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Pension Updates



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Update No. 45

Thank you for your continued attention and energy towards educator pension reform.

During the last legislative session, over 1000 members took part in an Education Minnesota pension advocacy session to learn about how pensions work, what's needs improving, and how we can fight for action.

To be able to achieve the pension improvements we need from the state, we need to stand strong and stand together. It's extremely important that we engage new educators, and educators who may not have heard of this movement yet. We are asking local leaders and pension advocates to share [this flyer](#), which can serve as an easy way to engage your colleagues.

Minnesota's Pension Landscape

We've gotten requests from members to include some broader context for Minnesota's pension system.

Educators from Education Minnesota are in all of these systems: Teachers' Retirement Association (TRA), St. Paul Teachers' Retirement Fund Association (SPTRF), Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) and MSRS (Minnesota State Retirement System).

- [PERA or Public Employees Retirement Association](#) is a set of five defined-benefit pension plans. Non-licensed employees of public-school districts fall under the [General Plan](#).
- [TRA or Teachers' Retirement Association](#) is a defined-benefit pension plan for most Minnesota public education teachers, licensed school staff and some administrators.
- [SPTRF or St. Paul Teachers' Retirement Fund Association](#) is a defined-benefit pension plan for anyone employed in a St. Paul Public schools' position which requires a teacher's license.
- [MSRS-CERP](#) is a defined-benefit pension plan that covers certain correctional officers and other specified Department of Corrections and Human Services employees, [including some teachers](#), who spend at least 75% of their time directly responsible for inmate or patient care.

Who makes the decisions?

The board of trustees overseeing our pension plan systems is often the beginning or end of any plan discussion. The board makes decisions on administration of the plans, hires the executive director and sets other policies that aren't in state statute. These boards, their staff and their executive directors are influential when decisions or changes are being considered at the Legislature as well. These boards are made up of a mix of elected pension plan members and appointees from certain groups or government agencies.

Pension plan boards responsibilities include:

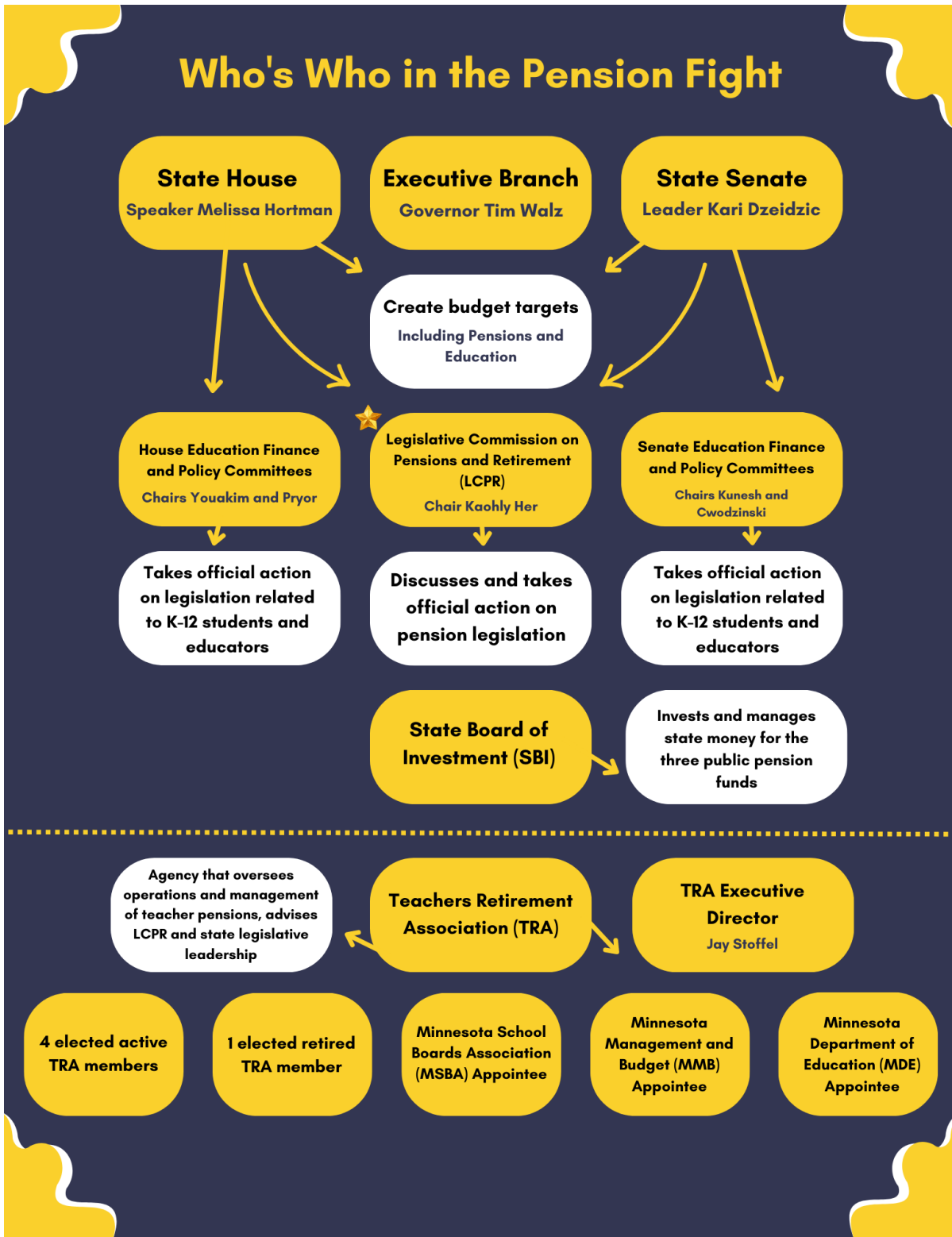
- **TRA:** Oversee administration of the pension fund; establish rules, policies and procedures for administering the plan; approve an annual budget; retain an actuary to assess the financial status of the plan; determine member appeals; and appoint the executive director. Eight-member board (five teacher representatives are elected and three are appointed).
- **SPTRFA:** Governed by a 10-member board that serves as a fiduciary to members and beneficiaries. Nine of 10 board members are elected by membership for staggered three-year terms. One ex-officio board member is appointed by the St. Paul Public Schools School Board.
- **PERA:** This plan's board approves its operating budget, decides legislative policy and priorities and hires the executive director. In addition, trustees establish policies and procedures that govern PERA operations; hear and rule on appeal matters of disabilitants, retirees and members; and direct the dissemination of information to PERA members. This board has six appointees from different groups and five elected board members.
- **MSRS:** The Board sets policies, hears disability and benefit appeals, and oversees the administration of all MSRS plans for state employees, as well as the Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP) and Minnesota Deferred Compensation Plan (MNDCP) for all public employees.

Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement (LCPR)

In Minnesota, many decisions on pension improvements have to be made through legislative action.

The [LCPR](#) is a joint legislative commission, with both Senators and Representatives, that discusses, considers and recommends pension legislation. The LCPR is the cornerstone for pension discussions, and members are looked to by the full Legislature for recommendations.

From statute: "The commission consists of seven members of the Senate appointed by the Subcommittee on Committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration and seven members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker. No more than five members from each chamber may be from the majority caucus in that chamber. Members shall be appointed at the commencement of each regular session of the legislature for a two-year term beginning January 16 of the first year of the regular session."



Attend Legislative Town Halls

Legislators often hold town hall events or listening sessions during the interim. Follow your state representative and senator on social media or subscribe to their email updates to find these events. Attend the event and ask about educator pension reform.

Pension Advisory Group Update

Education Minnesota's member-led Pension Advisory Group will be meeting next week on Sept. 14, and an agenda for their meeting will be posted on the [Pension](#)

[Advocacy Network Facebook Page](#). The group is working to recommend legislative priorities for next session, as well as an organizing and engagement plan. Check out the notes from their last meeting [here](#).

Resources:

Organizing and Action	General Information
Tips for contacting your legislators	Education Minnesota pensions webpage
Find your legislators	EdMN Capitol Connection e-newsletter
LCPR members	TRA document on pension basics
Education Minnesota Pension Advocacy Network	PERA member resources
	Public pension terminology

If you've missed any past updates, they're [available on our website](#). If you have any questions, please email pensions@edmn.org.

Keep organizing, sharing and talking to your colleagues about our plan. [Sign up and forward this Education Minnesota Pension Updates signup today or use the QR code below!](#)

