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 (STPRFA), 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.

- **STPRFA 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).

- SPTFRA: 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.

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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!