

# Professional Training for Educators

2026-27

# Education Minnesota's Core Trainings

2026-27

*These trainings are available to  
Education Minnesota members only.*



**THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**



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# Education Minnesota's Professional Development Program FAQs

## How do trainings get requested?

All training requests go through local presidents and/or field staff, who submit a PD request on [educationminnesota.org](http://educationminnesota.org). Once the request is received, the professional development team works to find trainers.

## Who leads trainings?

Most of our trainings are led by Education Minnesota staff, but many of the relicensure, professional practice, and racial and social justice trainings are led by member trainers.

## Who do I contact if I have questions about professional development?

Your local president and field staff are the best place to start! If you have specific questions about curriculum, content, or internal processes, the PD team can be contacted at [meapd@edmn.org](mailto:meapd@edmn.org).

## Who can take the trainings?

Current Education Minnesota members only.

## What are the minimums and maximums for participants in a training?

There is a minimum of 10 participants for each in person training. Maximums depends on the training. All relicensure trainings have a maximum of 35 attendees, except for Cultural Competency, which is 50. If a training is held on Zoom, we can accommodate more, but for most sessions the maximum is 50.

## Do the trainings cost anything?

No, they are free to Education Minnesota members, and a great example of union dues at work to provide quality professional development for membership!

## There is a new statute requiring training about American Indian history and culture. Do you have a training to fulfill this requirement?

Yes, it is in this booklet and titled American Indian History and Culture.

## Who can become a member trainer?

Any member of Education Minnesota - they just need to attend a Train the Trainer event which typically takes place in the summer. Members may also shadow our current trainers at various times within our PD year. Members interested in becoming trainers should email [meapd@edmn.org](mailto:meapd@edmn.org) to request more information.

# MEA Online

**Get the professional development you need from the comfort of your home or classroom through trainings on our online learning platform MEA Online!**

Improve your professional practice, earn CEU credits for relicensure or build your union understanding and power.

All MEA Online courses are done asynchronously, at every individual's own pace. The site also saves your progress, and automatically awards CEUs to your account and to your email upon each course completion.

The best part? These courses are FREE to active Education Minnesota members.

Courses are updated and added regularly. There are currently over 40 courses available, including all relicensure trainings!

**Another benefit of having an MEA Online account is access to online courses provided by NEA. To access both MEA Online and NEA's PEP, please go to the PEP registration page and register with the same email and password you use to access MEA Online.**

A few of the classes offered by NEA include:

- *Put on Your Own Oxygen Mask First: Cultivating Healing and Wellbeing through Social Awareness*
- *Classroom Management: Positive Response to Challenging Behaviors*
- *SEL: Relationship Skills*
- *Remote Learning: Equity Challenges and Opportunities*
- *Bully Prevention: School Connectedness*

***Scan here to access MEA Online***



[www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org)

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## Voluntary Unionism

These courses are especially important to offer to local and IO leaders in the fall. It is strongly recommended that curriculum offerings for Fall Drive-Ins includes one or more of these courses.

### 1. Building Representatives – Roles and Responsibilities

*Presenters: Field staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Building representatives are the eyes and ears of the local. This session defines the role of building reps, and provides ideas for them on how to connect with members, conduct short informational meetings and advocate on behalf of the members they represent.

VU010

### 2. Local Membership Training: A Step-by-Step Guide to Keeping Accurate Membership Information

*Presenters: Field staff*

*Time: 90 minutes*

Attendees will learn new systems to document, record and monitor membership information as well as discuss case scenarios that will be helpful in their day-to-day duties as membership contacts. There will be an opportunity to review membership materials and learn how to complete membership forms and document roster changes. Recording potential members will also be discussed.

VU020

### 3. Union Orientation Best Practices

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 60 minutes*

Inviting new hires to join the union at the beginning of their employment has been a long-standing, successful practice for building and maintaining the strength of unions. A quality, well-planned orientation along with thoughtful, intentional follow up practices will increase the likelihood that new hires will recognize the value of belonging to the union and choose to join. This session will give you the latest research-based tips and tools you need to develop a successful new hire orientation program for your local.

VU070

## Leading and Growing Your Union

These courses help develop skills that current or emerging leaders need to be successful like planning, organizing, complying with union requirements, engaging members and the community and much more.

### 4. Financial and Fiduciary Responsibilities for Local Leaders

*Presenters: Finance staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

Education Minnesota and all its affiliates and intermediate organizations must comply with local, state and federal laws, plus the rules and policies set forth in our governance documents and by our national affiliates. At the same time, we must ensure strong financial practices. This session will provide information on fiduciary responsibilities and financial training for treasurers, local and intermediate organization leaders.

UN030

## 5. The History of Education Minnesota: Our Shared Legacy

*Presenters: Field staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

Our history is all around us. We stand on the shoulders of giants. Learning our history will help point us to the future of our union. This workshop introduces participants to the history of Education Minnesota and how to be involved in shaping what comes next. The workshop includes a short video produced by the University of Minnesota, Labor Education Service, a timeline of education unions in Minnesota, and an activity focused on the development of labor in Minnesota public education.

*UN120*

## 6. Internal Audit Committee Training

*Presenters: Finance staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

Your local's internal audit committee plays a critical role in maintaining the integrity of the local's financial reporting. Having the right knowledge and tools will help your committee manage this important responsibility in the most efficient way possible. We'll take you step by step through the internal financial review process.

*UN040*

## 7. Meet and Confer

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 60 minutes*

Meet and Confer will explore the "Who," "What," "When," "Where," "Why," and "How" of the collaborative problem solving process between the Exclusive Representative and the School District.

*UN060*

## 8. Winning Local Referendums: Set a Goal. Write a Plan. Execute. Learn How to Organize Locally and Work With Community and Labor Allies for the Win

*Presenters: Public affairs staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

This session will cover the tools, resources and help available to locals that are working to pass an operating, building or technology referendum. The session includes valuable information for new and veteran leadership on how to create and execute a successful referendum campaign. The session explains what resources Education Minnesota offers, how to evaluate your community's climate on levies, and working with other community and labor organizations such as parent groups and AFL-CIO Area Labor Councils. Learn from other locals on the do's and don'ts of winning a referendum.

*UN070*

## Bargaining/Negotiations

Building a strong local begins with a strong contract. These courses will allow either experienced and new members to a negotiations team, or members interested in supporting local bargaining, to be more inclusive and effective.

## 9. Anti-Racism and Equity at the Bargaining Table

*Presenters: Negotiations staff and field staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes (90 minutes preferred)*

This session will explore collective bargaining and organizing strategies to elevate the voices of members of color, students and other traditionally underrepresented groups. Participants will examine barriers that some members face based on aspects of their identity and explore contractual changes that can address some of them.

*BN160*

**10. Conversational School Finance** 

*Presenters: Negotiations staff and field staff*

*Time: 75 minutes*

School finance is incredibly complex. Learn the basics of Minnesota's school funding system, state trends, why we face underfunding and build your vocabulary around terms and concepts of school district budgets. You will learn how to use finance data to understand a district's financial position and how to advocate with members and others for adequate and equitable funding for public education.

*BN040*

**11. Costing for Education Support Professionals (ESP) Settlements** 

*Presenters: Negotiations staff and field staff*

*Time: 60-75 minutes*

Knowing the cost of a salary proposal is necessary before presentation of the proposal to the district. ESP compensation schedules can be complex, making it difficult to understand the cost implications of a proposal. This session will demonstrate an Excel spreadsheet that has been developed by Education Minnesota to be used during negotiations to determine the cost of proposals.

*BN055*

**12. Costing for Teacher Settlements**

*Presenters: Negotiations staff and field staff*

*Time: 60-75 minutes*

Knowing the cost of a salary proposal is necessary before presentation of the proposal to the district. Teacher negotiators need to understand the cost implications of a proposal before offering it to the employer. This seminar will demonstrate an Excel spreadsheet that has been developed by Education Minnesota to be used during negotiations to determine the cost of proposals. Participants are encouraged to bring laptops to this session.

*BN050*

**13. Identifying and Including Special Education Issues in Contracts**

*Presenters: Legal staff and Education*

*Minnesota staff*

*Time: 60-75 minutes*

Collective bargaining agreements are an essential tool for meeting the increasing challenges facing special educators. This session will offer an opportunity to discuss special education workload and Education Minnesota's bargaining goals related to special education, as well as exchange ideas on how best to address special education in your contract.

*BN060*

**14. Internal Communication with Members during Bargaining**

*Presenters: Public affairs staff and field organizers*

*Time: 60 minutes*

This session will discuss strategies and options for effectively communicating with your members during negotiations.

*BN070*

**15. Negotiations Resources: Online Data and Information to Support Bargaining** 

*Presenters: Negotiations staff and field staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

Are you new to your bargaining team or to doing research in support of bargaining? Familiarize yourself with the negotiations tools on the Education Minnesota website, the Department of Education website, AFT and NEA, and other resources on the web. You will learn to use resources that will assist you and your local in doing the research necessary to prepare for bargaining. Tools include a contract language search engine, data on demographics and funding, survey tools and economic data.

*BN110*

## 16. Rethinking Bargaining Surveys

*Presenters: Negotiations staff and field staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Bargaining surveys are a staple in the negotiations process, but are they the best way to get information about members' needs, priorities and values? In this session, participants will explore alternative methods for gathering information that define bargaining priorities, and we will also discuss how these methods can also build local organizing capacity. Participants will also examine how surveys can be used later in the bargaining process to create a cycle of communications between members and their bargaining team.

*BN140*

## 17. Special Education Issues in Contracts for ESPs

*Presenters: Field staff, field organizers*

*Time: 60-75 minutes*

ESPs play a crucial role in providing Special Education services in schools, and contracts are vital for addressing special education issues for ESPs. In this session, participants will discuss ways to enhance your current contract language to support ESPs and students in special education. Participants will explore new ideas together and discuss the inclusion of laws in the contract that improve the experience of staff and students. Bring your contract and your ideas to this interactive session!

*BN180*

## Legal: Know Your Rights

Thinking of holding a staff walkout in your school? Frustrated by constant interruptions to your work by student cellphone use? Just want to know what you can and can't do as an educator? These classes are designed for all educators to better get to know their legal rights and responsibilities.

### 18. Educator Code of Ethics and Top Reasons for Educator Discipline

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This session focuses on the legal and ethical issues addressed by the Code of Ethics for Minnesota Educators, as well as the most common reasons educators face disciplinary action in their employment or against their license(s). The presentation will also address boundaries educators can and should set in their interactions with students, parents, and colleagues, including on cell phones and social media.

*LG170*

### 19. Supporting Transgender Students and Staff

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Over the past few years, issues surrounding the rights of students and employees who identify as transgender have gone from relatively obscure to center stage. This presentation will cover the legal rights of transgender students and employees in Minnesota, ways that educators can support their students and colleagues, as well as the status of efforts to roll back protections for transgender students and employees at the federal level.

*LG160*

## 20. Special Education Law Overview for General Education Staff

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

An overview of key legal concepts and terminology used in special education, working with other members of an IEP team, and Minnesota-specific legal requirements affecting students with disabilities and those who educate them. This training would be helpful for general educators looking to learn more about the needs and rights of their students with special needs and union leaders looking to learn more about the needs and responsibilities of their members who work in Special Education.

*LG151*

## 21. Immigration Issues for Minnesota Educators

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This training will provide up-to-date information about the different immigration categories in the United States and how immigration policy changes under the new administration are affecting Minnesota educators, students, and their family members in each category. The training will also cover how educators, schools, and campuses should respond to the presence of immigration officers in schools and campuses, as well as proactive steps educators and schools may take to support immigrant and migrant students and their families.

*LG210*

## 22. Free Speech Rights of Educators

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This class will examine the various sources of speech protection for educators, both within and outside the classroom. After learning about major Supreme Court cases and Minnesota laws affecting free speech rights of educators, participants will apply their knowledge with real-life scenarios. Participants will also learn

strategies for protecting or expanding their own speech rights through collective bargaining.

*LG060*

## 23. Reasonable Accommodations and Other Supports for Staff with Disabilities

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

In this session, we will address the various issues faced by our members and locals when it comes to navigating physical and mental disabilities, including invisible illnesses. Participants will learn about members' rights to reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Minnesota Human Rights Act, the interactive process, and other supports, such as paid and unpaid leaves of absence as well as disability benefits provided under a union contract or educator pension program.

*LG220*

## 24. Know Your Rights: What Minnesota Educators Should Know About Student Discipline, Physical Interventions, Staff Safety, Investigations and More

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This training by an Education Minnesota attorney will provide you with an overview of Minnesota laws affecting educator rights and responsibilities when dealing with student discipline and safety concerns, with a focus on laws recently enacted or amended by the legislature related to reasonable force, student cell phone use, paraprofessional training, and red flag laws. In addition, you will receive a copy of a comprehensive guide to your legal rights at work, including sample bargaining language and your rights in disciplinary investigations.

*LG010*

## Equity and the Law: Legal Protections Against Discrimination

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

An Education Minnesota attorney will provide an overview of state and federal protections against employment discrimination with definitions of key terminology such as protected class and hostile work environment. The training will discuss the types of evidence required by law to bring a successful discrimination case and the processes available to educators if they believe they have experienced unlawful discrimination at work. The presenter will also address and invite participants to share ways that locals can advocate for workplaces that are anti-racist and equitable for employees from historically marginalized groups through the meet and confer process and contract language.

*LG050*

## 25. Legal Updates and Q&A with an Education Minnesota Attorney

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Join one of the Education Minnesota attorneys as we review current legal issues, discuss recent legislation affecting educators, and answer your burning legal questions. Even if you've attended before, we'll have new questions to test your knowledge of the legal issues impacting educators.

*LG110*

## 26. Identifying and Challenging Unfair Labor Practices Under PELRA

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This session will provide an overview of unfair labor practices (ULPs) under the Public Employment Labor Relations Act. We will discuss the legal rights and obligations of unions and employees and how to use those rights to aid in successful organizing efforts in support of a contract settlement, new member recruitment,

or challenging employer interference with union advocacy.

*LG230*

## 27. Legal Issues for ESPs

*Presenters: Legal staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This session will offer a review of the laws affecting ESPs. An Education Minnesota attorney will walk you through the Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA), wage and hour laws, leave laws, anti-discrimination laws, district training obligations, and other applicable state and federal laws.

*LG100*

## 28. Legal Issues in Bargaining: Preserving Statutory Protections

*Presenters: Legal staff and field staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Many legal issues arise during bargaining. Can the employer refuse to provide budget documents? Are the district's negotiators bargaining in good faith? Can they summarize negotiations in the newsletter? What is the difference between mandatory, permissive, and illegal subjects of bargaining? How can our local extend statutory protections to all bargaining unit members? This session will cover a variety of legal questions that come up before, during and after negotiations.

*BN090*

## 29. Language Matters

*Presenters: Legal staff, field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Locals and individual members need to pay close attention to language in their contracts. A few words can sometimes make a big difference in meaning. During this workshop we will review various examples of language from grievance to emergency leave and everything in between. Attendees should bring a copy of their collective bargaining agreement to the session.

*BN080*

## Relicensure

Please note: the following trainings are presented by member trainers. Please submit your requests with ample lead time to give Education Minnesota the opportunity to obtain trainers.

### 30. American Indian History and Culture

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 or 120 minutes*

This training will address: key concepts and terminology including tribal sovereignty, tribal nation, American Indian, and indigenous; The Dakota and Ojibwe peoples' relationship with Minnesota, and their unique and distinct cultural heritages and sovereignty; and the laws that govern how Minnesota teachers, schools, and districts work with the 11 Tribal Nations that share geography with the state of Minnesota. This training meets the following statute requirements: "Subd. 7. American Indian history and culture. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must adopt rules that require all licensed teachers renewing their license under sections 122A.181 to 122A.184 to include in the renewal requirements professional development in the cultural heritage and contemporary contributions of American Indians, with particular emphasis on Minnesota Tribal Nations."

*RS080*

### 31. Cultural Competency 1-4 Series ☺

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*(8 hours for complete series to satisfy relicensure requirement) (50 max. capacity)*

This series is designed to deepen educators' understanding of their own frames of reference, the potential bias in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with students, students' families, and the school communities. Participants will engage in self-reflection and discussion around the following topics: racial, cultural, and socioeconomic groups; American Indian and Alaskan native

students; religion; systemic racism; gender identity, including transgender students; sexual orientation; language diversity; and individuals with disabilities and mental health concerns. The series can be offered in a variety of configurations (one eight-hour session is not an option due to the intensity of the material): Four two-hour sessions, two four-hour sessions (refreshments and a meal would need to be provided). Our recommendation for best practice is to offer two 4-hour sessions in close proximity to one another. Participants will not receive relicensure credit for the Cultural Competency requirement until they have completed all four sessions. This training is designed to meet the language and intent of the Minnesota statutory requirement. It is the only MEA PD training that meets all the required content. Culturally Responsive Teaching does not fulfill all requirements. Local continuing education committees have the authority to approve or deny submissions so please check with local leaders if you have questions.

*RE010*

#### Module 1: Expanding Your Equity Lens (2 hours)

Equity work is a journey and in this session we will lay the foundation for centering equity work in your community. Participants will ground themselves with norms and vocabulary, and develop an understanding of the importance of intercultural competency.

#### Module 2: Equity Mirrors – Reflection on Our Own Power and Privilege (2 hours)

Equity begins with an exploration of self. Participants in this session will begin to understand implicit bias and the construction of privilege. One of the goals of the session is to develop strategies to recognize and dismantle implicit bias in their lives.

#### Module 3: The Language of Equity - How We can Speak Up (2 hours)

Equity work must be done in relationship with others. Language is power, and identifying skills to speak up against prejudice, bias, and stereotypes

takes practice. Upon completion, participants will be able to acknowledge and respond to microaggressions, understand intent versus impact, and how to restore relationships using inclusive and recovery language.

#### **Module 4: Practice Makes Permanent – Sustaining Equity Work (2 hours)**

Equity work is ongoing. This session will highlight important strategies as you continue on your equity journey. We highlight varying levels of activism, engagement, and provide resources on implementing an equity mindset. This module also provides various case studies to practice doing the work. Module 4 ends with resources on how to continue this work through your union.

### **32. English Learners** 🕒

*(35 max. capacity)*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60, 90 or 120 minutes*

Learn to tap into the strengths the English Learners bring to your class. Discover strategies for differentiation and scaffolding to support their work as they progress through stages of language acquisition.

*RE020*

### **33. Positive Behavior Interventions and Accommodations/Modifications** 🕒

*(35 max. capacity)*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60, 90 or 120 minutes*

This session focuses on effective strategies that lead to increased student engagement and achievement.

*RE030*

### **34. Reading** 🕒

*(35 max. capacity)*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60, 90 or 120 minutes*

Participants will review the research and exemplary practices that help students acquire strong reading comprehension skills.

*RE040*

### **35. Student Mental Health** 🕒

*(35 max. capacity)*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60, 90 or 120 minutes*

This session raises awareness of key warning signs for early onset mental illness in children and adolescents and includes strategies for addressing learning challenges faced by students with particular mental health challenges.

*RE050*

### **36. Suicide Prevention** 🕒

*(35 max. capacity)*

*Presenters: Community partners, member trainers and qualified Education Minnesota staff*

*Time: 60, 90 or 120 minutes*

This session will focus on best practices in the area of suicide prevention. Due to the sensitive nature of this training, facilitators will be licensed practitioners in mental health and/or highly trained and qualified with expertise in suicide prevention.

*RE060*

## Professional Practice in the Classroom

These courses are designed for classroom educators and ESPs who are looking to use best practices in their work. These sessions are mostly taught by current, active educators who have practical, hands-on experience to share. Participants in these sessions will earn relicensing clock hours (also called CEUs). Offering these courses in your IO or local is a great way to build awareness of all that the union has to support them in their work.

### 37. Developing a Student-Centered Mindset

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60 minutes*

*Audience: ESPs*

Students are a complex makeup of their cultural background, socio-economic status, maturation and mental health. This course will help you develop an awareness of these factors and provide you with additional resources to be more effective in working with all students.

*PP010*

### 38. Education Minnesota Foundation – How to Enhance Your Profession and Classroom

*Recommended mode: via Zoom*

*Presenters: Foundation staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

This training will review the different Education Minnesota Foundation grant applications that can prepare you to apply for funding for our grants and most public and private resources. This easy grant writing process can benefit educators, education support professionals and students.

*PP130*

### 39. Introduction to Restorative Practices

*Presenters: Policy staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Educators will learn the history and seven guiding principles of restorative practices. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the circle process and reflect on the benefits of restorative

practices in learning communities. Participants will also be given time to reflect on their own classroom, site and district's capacity to adopt restorative practices.

*PP020*

### 40. Introduction to Neurodiversity

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

Neurodiversity refers to the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits, regarded as part of the normal variation in the human population. While a number of attributes fall under the neurodiverse umbrella, this course focuses primarily on supporting students with autism spectrum disorder and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, the processes by which students receive support in school, identifying characteristics, intersectionality, teaching strategies, and resources for further learning.

*RS060*

### 41. Trauma

*Presenters: Education Issues staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

This course provides an introduction on the relatively new field of understanding the consequences of childhood trauma and what that means for educators. The course provides an overview of the original ACEs study, defines key terms and explores, at a basic level, how trauma impacts the developing brain. Understanding that dynamic opens up new doors for educators to stop causing further harm with traditional responses to behavior problems and to identify new ways to help students carrying high levels of toxic stress from exposure to childhood trauma to develop resiliency.

*PP030*

### 42. Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship

*Presenters: Policy staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 minutes preferred (can be condensed to*

60 minutes if requested)

This course provides an overview of the history and evolution of our two unique professions and highlights strategic differences both inside and outside the classroom for our licensed and non-licensed educators. Participants will leave this session with tangible strategies that help us maximize our collective impact in schools while building an environment together that fosters better outcomes for our students.

PP110

### 43. True Colors

*Presenters: Field staff*

*Time: 120 minutes*

True Colors has been created as a vocabulary through which people can communicate the expression of their character. True Colors is an easy, entertaining way to identify your character spectrum to better understand yourself and others. It is an invaluable tool for enjoying success in your personal and professional life. True Colors uses four colors to identify distinct perspectives and personalities. Most of us have a dominant or bright color and are influenced or shaded by the other three colors, thus creating our True Colors Spectrum. True Colors establishes a common language by which we communicate core motivations, needs and behaviors. Discovering your True Colors Spectrum is fun and exciting! Once you recognize the True Colors in yourself and others, you will be able to respond more appropriately and concisely in your varied communication settings. School employees will be able to understand their students and will communicate more effectively with students and parents after attending the True Colors training.

## Racial and Social Justice

### 44. Dismantling Ableism

*Updated for 2024-2025*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

Ableism is rooted in the belief that typical abilities are superior and results in discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities. Subtle and obvious forms of ableism prevent people with disabilities from fully accessing equitable spaces and opportunities. Participants will learn the definition of ableism, how it shows up, examples of inclusive language, and develop methods to redress ableist systems and practices from an individual to a systems level.

RS040

### 45. Culturally Responsive Teaching Through a Racial Justice Lens

*(35 max. capacity)*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

This course will introduce strategies of culturally responsive teaching through a racial justice lens and how you can challenge and disrupt the systems, policies and pedagogy that has perpetuated systemic racism. By completing this course, you will receive one hour of CEU credit. By definition of the state statute, this CEU will not satisfy the relicensure requirement of cultural competency. If you are interested in that CEU, you must take our four-part Cultural Competency offering which is available online or in-person.

RS010

#### 46. Centering Student Success Through the Lens of LGBTQIA+ Identity

*New for 2026-2027*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This course is focused on making sure all students' identities are valued within each educator's circle of influence. Participants will be challenged to look at implicit habits in their own educational environment while walking away with practical shifts to foster inclusivity.

*RS023*

#### 47. Fostering Safe Schools Through the Lens of LGBTQIA+ Identity

*New for 2026-2027*

*Presenters: Education Minnesota staff and member trainers*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This course is focusing on fostering inclusive schools and what educators can do within their school systems. Educators will be encouraged to advocate for systems to include all students' identities.

*RS024*

#### 48. Recognizing and Combating Antisemitism in Schools

*Updated for 2026-2027*

*Presenters: Education issues staff and member trainers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

According to the Anti-Defamation League's '2025 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents,' increased antisemitic bullying and vandalism in Minnesota's K-12 schools still persist throughout our state. Proactive, comprehensive training on how to combat antisemitism in the classroom has proven to be the most effective strategy in disrupting this harmful escalation of hate. In this training, educators will be introduced to the basic tenants of Judaism, the seven most common antisemitic tropes, and tangible tools to both interrupt and prevent this harmful trend in our schools.

*RS070*

## Personal Finance and Wellness

Did you know that being a member of the union also gives you access to financial planning, debt reduction and wellness resources? These courses are a great way to get to know the union-based opportunities for support for educators outside of their classrooms and in every part of their daily lives. Many will also provide strategies to activate yourself or colleagues to take action on these pressing issues.

#### 49. Current Issues in Health Insurance

*Presenters: Policy staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

This session will explore key health insurance issues that affect Education Minnesota members. Session topics will range from insurance fundamentals, including cost management strategies and plan design issues, to current topics, including wellness plans, medical spending accounts, PEIP and HITA.

*PF040*

## 50. Degrees, Not Debt: Dealing With Student Loan Debt 🗣️

*Presenters: Policy staff and field staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

We want to make sure you, as an educator, know about existing student loan forgiveness programs, how to find out if you're eligible and how to apply for them. Education Minnesota's Degrees, Not Debt program is rallying public support to decrease the cost of college and make it easier and cheaper to pay student loan debt. We know that student loan debt makes life hard for many young educators, driving some away from teaching. Many see the cost of college as a barrier to getting into the profession in the first place. These challenges weaken the diversity and depth of our teaching corps.

*PF030*

## 51. Mental Health Issues for Advocates and Members

*Presenters: Legal staff or other staff*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

Educators perform a hard job, often under scrutiny and with many students depending on them. When our members are stressed and/or struggling with their mental health, what can we do to recognize this and respond with as much help as possible? What protections do our members have, and what resources are available to them? This session will explore those issues.

*PF060*

## Free Benefits, Yes Please!

*New for 2026-2027*

*Presenters: ESI staff*

*Time: 60 minutes*

As a member of your local union and Education Minnesota, you have access to free member benefits from ESI, the National Education Association (NEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and Union Plus! Member benefits are designed to offer education, special benefits, and discounts on a variety of products and

services to support every aspect of your life. We will explore the benefits and how to access them.

*PF021*

## 52. When Can I Afford to Retire? (For members with a PERA pension)

*Presenters: EFS Advisors, ESI retirement consultants and Educators Lifetime Solutions*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

The answer to this question depends not only on how well you have planned financially, but also on what your plans are in retirement. While you are working, your income comes from your paycheck. In retirement, your income will come from three sources: your pension, social security, any savings you have accumulated in accounts such as 403(b)/457/IRAs and savings. In this session, members will begin to understand how defined-benefit pensions work and how income in retirement is calculated based on the pension option you choose. You will also learn about various investment plans and the differences between them so you can plan what is best for you. Also important are health care choices, and decisions related to long-term care insurance as a means to provide independence as well as helping to protect assets and retirement savings.

*PF011*

### 53. When Can I Afford to Retire? (For members with a TRA pension)

*Presenters: EFS Advisors, ESI retirement consultants and Educators Lifetime Solutions*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

The answer to this question depends not only on how well you have planned financially, but also on what your plans are in retirement. While you are working, your income comes from your paycheck. In retirement, your income will come from three sources: your pension, social security, any savings you have accumulated in accounts such as 403(b)/457/IRAs and savings. In this session, members will begin to understand how defined-benefit pensions work and how income in retirement is calculated based on the pension option you choose. You will also learn about various investment plans and the differences between them so you can plan what is best for you. Also important are health care choices, and decisions related to long-term care insurance as a means to provide independence as well as helping to protect assets and retirement savings.

*PF012*

## Politics

Education is an increasingly political issue. These classes will help members and leaders understand how elected officials and the policies that they make impact our schools and students...and how to influence those decision makers.

### 54. Legislative Session Update/Preview

*Presenters: Public affairs staff*

*Time: 45-60 minutes*

What are the governor's and lawmakers' priorities likely to be in 2027? We will offer our predictions on what to expect in the 2027 legislative session and provide a brief overview of what happened last year.

*PO010*

## Organizing

This group of trainings takes a deeper dive into how organizing for power is accomplished. Each training takes a close look at the specific topic in depth and is intended to move a local from tactics and advocacy to organizing. Each training is designed to take 90 minutes but can be modified to a shorter 60 minute quick hit course or a longer 120 minutes that incorporates work/planning time.

### 55. Doing the Groundwork: Organizing Conversations

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

Email, texting, leaflets and social media are useful tools but they can't beat the power of face-to-face conversations. These organizing conversations are the best way to understand the challenges and concerns that your colleagues care about and help everyone understand the need for action. By developing thoughtful, honest organizing conversations you will activate your colleagues beyond "the way things are" and build a local focused on the issues that matter most.

*OR020*

### 56. How Organizing can Benefit your Local: Issue Campaigns and Year Round Capacity Building

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

Are you curious about how organizing campaigns can work in support of grievances and to leverage your union's power against problematic policies? Are you going into contract negotiations and want to engage your membership more broadly in support of bargaining? Does your local need help with new member recruitment, member engagement, and developing new leaders to secure the future of your local? This workshop will address the strategies that support your union's goals. We begin with analyzing your local's current strengths and weaknesses and then begin building a plan to help you navigate what's ahead. From surveys to rallies - what works based on the context your local is in.

*OR030*

### 57. So you want to be strike ready?

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 90 minutes*

Tired of the same 2 and 2? Want to push for class size language? Sick of the district always telling you “no?” This training will serve as a guide for locals who want to be strike ready in order to demand unprecedented contracts. Learn what it takes to be strike ready, and how to move your local to a powerful union, ready for big wins!

*OR060*

### 58. Advocacy to Power

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 60-90 minutes*

What does it take to transition from advocacy to actual power while also achieving wins? How can we move from speaking up to actually being in a position to make a difference? In this session, we reflect on some of the organizing achievements gained during contract fights over the last year and discuss how to use the power gained through a contract cycle to advocate for the next win.

*OR090*

### 59. School Safety, Community Defense, and Educator Power in a Federal Enforcement Era

*New for 2026-2027*

*Presenters: Field staff and field organizers*

*Time: 120 minutes*

The training explains how school and site-based safety plans work, how to document enforcement activity without escalating risk, and how roles, protocols, and collective structures protect students and staff. Participants also learn when and how to connect with rapid response networks and how organizing strategies and community coordination reduce individual exposure while strengthening safety across schools and neighborhoods.

*OR100*

## Education Minnesota Core Training FAQs

Education Minnesota's Core Trainings are focused on building strong, effective locals. This statewide program builds on the strength within locals to help build a solid foundation for success. The trainings give leaders and members information and skills in five important areas: member rights, negotiations, local organizing, health insurance and peer review. Education Minnesota staff facilitate each training opportunity. A trainer must be assigned by Education Minnesota staff before a Core Training Request Form is submitted.

### Where and when are Core Trainings offered?

Core Trainings are offered through regional intermediate organizations (IOs) and locals. As they develop their yearly programming, IOs/locals are encouraged to consider sponsoring Core Training events to benefit their members and leaders. IOs/locals contact field office staff to have their Core Trainings placed on the Core Training master schedule. IOs/locals publicize the Core Trainings in their area of the state.

### Who may attend Core Training?

Members should check the Core Training master schedule on the Education Minnesota website for Core Trainings offered in various parts of the state ([educationminnesota.org/advocacy/UnionU/core-training](http://educationminnesota.org/advocacy/UnionU/core-training)). Education Minnesota field staff also have this information. Any member of Education Minnesota may attend any Core Training event.

### What is the reimbursement from Education Minnesota?

To expand participation to as many members as possible, Education Minnesota reimburses an IO/local up to \$30 for each Education Minnesota member completing a five-hour Core Training segment. This reimbursement is meant to offset part of the cost of sponsoring a training event (food and meeting room rental, for example). Copies of expenditure receipts are required for reimbursement. The minimum of 10 participants to receive reimbursement has been removed.

### How does an IO/local request this reimbursement?

An IO/local must promote its trainings to all Education Minnesota members through the Core Training master schedule. At the training event, all participants must sign the Core Training registration reimbursement form, indicating the name of their local. Field OPS are responsible for confirming membership of reimbursable attendees. After the training, the IO/local president/chair must sign the form and return it to Education Minnesota's St. Paul office, Attn: Policy, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103.

### How does my local benefit from Core Trainings?

- Members develop the ability to advocate for other members through Member Rights Advocacy (MRA) training.
- They learn to prepare for and participate in contract negotiations via the Certified Negotiator Program (CNP) for teachers or ESPs. Some members might also attend CNP to help them decide whether to become a local negotiator.
- They learn to build power among members, demonstrate member unity and grow community support in the Local and Community Action Team (LCAT) program.
- Members learn to train their local colleagues on giving and receiving valuable feedback on their teaching in Peer Review: Strategies for Success.
- Members will acquire knowledge and skills to advocate for quality health insurance for their local through Health Insurance Basics and Beyond.
- The result of completing the Core Training is a stronger and more vibrant local union.

# Core Training Reimbursement Opportunities

## Core Training opportunities qualifying for reimbursement are:

1. Certified Negotiator Program (CNP).
  - Teachers (9 hours and up to 2 reimbursable segments).
  - ESPs (9 hours and up to 2 reimbursable segments).
2. Health Insurance Basics and Beyond.
  - Health Insurance (5 hours).
3. Local and Community Action Team (LCAT) Parts I and II (10 hours total).
  - Part I (5 hours).
  - Part II (5 hours).
4. Member Rights Advocacy (MRA) (5.5 hours total).
5. Union Leadership Development Program(15 hours total).

The following pages contain descriptions of each Core Training segment. Also included are space and setup requirements to help your intermediate organization/local choose the trainings that fit your members' needs. Education Minnesota is committed to training that builds local strength, protects members' rights and teaches the skills to negotiate good contracts.

# Certified Negotiators Program (CNP)

In person, asynchronous via MEA Online

## Space requirements

- Room needs adequate space to allow participants to easily move about for group activities.
- Space is needed for breakout sessions during negotiations practice component, ideally two separate but adjoining rooms.
- Wall space must be adequate for bargaining timeline, posters, flip charts.
- Participants must be able to see a viewing screen and to work in groups; round or conference-style tables preferred.
- A screen or blank wall is necessary for viewing projected images and print.
- An internet connection is required for the AFT LeaderNet Survey Creator training.
- A table must be placed near one entrance for sign-in sheets, nametags and table tents.

## Set-up time

- Schedule ample time for presenter(s) to arrange room, put up posters, set out participant materials, test AV equipment and sign in participants.

## Other requirements

- Sponsoring IO/local provides meals, snacks, meeting space, nametags and table tents.
- Education Minnesota provides the training materials and presenters.

## CNP for ESPs and Teachers: Description

Negotiators acquire knowledge and skills to lead their locals to settlement. There are two versions of Certified Negotiators training, one specifically for teacher negotiators and the other for ESP negotiators. Each version is 9 hours in length and can be scheduled in shorter sessions. This training is best for participants when sessions occur over a short period of time. CNP is an interactive and participatory training that is recommended for current and future negotiators, leaders and any members looking to learn about negotiations.

## CNP for ESPs and Teachers: Content overview

*Both of these trainings are sequential and should be taken in order*

- Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA)
- Engaging members in the negotiations process
- Team dynamics
- Proposals
- Costing
- During negotiation
- Presenting and countering
- Closing the deal

C0010

# Health Insurance Basics and Beyond

In person, asynchronous via MEA Online

## Space requirements

- Room needs adequate space to allow participants to easily move about for group activities.
- Wall space must be adequate for timeline, posters and flip charts.
- Participants must be able to see a viewing screen and to work in groups; round tables preferred.
- A screen or blank wall is necessary for viewing projected images and print materials.
- A table must be placed near entrance for sign-in sheets, nametags and table tents.

## Set-up time

- Schedule ample time for presenter(s) to arrange room, put up posters, set out participant materials, test AV equipment and sign in participants.

## Other requirements

- Sponsoring IO/local provides meals, snacks, meeting space, nametags and table tents.
- Education Minnesota provides the training materials and presenters.

## Description

With rising costs and numerous laws in place regarding insurance, it is important that our members have an understanding of health insurance in general and how it works. Participants will gain knowledge around the various components and terminology of insurance, the laws that deal with insurance, and the skills necessary to make comparisons between insurance plans, as well as how to utilize a district insurance committee to its maximum potential. Topics covered in this training include group insurance, legal rights and responsibilities, side-by-side comparisons and an effective insurance committee.

PF050

# Local and Community Action Team (LCAT) Training

## In person only

### Space requirements

- Room needs adequate space to allow participants to easily move about for group activities.
- Space is needed for breakout sessions for organizing conversation training; ideally two separate but adjoining rooms.
- Wall space must be adequate for timeline, posters and flip charts.
- Participants must be able to see a viewing screen and to work in groups; round tables preferred.
- A screen or blank wall is necessary for viewing projected images and print materials.
- A table must be placed near entrance for sign-in sheets, nametags and table tents.

### Set-up time

- Schedule ample time for presenter(s) to arrange room, put up posters, set out participant materials, test AV equipment and sign in participants.

### Other requirements

- Sponsoring IO/local provides meals, snacks, meeting space, nametags and table tents.
- Education Minnesota provides the training materials and presenters.
- Training can be scheduled on a Friday night and Saturday or over the course of two to three evenings.

### Description

The LCAT program helps locals with internal organizing and community engagement campaigns. The goal is to build positive, sustainable relationships among educators and those who live and work in their communities. Locals do this by creating teams that include local leadership, negotiators, members of settlement committees and those with an interest in organizing in their schools and communities. Training sessions are offered to give teachers and ESPs foundational skills to help their local union build power and reach their goals. Participating local teams should consist of at least one member of the bargaining team, one member of the local's leadership group and two additional members who will become part of the Local and Community Action Team. The complete 10-hour training can be done on a Friday night and Saturday. The maximum number of participating local teams is six.

### LCAT Part I: Overview (5 hours)

- STEP Analysis: The environment in which we work, live and negotiate.
- SWOT Analysis: Internal analysis of the local's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Building an LCAT.
- Identifying organizing issues.

### LCAT Part II: Overview (5 hours)

Participants must complete LCAT Part I before Part II.

- One-on-one conversations.
- Planning your campaign.
- Next steps.

C0030

# Member Rights Advocacy (MRA)

In person, asynchronous via MEA Online

## Space requirements

- Room needs adequate space to allow participants to easily move about for group activities.
- Wall space must be adequate for hanging posters.
- Participants must be able to see a viewing screen and to work in groups; round tables preferred.
- A screen or blank wall is necessary for viewing projected images and print.
- A table must be placed near entrance for sign-in sheets, nametags and table tents.

## Set-up time

- Schedule ample time for presenter(s) to arrange room, put up posters, set out participant materials, test AV equipment and sign in participants.

## Other requirements

- Sponsoring IO/local provides meals, snacks, meeting space, nametags and table tents.
- Education Minnesota provides the training materials and presenters.

## Description

Member Rights Advocacy is training that develops the knowledge and skills to assist other members in understanding their rights and resolving conflicts using a variety of strategies. This training will focus on understanding the role, responsibilities, and rights of representation. MRA will help you develop mindful strategies when responding to problems, recognize biases and prejudices of effective listening, and work to build stronger relationships with all members of your local.

## Participants will:

- Understand the role of a member rights advocate.
- Understand the rights and responsibilities of representation.
- Develop knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to represent all members.
- Learn new and better ways to respond to problems.
- Recognize roadblocks to effective listening.
- Reinforce communication skills.
- Build stronger relationships with members of your local.
- Reflect on personal growth as an advocate and leader in your local.

## **MRA Overview (5.5 hours):**

- Introduction
- Rights and Responsibilities of Representation
- Conflict
- Advocacy Model
- Valuing Member Concerns
- Investigation
- Defining the Issue
- What's next?
- Accompanying a Member
- Organizing
- Grievance
- Review
- Closure and Wrap Up

*C0040*

# Union Leadership Development Program (ULDP)

## Space requirements

- Room needs adequate space to allow participants to easily move about for group activities.
- Wall space must be adequate for timeline, posters, flip charts.
- Participants must be able to see a viewing screen and to work in groups; round or conference-style tables preferred.
- A screen or blank wall is necessary for viewing projected images and print.
- A table must be placed near one entrance for sign-in sheets, nametags and table tents.

## Set-up time

- Schedule ample time for presenter(s) to arrange room, put up posters, set out participant materials, test AV equipment and sign in participants.

## Other requirements

- Sponsoring IO/local provides meals, snacks, meeting space, nametags and table tents.
- Education Minnesota provides the training materials and presenters.

## Description

The Education Minnesota Union Leadership Development program is a three-part training, modeled after the NEA's leadership competencies, which challenges Education Minnesota members to deepen their union leadership skills, abilities, and philosophy. Although not designed for any one specific position, this training is relevant for any members looking to become more active in their union. The trainings can be taken in any order and are based on these four overall beliefs:

- We believe that the union is the place to address and advocate for all staff and student needs.
- We believe in the power of collective action and recognize different avenues in order to effect change.
- We believe leaders must reflect on their individual interests, skills and needs.
- We believe in strengthening our skills to talk to colleagues, relationally organize, and identify fellow leaders and activists

## Sequence

It is recommended that each participant take all three parts of the training. However, the courses stand alone and can be taken in any order.

## Leading of Self: Overview (5 hours)

### Objectives:

- Create connections with other emerging leaders to build collective power in their union.
- Understand the importance of building local sounding boards.
- Delve into shared leadership models, understanding the differences between host and hero leadership.
- Reflect on their own unique leadership strengths and set goals for the future.

### Introduction

- Core Beliefs of the Union Leadership Development Program
- Objectives
- Grounding
- Why Are You Here?
- Broken Squares activity
- Developing Your Own Leadership

### Identify (as) a Leader

- Snowball activity
- Leading the Collective
- Host vs. Hero
- Using Collective Voice

### Sounding Boards

- Populating Your Sounding Board — Think-Pair-Share
- Barriers
- Supports

### Conclusion

- NEA Competencies
- Goals and takeaways
- Thank you

## Leading of Others: Overview (5 hours)

### Objectives:

- Utilize storytelling to inspire their union siblings to join them in the work.
- Engage in relational organizing to identify values and motivations.
- Identify the qualities of leadership needed to build power.
- Navigate potential conflict and develop strategies to move through these tensions.

### Introduction

- Core Beliefs of the Union Leadership Development Program
- Objectives
- Community Agreements
- Grounding
- Connection activity
- Building Connections

### Sharing Stories

- Power of Sharing Stories
- Video: Story of Self: Why Am I Here?
- Sharing and Coaching
- Reflection

### One and One Conversations

- Relational Organizing Conversation
- Curiosity and Listening
- Modeling and Practice
- Potential Tensions
- AAR

### Organic Leaders

- Leader Qualities
- Leader ID Question
- Case Study
- Union Affinity
- Assessments

### Mission and Vision

- Purpose of Mission Statement
- Next steps

### Conclusion

- Takeaways
- Thank you

## Leading the Organization: Overview (5 hours)

### Objectives

- Use comprehensive unionism to guide their work.
- Understand that leading is not limited to those with positional power.
- Identify how they can build power through an organizing framework.
- Create a draft organizing plan that contributes to building a cohesive, powerful union.

### Introduction

- Core Beliefs of the Union Leadership Development Program
- Objectives
- Grounding
- Fold the Line activity

### Powerful Unions

- Our Union's Work
- Three Frames of Unionism
- Problem vs Issue
- We Do-You Do Practice

### Organizing Plan

- Elements of an Effective Organizing Plan
- Research and Information Gathering
- We Do-You Do Practice

### Goals

- Theory of Change
- We Do-You Do Practice
- Power Analysis

### Strategies

- Supporting Tactics
- Structure Tests
- We Do-You Do Practice

### Conclusion

- Campaign Plan
- Goals and takeaways
- Evaluation

CO050



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