

# AHEM FRIDAY BLAST

Valerie Holthus, President

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## The Great Grade Debate

Grading has been a difficult issue as distance learning continues. Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has recognized the difficulty that teachers and higher education are facing with credible and consistent grading during this unsettling time.

MDE has formed a group to assist in providing guidance to districts, and within this group have identified four work groups: 1. Guiding Principles, 2. K12 Ramifications, 3. Higher Education Transition Ramifications and 4. Messaging.

I am one of five in the Guiding Principles Group, and Superintendent Law is one of three in the Messaging Group.

By the time you read this, MDE will have received the group's summaries, and you should be hearing Anoka Hennepin's grading procedures after MDE's recommendations soon.

Thank you so very much for all of the emails regarding grading, giving me valuable insight and understanding to your concerns, which helped me to advocate for you and your students.

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If you have family members who have been laid off, or have had their hours drastically reduced, here is the updated Unemployment Insurance Q & A from DEED. <https://www.uimn.org/applicants/needtoknow/news-updates/covid-19.jsp>.

**AHEM OFFICE IS CLOSED, not all phone lines are working.**  
**If you have questions or concerns, please email either**  
**[david.kundin@edmn.org](mailto:david.kundin@edmn.org), [laura.bratland@edmn.org](mailto:laura.bratland@edmn.org) or**  
**[valerie.holthus@edmn.org](mailto:valerie.holthus@edmn.org).**  
**Thank you, sorry for the inconvenience.**

## **AHEM Officer Opening**

**Our VP/Secretary, Laura Bratland, has taken a job as field staff.** Please consider filing to fulfill the remainder of the Secretary/Vice President's term, which will be from May 18, 2020 - June 30, 2022. The filing period ends on Monday April 20, 2020. The stipend for this position is \$6,696.00 per year, and is a great opportunity if you have been considering leadership in the union. Contact [janie.hemmelgarn@edmn.org](mailto:janie.hemmelgarn@edmn.org) to file. Primary duties include taking minutes at meetings and hosting Meet and Confer.

### **Data Privacy while conducting Distance Learning**

Regarding data privacy concerns for both students and staff, and questions about provisions of special education services: Please see MDE's current guidance on these topics:

Student data privacy: <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/covid19/MDE032171>

Special education: <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/covid19/spedcovid19/index.htm>

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### ***NON-RENEWAL (PINK SLIP) NOTICES TO PROBATIONARY TEACHERS***

On Monday, March 30, 2020, at a virtual Anoka-Hennepin School Board meeting, the School Board approved a motion to non-renew/terminate approximately 264 probationary teaching contracts at the end of the 2019-20 school year. This means that all of those teachers will be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits and should receive pay and insurance benefits through the end of this school year, or through August 31, 2020.

Under Minnesota teacher tenure law, if a teacher completes three (3) consecutive years and is rehired for the following year, the teacher has earned tenure. Once the three year period is completed, if a teacher moves to a different school district, or has a break in service, they only need to complete a one year probationary period to regain tenure. For most of the probationary teachers who were non-renewed, you will be eligible to apply for other vacancies in the District, and may even be encouraged to apply for the vacancies created by your non-renewal.

Unfortunately, in approximately 20 cases, the District added language that reflects that the non-renewal decisions were based on performance concerns which building administrators identified with those specific probationary teachers. Those teachers will not be considered for rehire in AH #11 for the upcoming school year. We are in the process of reaching out to those individuals with specific advice on how to respond to those notices. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Education Minnesota Field Staff, David Kundin, at [david.kundin@edmdn.org](mailto:david.kundin@edmdn.org).



## More Helpful Links:

1. Expanded unemployment eligibility and benefits under Gov. Walz's Executive Order and the federal emergency stimulus bill, called the CARES Act: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/in-the-classroom/Coronavirus/Unemployment-FAQ>
2. Expanded sick and child care leave benefits provided by the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA): <https://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/in-the-classroom/Coronavirus/Paid-sick-and-child-care-leave-FAQ>
3. Guidance on delivering equitable special education instruction and services through distance learning: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/in-the-classroom/Coronavirus/Special-education-FAQ>. This includes many questions our members have been asking about IEP modifications, deadlines, and other compliance issues, as well as accommodations for students.
4. Updated guidance on local elections, including an overview of LMRDA requirements for mail ballot and electronic voting: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/in-the-classroom/Coronavirus/Local-elections-FAQ>

## Postponements and Cancellations

**Professional Development Classes** at AHEM, are cancelled.  
**Safe Schools Meeting**, Wednesday, April 15, will be cancelled.  
**Lobby Day**, April 16, will be cancelled.  
**Representative Assembly**, Monday, April 27, will be held virtually.  
**Recognition Dinner**, May 13, will be rescheduled to occur this Fall.