

# AHEM FRIDAY BLAST

Valerie Holthus, President

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## IT'S OFFICIAL: DISTANCE LEARNING FOR REST OF SY 19/20

NON-STUDENT CONTACT DAYS TO PREPARE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING FOR THE REST OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR WILL BE MAY 1 AND 4<sup>TH</sup>.

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AHEM Vice President/Secretary Election on May 13 and 14

Three Candidates are running:

Mark Duffy

Math  
Regional High School

Jon Kohnen

Grade 3  
Sunrise Elementary

Kristi Weidlein

English  
Technical High School

Elections will occur electronically.

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF DURING THIS TIME

Working from home conducting distance learning brings different kinds of stressors. A higher reliance on smartphones and laptops is associated with higher stress levels in addition to greater social isolation and even insomnia, both of which are conversely linked with greater stress.

Most people are surprised by the stress they feel once the novelty of working from home wears off and the stress of its challenges becomes more apparent.

**Lack of Structure** Feeling a lack of boundaries on when you need to start working (and stop!), when you need to get up and go to sleep, and when to log off can feel like true liberation. This feeling, however, can gradually morph into a feeling of being out of control for many who don't expect it.

Flexible work hours can become too-long work hours as you struggle to fight distractions and get all of your work done. Later bedtimes can slip into less healthy sleep schedules, and social media can drain hours of productivity.

**Too Many Distractions** Email, television, and the siren song of social media can all throw us off and it's very possible to be distracted for hours by these things.

**Difficulty Setting Boundaries** Setting boundaries--creating a structure between your relationships and work is difficult to ensure that you don't blur the lines between productivity and leisure time.

**Social Isolation** Those who work at home may find that the solitude can be a double-edged sword. It is, of course, easier to focus, but we can become lonely before we realize it.

Social media can feel like a lifeline to others, but this type of interaction can sometimes feel isolating as well, as these interactions can feel less personal.

### **Tips for Managing the Stress of Working at Home:**

**Set A Schedule and Prioritize the challenging tasks first.** Rather than letting unpleasant or difficult tasks hang over your head and create stress when you think about them, pushing yourself to get the most difficult jobs done first can help you to clear your plate of those less exciting tasks, and you'll feel a sense of accomplishment and increased energy and satisfaction throughout the day.

**Create a Cohort and Stay Connected.** You can create your own supportive network of colleagues, fellow work-at-home buddies, or like-minded individuals relatively simply through social media groups, planned meet-ups, or even text-chat groups. You can identify people who share your needs or perspectives, gather them into a group, and benefit from that group! This group can feel like a lifeline when you need someone who understands or want to feel like part of a supportive community.

**Reward Yourself.** You can do this by breaking down your tasks into smaller goals and then rewarding yourself for taking each step. (Hint: Rewards don't need to be food-based to be rewarding!)

**Get Comfortable Saying No.** You'll be faced with many requests, most of which you need to refuse if you want to have enough time to get everything done. It can be surprisingly difficult to say no to people you don't really owe your time to. We may think of their needs and see ourselves as a great answer for them, and not realize that saying yes to them means saying no to ourselves.

Condensed From: [verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com); written by Elizabeth Scott, MS

## Some financial support options:

<https://www.educationminnesota.org/member-benefits/your-pocketbook/Coronavirus-resources>

### Education Minnesota - Discounts

Coronavirus resources. With the COVID-19 pandemic, our world is changing daily. Not only has our work changed but finances may be tight, retirement plans may have changed and paying bills may be difficult or impossible.

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

## **Announcements:**

- Education Minnesota Representative Convention – Sat., April 25 10:00 am – noon
- AHEM Representative Assembly – Mon., April 27, 4:45 pm
- School Board Meeting – Mon., April 27, 6:30 pm
- AHEM Scholarship Application Deadline – Fri., May 1.
- AHEM Executive Board – Mon., May 11, 4:45 pm
- School Board Mtg. – Mon., May 11, 6:30 pm
- AHEM Election Voting – Wed., May 13, through Thurs., May 14
- Last Dues Deduction – Friday, May 15
- AHEM Rep. Assembly – Mon., May 18, 4:45 pm
- Memorial Day Holiday – Mon., May 25
- School Board Mtg. – Tues., May 26, 6:30 pm