

AHEM Friday Blast

Valerie Holthus, President

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Minnesota Department of Education vaccination FAQ, received from Education Minnesota, based on questions received from our members, followed by Anoka-Hennepin's procedures.

- 1. If educators signed up for vaccination and got waitlisted last week or the previous week, do they need to sign up again to be eligible for a vaccine this week?** No. People who were waitlisted for appointments at Xcel/Roy Wilkins or any of the 35 community vaccination sites were transferred to the statewide list, and they are being contacted for appointments at the community sites based on the number of vaccine's available. Anoka-Hennepin has started using other vaccination providers, and when a vaccination becomes available through the alternative provider, the waitlisted member is sent an email with a google form asking for their phone number. Once the phone number has been authorized from the member, he/she will be contacted for an appointment.
- 3. If union locals want to know how many educators in their district have been vaccinated, how should they do this?** MDE is in the process of compiling this data for every district. If locals wish to gather their own information more quickly, it is strongly recommend making the survey anonymous, since some people may be reluctant to reveal this information about themselves with their names. AHEM will not be surveying their members, as this is private information, and lack of members reporting accurate information would invalidate survey results.
- 4. May school districts send a survey to staff asking whether they have been vaccinated?** Although districts are still unable to mandate vaccination because of the fact that vaccines remain in the emergency use authorization phase, it is likely that they will be allowed to ask staff whether or not they have been vaccinated or plan to get vaccinated. Districts should avoid asking questions that would require an employee to reveal information about a disability, such as whether an employee's reason for not getting the vaccine is due to their own health condition, unless the survey is anonymous. The District has no idea who have been vaccinated, as this information has not been provided by the state, based on AHEM's meeting with the District Administration on 2/11/21, they will not be surveying their employees.



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Congratulations to **Michelle Sharon, Rum River Elementary**, last week's winner of a Caribou gift card for submitting a preference for this Fall's Convocation Celebration.

Results of the survey were:

A live simulcast: 43%

A pre-recorded message to be played when convenient: 46%

No convocation: 11%

Meeting held at a High School for face-to-face gathering: 0%



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5. **Are student teachers or teacher candidates currently eligible for vaccines through the educator pilot project?** No. The current pilot program seeks to vaccinate school employees first. Education Minnesota believes that student teachers working in-person should be prioritized along with school employees due to the fact that they have similar exposure to the virus, and we will continue to advocate for their inclusion in the pilot program.
6. **We are hearing reports of school staff who have no direct contact with students getting vaccinated ahead of educators working in person. Is this permissible?** Districts were supposed to prioritize staff working in person and those with at-risk conditions, but in order to get as many educators and school employees vaccinated as possible, the subsequent registration was open to all school employees and selection has been randomized in order to ensure that all open appointments are filled. Education Minnesota continues to advocate that priority be given to staff working in person, those with underlying health conditions putting them at greater risk or other risk factors such as staff over the age of 65, and staff with household members at increased risk of severe illness due to COVID. **Anoka-Hennepin is currently receiving vaccinations at the rate of 25-50 per day. The ranking priorities are: 1. Age, 2. SPED staff in Level III and IV programs, early education programs, alternative high school programs, 3. Full-time primary teachers.**
7. **Are districts required to pay staff mileage or provide release time for staff to get vaccinated or participate in the in-school COVID testing?** All staff should be allowed to use their paid sick leave, or COVID/FFCRA leave (if extended) for both vaccination and COVID testing if it occurs during work hours. We have asked MDE to discourage districts from requiring staff to schedule vaccine or testing appointments outside of school hours. Some districts are paying employees' mileage to travel to testing or vaccination sites, which we strongly support. If you are denied the ability to use your sick leave for either vaccination or COVID testing, please contact Valerie.Holthus@edmn.org or David.kundin@edmn.org or Laura.bratland@edmn.org.
8. **Will Anoka-Hennepin follow state guidelines when determining instructional model for secondary schools?** **Yes. Currently the state guidelines indicate the 14-day case rate per 10,000 people in Anoka County puts secondary in hybrid for covid cases 10 to less than 30.**
9. **Will the State continue to require the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment be given to our students?** **Yes, the MCAs will still be required, and counselors at the secondary level will be given the dates soon.**

Statement from AFL/CIO President, Richard Trumka

Union approval ratings are near a 50-year high, and half of America's workers would join a union today if given the opportunity. Sadly, not enough unorganized workers have that chance. Employers and anti-worker politicians have rigged the system to make it as difficult as possible for workers to join together and form a union. The PRO Act would unrig the system by doing away with "right to work" laws and guaranteeing free and fair union elections across the country. It would penalize employers who punish workers for organizing. It's clear we need the PRO Act to put more power in the hands of working people.

Government Relations Update

Keep an eye out in the Education Minnesota all member emails, which keep us up-to-date on upcoming statewide virtual lobby days. This is a great way to learn a little at a time and talk directly with legislators from the luxurious comfort of your own living room. We will be advocating for education equity, with a special emphasis on recruiting and retaining educators of color. We will discuss the 2021 Increase Teachers of Color Act, along with racial equity aid, full-service community schools and trauma-informed professional development funding.



Here is the upcoming schedule for issue-based lobby days. Registration links for the Feb. 23 and later dates will be coming soon.

- Feb. 23: Early care and learning
- March 9: Education Minnesota policy priorities and budget update
- March 23: ESP Bill of Rights
- April 6: Education budget
- April 20: TBD

Aaron Balzer AHEM Government Relations Chairperson



Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota High School Senior Scholarship Program

Looking for a way to get more involved in YOUR union? Want to give away money? The scholarship committee is looking for some new members!

Scholarships are available for our member's high school senior who attends any public school.

Time commitment is two meetings (all virtual), and a few hours on your own in April to read essays.

It is AMAZING to see everything our members' kids are up to - you'll be reminded why we do what we do! Email Allison Hackenmiller if you are interested in joining.



Recommended Policy Option Range (14-day case rate per 10,000 people) Covid case rates have shown a significant drop in both counties since the last reporting period.

In-person learning for all students	0 to less than 10
Elementary in-person, Middle/high school hybrid	10 to less than 20
Both hybrid	20 to less than 30
Elementary hybrid, Middle/high school distance	30 to less than 50
Both distance	50 or more

MN Dept. of Health: Case Rates per 10,000, Based on 14-day Case Rate, Updated 2/4/21

1/10 – 1/23/21: Anoka County, 26.85 Hennepin County, 25.43

jwolfson.shinyapps.io: Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 14-day Case Rate by County
Updated 2/10/2021

Anoka: 23.3 Hennepin County 21.2



Travelling During Spring Break?

The Center for Disease Control may have a Few Expectations if you travel internationally. **Domestic travel does not have the same recommendations.**

If you participated in activities such as attending large gatherings, being in crowds, going into bars or restaurants or using public transportation such as airports during your travel, the following is recommended: Get tested 3-5 days after travel **AND** stay home for 7 days after travel. Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days. If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel. Avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness for 14 days, whether you get tested or not. Please check with your supervisor or the CDC website for more information.

VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE

AHEM Elections Timeline:

7:00 a.m. Feb. 24	Online voting for Treasurer, changes to Constitution and Bylaws and QComp opens. Via A-H email before or after duty day, or during duty-free lunch.
6:00 p.m. Feb. 25	Online voting closes.
February 26	Unofficial results via email or Friday Blast.
March 1	Rep. Assembly meeting, election results certified.

Education Minnesota Representative Convention



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The Representative Convention is our highest governing body, with more than 600 elected delegates from across the state meeting annually to set policy for the union. The 2021 RC will be held as a virtual meeting on one day only, Saturday, April 24.

Locals must submit names to Education Minnesota no later than 5 p.m. Friday, April 23. AHEM is allowed to send 35 members to the state convention where delegates vote on new business items, budget, and constitution/bylaws. Elections are held for any open offices including national delegates and NEA Board of Directors. Please email Jennifer.Adriaens@edmn.org to register.

2021 NEA Convention will be held as a virtual event in 2021.

The National Education Association Representative Assembly is currently planned to be held virtually July 2-6. Last year the convention was also held virtually, and the daily commitment to be live on line was greatly reduced from when the convention was held in person. If you are interested in attending, please email valerie.holthus@edmn.org.

National Education Association Conference is the primary legislative and policymaking body of the Association and derives its powers from, and is responsible to, the membership. The Representative Assembly adopts the strategic plan and budget, resolutions, the Legislative Program, and other policies of the Association. Delegates vote by secret ballot on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. Those delegates with full voting rights elect the executive officers, Executive Committee members, and at-large members of the NEA Board of Directors.

Noticed the Education Minnesota Ad Campaign on TV?

A message from President Denise Specht:

I wanted to give you a heads up that the latest phase in our “Believe in ‘We’” paid media campaign debuts this week through a series of new ads that began airing online this weekend and on statewide television.

The new phase is titled “Gratitude,” and the ads feature our members thanking Minnesotans for persevering through the “unreal” school years we’ve had in 2020 and 2021. Based on feedback from our Unity Table and research we have conducted on messaging, we are using these ads to build momentum and goodwill with the public as we prepare for the serious funding asks we will be making this legislative session.

“Gratitude” is the first three online ads, each a 15-second spot. These ads will appear on social media, on video sites such as YouTube and various targeted websites: “Bandwith” “Study Buddies” “Cameo Appearances”. More ads featuring more members will debut over the next several days. As I indicated above, the purpose of the current campaign is to strike a tone of unity and empathy with the public. We approach this in a hopeful, lighthearted and fun way that recognizes all of the challenges and craziness these last two academic years have brought.

Our members have led our students, families and communities through an unprecedented era of education, and we want to show Minnesota that we appreciate all we’ve gone through together. Later this Winter and into the Spring, the media campaign will present more hard-hitting messages about the funding needs of our schools. Research shows us those messages will resonate better if we first remind the public that we understand the challenges and are on the same page with them in a mission to make our schools better. You can check out all the ads on Education Minnesota’s YouTube page, and more information is available at the ad campaign website: BelieveInWeMN.com/Gratitude.

Sign up for the Fund Our Futures virtual rally with Gov. Walz!

Whether we’re Black or white, Latino or Asian, Indigenous or immigrant, we know that when we all contribute, we can make Minnesota a great place to live for all of us. But for too long, certain politicians have fueled the divisions between us while allowing the biggest corporations and richest 1% to get away without paying their fair share.

But it doesn’t have to be that way. By coming together, we can build a state where we all can be safe, healthy, no exceptions. Join more than 1,000 Minnesotans for a virtual rally with Gov. Tim Walz and legislative leadership to discuss raising the revenue necessary to build welcoming schools that work for every student, and communities where all families can thrive and succeed.

The event will include a briefing on Education Minnesota’s effort to win full funding for racially just schools and small group meetings with your neighbors and state lawmakers in your legislative district.

What: Fund Our Futures: Virtual Lobby Day and Rally With Gov. Tim Walz

When: 4-7 p.m., Feb. 25

Where: Via Zoom. Once registered, the Zoom link will be sent to you prior to the rally.

Please cut and paste the sign-in link in your browser to register:

<https://web.cvent.com/event/f4aea28c-f454-42a8-a79b-1ebf90ec9cf3/regProcessStep1>

UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

❖ Announcements:

- Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14 ... Spread the Love
- President's Day, Monday, February 15, No School ... Wear your aviators!
- All Secondary Students Return to Hybrid Model, Tuesday, February 16
- School Board Meeting, Monday, February 22, 6:30, SEC
- AHEM Elections, Electronic Voting, Tuesday & Wednesday, February 23 and 24
- AHEM Representative Assembly, Monday, March 1, 4:45
- Meet and Confer, Wednesday, March 3, 5:30, ESC
- AHEM Executive Board Meeting, Monday, March 8, 4:45
- School Board Work Session, Monday, March 8, 5:30, ESC
- End of Trimester 2, March 12
- Daylight Savings Time Begins, Sunday, March 14
- Spring Break, March 15 – 19
- No students, Grading Day/Staff Planning, March 22
- School Board Meeting, Monday, March 29, 6:30, SEC

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