

AHEM Friday Blast

Valerie Holthus, President

4/9/2021

Vol.3 No. 27

NEGOTIATIONS NOTEBOOK

What's going on with negotiations right now?



The negotiations team held online outreach meetings with members the last two weeks. Thank you to all of you who attended and shared your thoughts. The questions and ideas shared by members at these meetings will be used to help refine goals and priorities as we head to the bargaining table with the district this summer.

In some ways, however, the bargaining process is already starting. Over the next month or so, the Minnesota legislature will complete its work to develop a budget for the next two years. The final budget has a significant impact on the negotiations process and what can be achieved at the bargaining table. If you have not done so yet, the team urges you to sign the petition to protect and fully fund our schools at the legislature. When we go to the bargaining table, we all go together as one. Making our voices heard at the state level is one step we can all make in the larger process.

NEGOTIATIONS KNOWLEDGE

Group Insurance - Article XI, pages 18-20

Article XI covers various types of insurance coverage bargaining group members are eligible for as employees in the district. Section 2 defines the contribution the district will make towards single, family, and dual spouse coverage health insurance premiums for bargaining group members. During negotiations, it is these "district contributions" that are discussed. The amounts in the present contract have been modified by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed last year to increase the contributions to the levels that exist this year.

The specifics of the health insurance plan, such as which insurance provider we have, what the copays are, and what services are covered at what level are not a part of the contract. Those details are set by the district as part of the documents governing the insurance plan itself.



Boycott Marathon Petroleum Corporation, Speedway Gas Stations Urged

"The Saint Paul Building Trades announced a boycott of Speedway gas stations to call attention to Marathon's labor practices." They not only locked out their refinery workers, they are replacing them with out-of-state workers who lack training and experience.

"The company has put profits over the livelihoods of local workers and the safety of surrounding communities", said Joe Fowler, business manager of Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local 563.



**THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**



AHEM EARLY ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota is now offering an Early Enrollment program. If you are **not** currently an AHEM member, the Early Enrollment program is a great opportunity to pledge your membership for the 2021-2022 school year and gain access to many member benefits immediately (with full access starting Sept. 1) without paying dues until October 2021. To enroll in the program use the link below to complete the application:

<https://join.nea.org/minnesota/>

Unemployment Seminar

At its March 29, 2021, School Board meeting, the Anoka-Hennepin School Board approved non-renewing over 260 probationary teachers. Teachers, under contract with the District, should continue to receive benefits and compensation through the end of the 2020-21 school year, which includes full pay, plus health and dental insurance benefits, until August 30, 2021.

Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota is offering a virtual seminar presented by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development designed to assist non-renewed AHEM colleagues with information on economic benefits available as well as information on Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB) available during this difficult period.

If you are in need of additional information, please reach out to your Education Minnesota Field Staff David Kundin at David.Kundin@edmn.org or Laura Bratland at Laura.Bratland@edmn.org.

If you would like to attend the virtual seminar **May 12th at 4:30pm** please register with this link:

<https://forms.gle/TEH9YP8vC95zPaos6>

Please Sign the Petition!

You have likely received this postcard in the mail describing an action we can take against the decades of underfunding that have led to cuts and layoffs in our schools. About 75 percent of district funding comes from the legislature. That money funds programs for our students and funds our contracts – it's now 11.8 percent less than it was in 2003 in real dollars. Our petition puts the legislature and the governor on notice that we will not accept cuts to education. Our goal is 50,000 educators and 90% of your worksite signing the petition statewide. Funding effects our entire community - ask parents, friends, family and other members of your community to sign too.

Join together with educators and sign our petition!

We all want similar things, including welcoming public schools that allow all children to thrive and pursue their dreams. But decades of chronic underfunding has school districts across Minnesota preparing for harmful budget cuts next school year. Educators can prevent that if we act NOW and make sure the Legislature does its job and protects our public schools. State budget decisions this May will affect your class sizes, mental health supports in your schools and your paycheck.

#mnleg #edmnvotes



Government Relations Update

Aaron Balzer, AHEM Government Relations Committee Chair was among 20 people who testified on the subject of underfunding and vouchers at a Senate Hearing this week along with Heather Mueller, MN Education Commissioner, the director of the Perpich Center (which this bill would eliminate), superintendents, diversity advocacy and nonprofit leaders.

Aaron's Testimony:

School Underfunding and Vouchers

Senate Committee Testimony 4/6/21

Aaron Balzer, School Psychologist

Anoka Hennepin Schools

"Esteemed members of the Senate, my name is Aaron Balzer, a School Psychologist with Anoka-Hennepin Schools for the past 20 years. Thank you for allowing me to speak today. I've worked hard with administration on school safety, improving paraeducator retention and mental health supports. It is clear to me that we have just enough to prevent the 'big behaviors' but not enough to ever get at enabling 'big learning' for disadvantaged students. Today, underfunding is at a crisis level. State education spending is now at about 12% less in real dollars compared with 2003. We can talk about any improvement we like within education but in the end, we do not have the resources to do what is needed, nor even what is required. This bill doesn't provide these resources; in fact, it cuts public schools by \$300 million.

Supporters say vouchers, or an Education Savings Account as they're called in this bill, give the option for parents to take their kids out of failing schools. The truth is, schools are not failing, the state is failing to fund our schools and expecting local taxpayers to make up for a regressive tax structure. In the 1990's, Minnesota education routinely ranked with the highest states in the country. We also ranked in the top for funding. Today, we are 23rd in educational funding. Guess where we rank in test performance? You guessed it, about 23rd. Money is required for good results. Vouchers do not raise revenue.

So, what do we need to fund? Hybrid learning has taught us that kids need timely support from their own teacher. Smaller class sizes support both emotional well-being and learning. Second, fund adequate support staff. The pandemic has exacerbated the preexisting mental health crisis we all face. There is an inadequate pipeline for training mental health staff and inadequate funding to keep mental health professionals, such as the School-Based Mental Health Therapists, in our buildings. Please fund our schools to help keep our state the national leader in education it has been known to be. Thank you."

Thank you, Aaron!



Here is the upcoming session timeline and schedule for AHEM specific lobby events. All lobby events will be held virtually, and times are typically at the end of the elementary school day. Registration links will be coming soon, or contact Janie.Hemmeln@edmn.org for the link to register.

April 9: Third Committee Deadline, committees must act favorably on major appropriation and finance bills in order for the bill to pass.

April 20: Lobby Event – With Senator Jerry Newton, Rep. Nolan West and Rep. Erin Koegel.

May 11: AHEM Lobby Event

May 17: Adjournment

Recommended Policy Option Range (14-day case rate per 10,000 people). Daily covid case rates have shown a significant increase in case rates in both Anoka and Hennepin Counties since the last reporting period. How decisions are made about instructional models has changed, and will now be made at the building level, rather than at the District level.

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 4/8/21
3/14 – 3/27/21: Anoka County, 37.07 Hennepin County, 33.46

jwolfson.shinyapps.io: Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 14-day Case Rate by County
Updated 4/7/2021

Anoka: 52.2 Hennepin County 42.8

Education Minnesota Representative Convention

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 Education Minnesota Representative Convention Agenda, Saturday, April 24

1. Call to order
2. Credentials report
3. Approval of the rules
4. Approval of the agenda
5. Chair's report
6. National NEA President Becky Pringle
7. AFT Pres. Randi Weingarten
8. Amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws
9. Action Items
10. Closing Remarks

Award winners announced for 2021 Rep. Conv.

The Peterson-Schaubach Outstanding Leadership Award is awarded to **Kim Davidson, Crookston.**

The We Are One Solidarity Award

is awarded to the **Saint Paul Federation of Educators.**

Congratulations to the award recipients! There will be a separate award ceremony on May 13. More details about the award ceremony will be announced in an upcoming RC Update.

Retirement Congratulations

Correction: Kathleen Eaton, is retiring from Hoover, not Wilson, as incorrectly reported last week. Sorry, Katie!

		<u>Effective Date</u>
Jean King	Johnsville Elem.	6/11/21
Val Weaver	Andover HS	6/11/21
Sandra Youngmark	Coon Rapids HS	6/11/21
Susan Zemlin	Blaine HS	6/11/21
Cynthia Zidar	Sandburg Educational Center	6/11/21
Virginia Trawick	Wilson Elem.	6/11/21
Mike Hecker	Andover HS	6/11/21
Jeanne Ness	Jackson MS	6/11/21

Retirees: If you would like to have your retirement party announced here in the Friday Blast, please email valerie.holthus@edmn.org.

Union Sisters, Brothers, and Siblings,



We are at it again with giving away nutritious food! Working Partnerships has partnered with the USDA's federal "Farmers to Families" program to help get food out to our members and the community. We have given away a total of 2,100+ boxes of food over the last two events and donated 500 boxes to be redistributed. We are aiming for the month of April to give away 4,000 boxes.

April 17th – SEIU 26: 826 18th Ave NE. Mpls. MN 55418

They will be starting around 9:30/10am and Monica Mendez is the contact. She can be reached at (612) 843-6313 or bmendez@seiu26.org.

April 17th – IBEW 292 is having one at their local building located at 6700 W Broadway Ave. Brooklyn Park, MN. 55428. They will be starting around 10/10:30am and I will be your contact.

April 24th – Wayman AME Church is having another one and their location is 1221 7th Ave No. Mpls. MN. 55411 They will be starting around 9am and I will be your contact.

Covid Safety Plan:

We will have folks work in "pods" of 2. In their groups of 2/3, their partner(s) should be with someone they are already cohabitating with, or feel safe to work alongside them. Volunteers should expect a 2-3 hour shift.

Please contact me, KerryJo, at the information below.

KerryJo Felder, Organizer

Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation

Cell: (818) 720-7347

Email: kerry@minneapolisunions.org

UPCOMINGEVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

❖ Announcements:

- April 12: Elementary Specialists Meeting, 5:30
- April 13: AHEM attending District Insurance Advisory Comm. 4:00 p.m.
- April 13: LCAT meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- April 13: Negotiations team to meet with EdMN Metro Area Council, 5:30 p.m.
- April 14: Negotiations Team Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
- April 15: PD, English Learners, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
- April 17: Food Giveaway Event, 6700 West Broadway, Brooklyn Park, 10:00 a.m.
- April 17: Food Giveaway Event, 826 18th Ave. N.E. Mpls., 10:00 a.m.
- April 19: Rep Assembly, 4:45 p.m., Zoom
- April 20: Lobby Day with Sen. Newton, Rep. Koegel and Rep. West 4:30 p.m.
- April 20: Minneapolis Regional Labor Fed., Education Advisory Comm. 5:30 p.m.
- April 21: Administrative Professional's Day
- April 23: Education Minnesota Governing Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- April 24: Education Minnesota Representative Convention 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- April 24: Food Giveaway Event, 1221 7th Ave. No., Mpls., 9:00 a.m.
- April 26: School Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m., SEC
- May 5: Meet and Confer with the School Board
- May 10: Executive Board Meeting, 4:45
- May 10: School Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m., SEC
- May 11: AHEM Virtual Lobby Event with Sen. Limmer, Rep. Vang, Sen. Eaton
- May 12: Unemployment Seminar, with Liz McLoone, MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), 4:30 p.m., Zoom
- May 17: Legislative Session Ends
- May 17: AHEM Representative Assembly, 4:45

Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota Local 7007
3200 Main St. Suite 360
Coon Rapids, MN 55448
(763)421-9110