

# AHEM Friday Blast

Valerie Holthus, President

4/30/2021

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## IMPORTANT!

There are two things AHEM needs to help you with if you have experienced either of these two incidents:

1. AHEM and the District entered into an MOU to allow teachers who are forced to quarantine due to COVID exposure to get up to 80 hours of sick leave that does NOT count against a teacher's sick leave. The District could cancel this MOU if they gave AHEM notice at least two weeks prior to the end of the month that the MOU would be cancelled.

The District sent this notice to AHEM on 4/19/21 and seeks to cancel the MOU by April 30, 2021. Clearly, April 19 is NOT two weeks prior to the end of April. Given that defective notice, AHEM filed a grievance this week, and we need to know if any members have been granted sick leave under this MOU that will extend into May, or if any members have been denied this sick leave in May, due to the District's flawed attempt to cancel this MOU.

If you or know of such members being impacted by this, please have them contact either David Kundin ([david.kundin@edmn.org](mailto:david.kundin@edmn.org)) or Laura Bratland ([laura.bratland@edmn.org](mailto:laura.bratland@edmn.org)).

2. You need to contact field staff, [David.Kundin@edmn.org](mailto:David.Kundin@edmn.org) or [laura.bratland@edmn.org](mailto:laura.bratland@edmn.org). if you are a probationary teacher and received a non-renewal notice that includes the following language:

**“The decision to terminate your contract is based on a determination that your performance did not meet the standard for teaching that is required in the District. This termination is pursuant to Minnesota Statute 122A.40, Subdivision 5.”**

## Final Meet and Confer of the Year

Please plan on attending the last Meet and Confer of the year held on Wednesday, May 5 from 5:30 - 7:00. It will be at the ESC, and a virtual option on Zoom, as well. Meet and Confer is in our contract, so we have the contractual right to have the Board's undivided attention to listen to our concerns and hear our ideas. Show support for your fellow union members by being there. Here is the link to register: <https://forms.gle/GJLtZpA2ru3cJZZi9>



## Teachers May Work Remotely on June 11

Teachers will be able to work remotely on the last day of school, per the MOU that was signed between AHEM and the District.

Teachers have the discretion to work remotely on the June 11th grading day with the exception of being present to follow any required checkout procedures with their supervisor.



**THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**

## **MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> – INTERNATIONAL WORKER’S DAY** We often take for granted the hard-earned labor union rights we enjoy such as:

**Collective bargaining:** the power to negotiate for better pay and benefits. Union members get about 20% more in wages compared to workers who are not unionized. A single teacher would have no power to negotiate their salary or health insurance or make necessary changes in their district, but banding together with other teachers provides a voice to all. The voices AHEM members had on several committees this past year helped push through several safety changes and improvements in working environment issues. Contract negotiations are beginning soon, and we will be able to flex our unified power starting with examining high quality yet more affordable health insurance options for ourselves.

**Political Organizing:** Local (School Boards), State and National Lawmakers determine almost every aspect of our jobs from the number of days we work to the content we teach to the funding our Districts receive which ultimately determines the available dollars for teachers’ compensation. This past election cycle, educators across the state used their political power to vote in supporters of public education. AHEM also screens candidates and decides on who to endorse.

**Due Process:** A fair, systematic procedure for discipline issues and employment practices protects teachers from losing their jobs or being subjected to the unreasonable whims of an administrator’s senseless actions. Fortunately, because of our contractual rights, AHEM has only had to step in a few times this past year in cases such as this. Legal representation is also provided to members free of charge.

**Economic Trend Setting:** The gains made by teacher labor unions have spilled over to other non-union labor forces, such as a 40-hour workweek, health and retirement benefits, etc. AHEM teachers’ contractual gains are seen in other labor agreements from various bargaining groups within the Anoka-Hennepin District. Unionized workers also contribute more in tax revenue, rely less on welfare and enjoy more sustainable jobs.

**High-Quality Workforce:** Teachers who belong to a union have a greater degree of professionalism, and are serious about the quality, maintenance and continuation of the profession. AHEM is dedicated to offering professional development opportunities for teachers to earn re-licensure credits, and also offers a very popular Equity training (SEED) that includes an option of earning college credit. AHEM members also form half of the QComp program’s steering committee members.

**International Workers' Day** commemorates the lives lost leading to labor movement gains. In 1886 on May 1, a strike for the eight-hour workday in Chicago came to be known as the Haymarket affair.

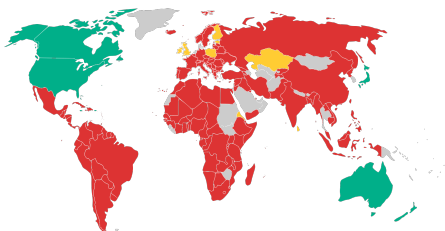
The clash of the police and workers led to the deaths of seven police officers and at least thirty-eight civilians; sixty police officers were injured, as were 115 civilians. Hundreds of labor leaders and sympathizers were later rounded-up and four were executed by hanging. The following day in Milwaukee, the state police fired on a crowd of strikers killing seven.

The anniversary of the Chicago protests were recognized around the world and spurred several protests for workers’ rights typically occurring on May 1. May Day has been formally recognized as an annual event and the day is one of the most important holidays in many countries to this day. May Day celebrations in these countries

typically feature elaborate workforce parades.

The countries in red celebrate Labor Day on May 1st, green countries celebrate Labor Day in September, yellow recognize labor on a different day, and gray do not have a labor day.

*Resources: Wikipedia.org and History.com/haymarket riot*



## Minnesota Workers Memorial Garden



The next time you are on the State Capitol grounds, find the Workers Memorial Garden, located southeast of the Capitol building. In this mural, you will see teachers in their classroom with their students as a well-deserved tribute to the work and importance of public education in our great state.

On the memorial are words from “Freedom’s Plow”, by Langston Hughes: "Free hands and slave hands, indentured hands, adventurous hands, white hands and black hands held the plow handles, axe handles, hammer handles, launched the boats and whipped the horses that fed and housed and moved America. Thus together through labor, all these hands made America."

This memorial is dedicated to all Minnesotans that have given their lives in the workplace. The stone and porcelain mural, created and installed by Saint Paul artist Craig David was completed in spring 2016, along with the final inscription acknowledging those major Minnesotan disasters that caused numerous fatalities. The memorial was re-dedicated in that year, again with keynote by former **Vice-President Walter Mondale**, whose words from 2010 were also captured on the wall.

Resources: *Minnesota AFL/CIO and State of Minnesota Websites*

## *Education Minnesota Teacher of the Year Award*

*ST. PAUL, Minnesota. April 27, 2021* – Nine teachers from across the state have been named finalists in the 2021 Minnesota Teacher of the Year program. There were 75 Teacher of the Year candidates for this program year. **AHEM also had three candidates who were chosen as semifinalists: Paul Heida, Anoka High School; Joleen Lundin, Madison Elementary; and Jamie Weisz, Champlin Park High School.** The selection panel is tentatively scheduled to meet in June to conduct individual interviews with each of the nine finalists and to cast votes for the 2021 Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

Education Minnesota, the statewide educators union, organizes and underwrites the Teacher of the Year program. The Minnesota Teacher of the Year Program also receives support from the following organizations: Education Minnesota ESI, Educators Lifetime Solutions, EFS Advisors, Harvard Club of Minnesota Foundation, SMART Technologies, MREA and United Educators Credit Union. The 2021 Minnesota Teacher of the Year finalists, listed alphabetically by name along with district, school, subject and grade(s) taught, are:

**Layne Bell**, Hopkins Public Schools, Hopkins High School – Hopkins Achievement Program alternative program, language arts, 9th-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Natalia Benjamin**, Rochester Public Schools, Century High School, EL and ethnic studies, 9th - 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Kim Marty–Goblirsch**, Medford Public Schools, Medford High School, language arts, 9th-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Todd Hunter**, Anoka-Hennepin School District, Anoka High School, science, 10th-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Eugenia Popa**, Saint Paul Public Schools, Harding Senior High School, ESL, 9th-12<sup>th</sup>.

**France Roberts**, Wayzata Public Schools, Meadow Ridge Elementary School, elementary education, 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Sandra Stephens**, South Washington County Schools, Nuevas Fronteras Spanish Immersion, elementary education.

**Jessica Stewart**, Osseo Area Schools, Osseo Senior High School, social studies, 9th-12<sup>th</sup>.

**Lauren Wheeler**, Minneapolis Public Schools, Thomas Edison High School, fitness for life/health, 9th-12<sup>th</sup>.

# Government Relations Update

## Who funds our future?



Proposed K-12 spending increase for FY 2022-23  
Sources: Minnesota Senate Counsel, Research and Fiscal Analysis; Governor's Office; Legislative Services



The Senate proposal is unacceptable and reinforces that the Senate has no interest in fixing the 12% reduction in state funding facing MN public schools since 2003. Write to your Senator today!

May 11: AHEM Lobby Event

May 17: Adjournment

AHEM and Osseo members met with Samantha Vang (40B), Rep. Cedrick Frasier (45A) and Senator Warren Limmer (34) on Tuesday. There was a good mental health discussion, including staffing ratios and Mental Health Therapist pay. Thank you to Allison Hackenmiller, Media Specialist at CPHS for contributing to the discussion. Racism in Brooklyn Center was also a big topic, including improving the diversity of educators, the unfairness of exams for immersion school teachers who tend to be Tier I-III. Our last Lobby Day is scheduled for May 11th, a reschedule for District 37.

**Legislative Action:** The House and Senate education omnibus bills are in conference committee this week. The House version adds \$722 million to public education while the Senate version adds \$152 million, while also subtracting \$300 million to private school vouchers. **The house version adds \$22.4 million to Anoka-Hennepin, or \$384 per pupil. The Senate adds \$6.3 million, or \$92 per pupil.** Call your Senator to advocate for education dollars today!

President Biden is proposing free preschool for all 3-4 year old children, a historic proposal that would benefit 5 million kids and save the average participating family \$13,000 per year.

**Census:** Minnesota narrowly held onto its 8th Congressional seat in the 2020 Census, beating out New York by only 89 people. The accuracy of this census has been questioned for many reasons, such as originating at the time the pandemic started and concluding earlier than usual. This story may not be over as Governor Cuomo intends to fight the Census results any way possible.

Recommended Policy Option Range (14-day case rate per 10,000 people). Daily covid case rates have shown a leveling off in the last week in case rates in both Anoka and Hennepin Counties. How decisions are made about instructional models has changed, and will now be made at the building level, rather than at the District level. [MN Dept. of Health: Case Rates per 10,000, Based on 14-day Case Rate, Updated 4/29/21](#)

4/4 – 4/17/21:

Anoka County, 68.04

Hennepin County, 47.07

Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 14-day Case Rate by County Updated 4/29/2021

Anoka: 68.04

Hennepin County 47.07

# Retirement Congratulations

Deborah Louwagie Sandburg Education Center June 25, 2021

Retirees: If you would like to have your retirement party announced, please email [valerie.holthus@edmn.org](mailto:valerie.holthus@edmn.org).



And we are having a party!

*MaGillyCuddys Bar in Anoka  
(downstairs)*

May 20<sup>th</sup> 4 pm - 6 pm

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

### ❖ Announcements:

- May 1: Free Food Giveaway, Farmer's to Families
- 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
- May 12: Unemployment Seminar, with Liz McLoone, MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), 4:30 p.m., Zoom
- May 15: Rally at the Capitol for Full-funding Public Education
- May 17: Legislative Session Ends
- May 17: AHEM Representative Assembly, 4:4

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