

# AHEM Friday Blast

Valerie Holthus, President

5/14/2021

Vol.3 No. 31

## Sign our Petition

Join tens of thousands of Minnesota educators and sign our petition urging legislators to raise revenue to fully fund our schools.

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/protect-our-public-schools/>

When we join together, we have the power to transform public education. Share with your friends and on social media! Use the hashtags #mnleg and #edmnvotes

### Considering Cashing In Your Sick Days?

#### Think Again!

You have recently received an email from the District regarding sick leave buy-back. Allowing the District to buy back your sick days is not in your best interest. Sick days convert when you retire at your daily rate of pay the last year you work. If you take your annual salary and divide it by 187, you will see the value of a sick day. For those at the top of the pay schedule, it is almost \$500 a day. The amount the district is offering to pay you for cashing in your days is FAR LESS than that.

You never know if you would become ill, or must care for a family member that could require you to miss work. In addition, if you were hired after July 1, 1994, you can use the value of your unused sick days (above 90) to be allocated to the Health Care Savings Plan. This could help you retire earlier knowing you would have health coverage carrying you over to the age of receiving Medicare. If you were hired before July 1, 1994 you receive a severance. Please review pages 37 and 38 in your green working agreement (contract) regarding severance pay.



QComp  
Payout  
Will Be  
On  
Friday,  
June 18



**THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**

# Join together with educators and take action!

Gov. Tim Walz and House DFL leaders are taking strong first steps this session toward fully funding our schools. Senate Republicans? Not so much. Their plan puts no new money on the general formula, siphons money from public schools and will force districts to make harmful budget cuts and lay off staff.

**View our side-by-side comparison to see what is at stake this legislative session: <http://edmn.me/budgets>**

**#mnleg #edmnvotes**



*As you may know, Minnesota's political leaders are nearing the end of the legislative session that will determine public education funding for the next two years.*

*The state budget provides about 75 percent of funding for our public school districts, so their decisions directly affect the resources we have for students, and the contracts we are able to bargain. While Governor Walz and the Minnesota House have proposed increases in education funding, the Minnesota **Senate leadership favors a package that would transfer millions of dollars to private school vouchers and lead to more education cuts and layoffs.***

*That is why hundreds of Minnesotans will be gathering at the Capitol in St. Paul this Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. We will be calling on lawmakers to invest in public education and other vital public services.*

**Mileage reimbursement and meal reimbursement** will be provided by Education Minnesota. Please join us in the movement to fully fund equitable public education! You can RSVP at [www.edmn.me/fofrally](http://www.edmn.me/fofrally).

# 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



## Lobby Days

We held our last Lobby Day for district 37 on Tuesday with Senator Jerry Newton. Representative Erin Koegel joined us after session ended. Rep. Nolan West said he may join us after session, but did not. Discussion centered around public and mental health, recruiting and retaining educators of color and infrastructure.

Senator Newton stated that there's no chance the legislature will be wrapped up by deadline. With Minnesota slated to get 2.83 billion in one-time funding for state government from Federal Government relief, it is still unclear to him how it can be spent and there have been no talks or agreements about that. Both are supportive of fully funding public education.

**Legislative Action:** This is the last week of the MN Legislative session. Among the sessions of the last decade, this session is the most divided. Legislators have the task of passing substantial legislation regarding racism and police reform. There has been little compromise to date between Democratic and Republican priorities. Democrats want permanent public education increases while Republicans want to assign very limited one-time funds and move a substantial sum into education vouchers, a move that Democrats entirely reject, as it would move dollars away from public education to private schools. With a 12% reduction in overall MN Legislature spending on education over the past 20 years and a budget flush with cash, Democrats are less willing to compromise and accept the underfunding and erosion of our outstanding public school system.

**FDA Action:** The FDA approved the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine for kids 12-15 this week.

**Rally Action:** The time for the Rally for Education event at the Capitol has changed to 2PM on Saturday, May 15th. You can sign up at [www.edmn.me/fofrally](http://www.edmn.me/fofrally).

**SIGN OUR PETITION TODAY** calling on Gov. Tim Walz and state legislators to stave off cuts to school funding, address the disruptions to education caused by COVID-19 and start making strategic investments to fully fund welcoming schools that work for everyone.



## 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/>

### Ne **New ads debut this week**

The latest phase of our [“Believe in ‘We’”](#) paid media campaign debuted this week through a series of online and TV ads. These ads are part of our final push this legislative session to convince lawmakers to raise the revenue needed to fund our schools so that every student can pursue their dreams.

## Congratulations to AHEM Senior Scholarship Winners!

### \$500 Winners:

Mari Ann Whiteford      Parent: Carol Whiteford

Elsie Groebner    Parent: Peter Groebner

Noah Eklund    Parent: Kari Eklund

Hailey Shager    Parent: Amy Carroll

Ian Nguyen    Parent: Bich Lieu Nguyen

### \$750 Winners:

Sophie Czech    Parent: Steve Czech

Mackenzie Moe    Parent: Sara Haller

**MN Department of Education’s Safe Learning Plan will expire the first week of June. There will be a different plan starting for 2021 Summer Programming.**

Below is the current recommended Policy Option Range (14-day case rate per 10,000 people). Daily covid case rates have shown a significant decrease 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.

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 5/13/21

4/18 – 5/1/21:                      Anoka County, 53.48                      Hennepin County, 33.08

Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 14-day Case Rate by County Updated 5/12/2021

Anoka: 44.4      Hennepin County 26.7

## Member Rights Notes:

My biggest learning from the past year as Member Rights Chair can be summed up in advice I received from David Kundin: “When all else fails, read the instructions.” For instance, the best way to protect your rights is to know your contract. It’s 66 pages long. If you throw out the signature page, the table of contents, and the pay scale pages, it’s down to fewer than 60. The contract fits in a glove compartment, a work bag, a personal organizer, or a coat pocket. Carry it around.

Why? Hundreds of hours go into its creation. It is the single most important work product that AHEM creates. It is yours. And reading it will generate questions, which generate discussions, which generate relationships, which generate empathy, which generates unity. The union isn’t a thing, it’s people. And your contract is what connects you to the people with whom you build your career.

Peder Engebretson,  
AHEM Member Rights Chairperson

## Retirement Congratulations

Linda Aldis

Lincoln Elementary

June 11, 2021

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



*You're invited to a*  
**Retirement Party**  
*honoring*  
**Andy Owens**

*Come and celebrate Andy's 34 years of teaching,  
30 at Mississippi Elementary!*

**Tuesday, June 1st**

**4:15-6:00pm**

**Alloy Brewery**

*2700 Coon Rapids Blvd. NW Coon Rapids 55433*

*(Indoor and outdoor space open)*



RSVP by Tuesday, May 25th  
on Google Form ([click here](#))  
or  
to [Melissa.Bjerke@ahschools.us](mailto:Melissa.Bjerke@ahschools.us)



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

### ❖ Announcements:

- May 15: Rally at the Capitol for Full-funding Public Education
- May 17: Regular Legislative Session Ends
- May 17: AHEM Representative Assembly, 4:45
- May 19: Metro Area Council for Negotiators, 5:30 – 7:00
- May 21 – 22: Education Minnesota Governing Board Meeting
- May 24: School Board Meeting, SEC, 6:30
- May 31: Memorial Day
- June 2: Local Contract Action Team Meeting, 4:30 – 5:30
- June 7: AHEM Executive Board Meeting, 4:45
- June 8: AFL-CIO Midwest Regional Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- June 11: Grading Day, teachers may work from home, if possible.

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