



## ANOKA HENNEPIN LOCAL 7007

# Friday Blast

Valerie Holthus, President

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## Update of January 24 Meeting with District Administration

- **Our ask:** to compensate all staff for their extra work. **Update:** AH and AHEM has approved an additional MOU to increase the rate for elementary education teachers taking on additional students half or full day to \$220/day divided by the number of teachers absorbing the students. While we appreciate this additional compensation for elementary educators, we know that this does not address all staff at both elementary and secondary who are taking on extra workload due to the shortage. We will continue to work with the district on additional solutions for those staff.
- **Our ask:** provide staff with additional KN95 masks, and rapid testing kits. **Update:** AH district has ordered additional KN95 masks for all staff. The district has also ordered two (2) at home testing kits per educator. Both masks and testing kits will be made available to staff as soon as possible. Staff may also order four (4) testing kits for their home through the federal government; use [this link](#) to order yours today.
- **Our ask:** Move conferences to a virtual platform, and allow our educators to work from home during this time. **Update:** A survey was sent out to all elementary teachers asking their preference for virtual or in-person conferences. Results of those responding showed the majority, 66% wanting to allow the option of in-person conferences for families. Due to the survey results, the district will continue with their original plan of offering families both virtual and in-person options. We are disappointed that communication only went out to elementary teachers, as we had advocated for all levels, and not just elementary.
- **Our ask:** To move upcoming PD days to a virtual platform and allow our educators to work from home on those days. **Update:** The district responded that they had already contracted some speakers or consulting groups and part of their contract requires in-person attendance at their PD. Schools that are able to move virtual may do so, but the virtual PD will take place on-site.
- **Our ask:** First, those educators are not to be asked to work while taking sick

leave. Second, five (5) days of sick leave due to a member having COVID not be deducted from their sick leave bank. **Update:** Another MOU was agreed to that allows for five (5) paid sick days due to COVID that is not deducted from the employees sick leave bank, this MOU will be in effect between January 3 – March 11. The employee will be required to provide a lab certified positive covid test result beginning Feb. 4 to qualify for these days. AH agrees that staff should not work from home while out on sick leave, other than providing lesson plans that a sub can follow.

We appreciate the collaboration and many solutions that were agreed to with the Anoka Hennepin District Administration as a result of the hard work of our Union Member Engagement committee. While these are certainly steps in the right direction, we know there is still a steep hill ahead, and we will continue to advocate for our members in every corner of our district during what seems like the worst school year most of our educators have experienced in their career. We are thankful for the work that each one of you do for our students.

If you have questions or concerns please reach out to your Building Rep, Member Engagement Coordinator, or leadership at the Anoka Union Office.

## Two AHEM members are candidates for Minnesota Teacher of the Year!



***Mary Bretland***

Mary Betland, an English teacher at Jackson Middle School, and Megan Rafferty, an ESL teacher at Mississippi Elementary are two of the 77 candidates for the Minnesota Teacher of the Year program.

This year's program will name the 58th Minnesota Teacher of the Year. The program celebrates the tradition of excellence in teaching in Minnesota. Eligible candidates include pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade, Early Childhood Family Education and Adult Basic Education teachers, from public or private schools.

An independent panel of leaders in the fields of education, business, government, nonprofit and philanthropy will read candidates' portfolios over the next few weeks and narrow the list to a group of semifinalists. In March, the panel will convene again and review additional materials from the semifinalists to choose a group of finalists. Because of safety precautions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the scheduled Minnesota Teacher of the Year banquet, set for May 1 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre, could be postponed.

Organized and underwritten by Education Minnesota, the Minnesota Teacher of the Year program receives



**Megan Rafferty**

support from Education Minnesota ESI, Educators Lifetime Solutions, EFS Advisors, Harvard Club of Minnesota Foundation, SMART Technologies, and United Educators Credit Union.

## Trivia Question

### **Congratulations to the winners of last week's trivia question!**

*Every Contract, or Working Agreement, is printed with a colored cover. This past contract (2019-2021) was Bright Green, the last contract (2017-2019) was Goldenrod. What was the color of the contract before that (2015-2017)?*

#### **d. Bright Pink**

Congratulations to Lindsay King, Sunrise Elementary, Tracy Kiefer, Sorteberg Early Childhood Center and Renee Johnson, Anoka High School

### **This week's Question:**

First three correct answers will win a coffee gift card.

**Each year in October, Education Minnesota holds their state-wide conference. For many years it was called MEA, or Minnesota Education Association conference. Then for several years it was called something different. However, the term MEA still stuck, so the acronym "MEA" was reinstated and referred to as "Minnesota Educator Academy." What was the conference called between the times it was Minnesota Education Association Conference and Minnesota Educator Academy?**

- a. Minnesota Conference for Educators
- b. Education Minnesota Professional Conference
- c. Educators of Minnesota Conference
- d. Minnesota Educators Anonymous

Please email your answer to [valerie.holthus@edmn.org](mailto:valerie.holthus@edmn.org)

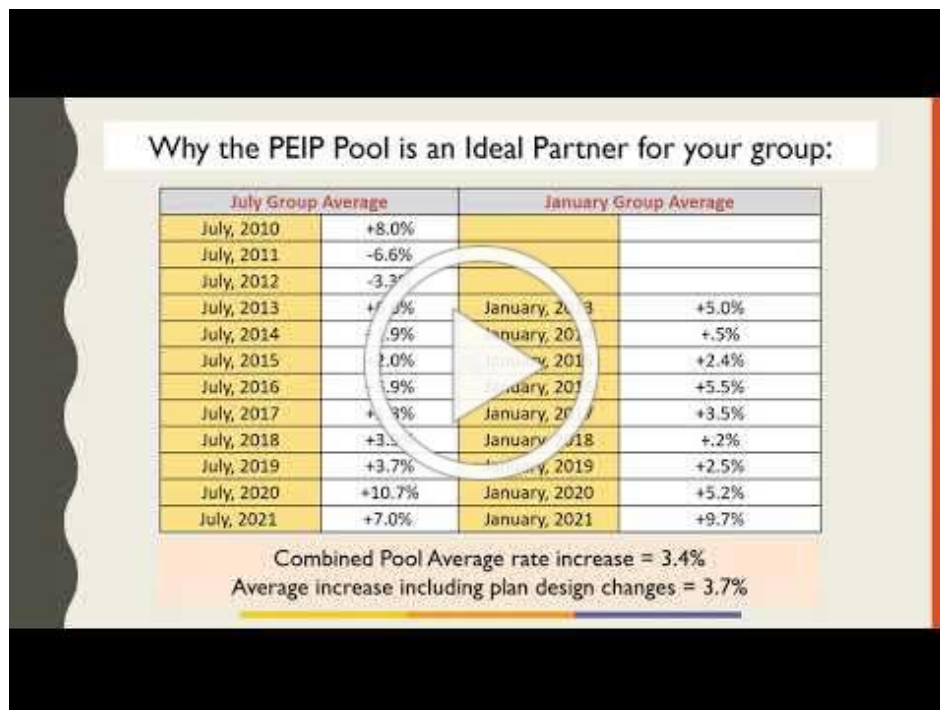
## We Now Have More Insurance Options

With the ratification of our recent contract, we have secured the right to move to PIEP should rates favor this move. AHEM both negotiates increased insurance

contributions from the district to our members, but our union also works with the district on providing the most affordable yet robust insurance plan for our members. It is important to be educated on our insurance options should we vote to move.

PEIP offers built-in features that make its insurance coverage affordable. First, PEIP combines public employee groups all over Minnesota to maximize insurance buying power and secure competitive rates that individual groups might be unable to negotiate on their own. Finally, PEIP's innovative Advantage plan designs keep medical costs under control -- and assures that health care dollars are used wisely.

View a PEIP introductory video here:



Please Contact the PEIP Committee at [AnokaHennepinEM@gmail.com](mailto:AnokaHennepinEM@gmail.com) if you have questions

## When Can I Afford to Retire Seminar

One of the many things Education Minnesota ESI Member Benefits provides for members are informational seminars. We will be holding a When Can I Afford to Retire virtual seminar for locals serviced out of the Anoka field office on Feb. 23 from 6-7 p.m. This seminar will focus on those with a TRA pension.

During your working career your income comes from your salary. In retirement, your income comes from three sources; a pension, Social Security and other savings you have such as a 403(b). Whether you are an early career educator or nearing retirement, this seminar has valuable information for you.

Attending a When Can I Afford to Retire seminar will:

- Provide a general overview of defined benefit pensions
- Increase member level of understanding of retirement benefits
- Assist members with next steps for future planning

Please register [here](#) if you plan to attend.

## Tell Cub Foods: Hands off Worker Benefits!

Dear Friends of the Labor Community,

In contract negotiations, BCTGM Local 22 in Minneapolis, Minn. has been fighting back demands by UNFI/Cub Foods to take away workers' retirement and health care benefits.

Despite Local 22's attempts to negotiate a fair contract, UNFI continues to insist that the workers sacrifice their union negotiated health care benefits and accept an inferior plan that could cost them thousands more per year in out-of-pocket costs. Additionally, the company wants to strip workers of their pensions and more.

Join the campaign to stop UNFI/Cub Foods from taking back from the workers!

[Click here to send an email to company executives!](#)

Tell them to keep away from workers' health and pension benefits!

The Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers, and Grain Millers International  
Union AFL-CIO CLC

## AHEM Clothing is Here!

**Every member is allowed \$25.00 to spend on union wear.**

How to place your AHEM Gear order (PLEASE read CAREFULLY!):

1. Click on this link to go to the web

store: <http://www.tornadoalleysportswear.com/anoka-hennepin>

2. Don't panic when all you see is this a prompt for a password: Simply enter the

**Web Store Password: 2022AHEM**



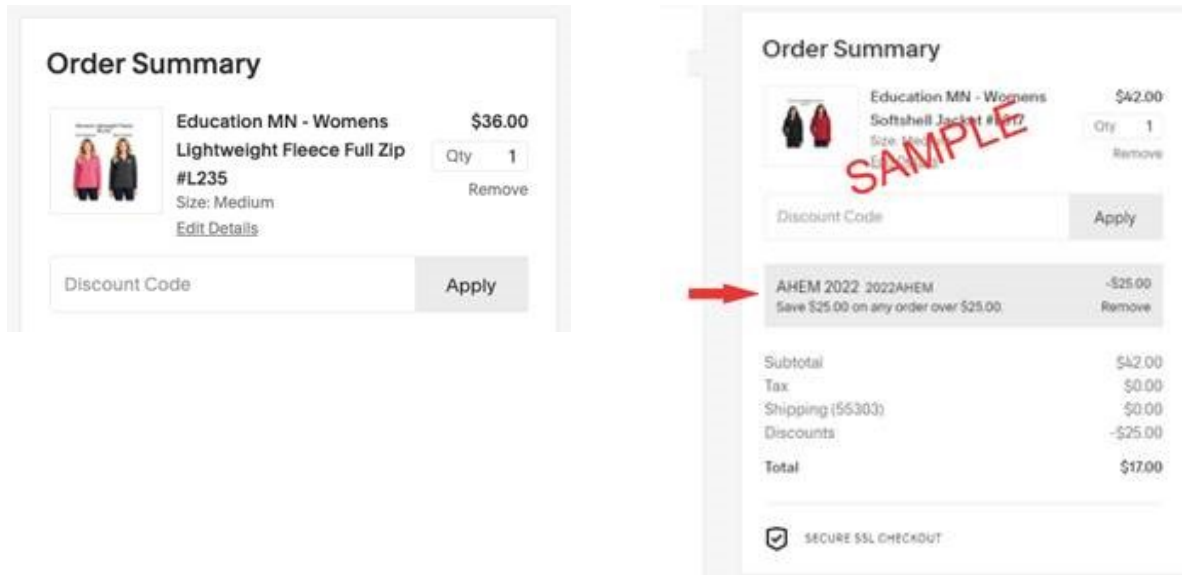
3. Pick your items. Everyone gets a \$25 credit at check-out.

4. When you are done selecting your items. Click on the cart icon.

5. On the **Order Summary** section ONLY, enter the **Discount**

**Code: 2022AHEM.**

6. DO NOT enter the Discount Code again, Even though there will be a spot for it. If you do, it will tell you the code has expired or already been used.



Happy ordering!

## New Communication Method

AHEM will begin using *Constant Contact* to send communications with our members instead of relying on the District e-mail system. Communicating through this platform should improve confidentiality of our messaging and allow us to communicate more effectively with you, our membership.

## Coming Up

- School Board WS, ESC, 5:30pm – Feb. 7
- Pay Day – Feb. 11
- Valentines Day – Feb. 14
- Presidents Day, District closed – Feb. 21
- **ESI: When Can I Afford to Retire virtual seminar**, 6 pm – Feb. 23
- School Board Meeting, 6:30pm, ESC – Feb. 28
- Executive Board, 4:45pm, AHEM – Feb. 28



***"A country is considered the more civilized the more the wisdom and efficiency of its laws hinder a weak man from becoming too weak or a***

*powerful one too powerful."*  
- Primo Levi

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