



ANOKA HENNEPIN LOCAL 7007

Friday Blast

Valerie Holthus, President

January 7, 2022 Vol 4 No. 14

Virtual Political Conference 2022

Our vote and our power to collectively bargain, stand up for fully funded schools and fight for racial justice

Overview: For democracy to work for all of us, every voter must have our voice heard and our vote counted. That includes all 86,000 educators in Minnesota in 2022. On Nov. 8, 2022, we will come together to vote for governor, attorney general, state legislators, school board members and other state offices.

REGISTER NOW!

- On Saturday, Jan. 29, join educators virtually from across Minnesota to kick-off a historic election campaign to get out the vote for collective bargaining rights, fully funded public schools and racial justice.
- Ask questions of Gov. Tim Walz, as a part of the 2022 Education Minnesota gubernatorial endorsement process.
- Attend two interactive sessions to gain an introduction to the most pressing issues to educators in 2022 and learn about our plan to get out the vote of every educator in Minnesota.

Trivia Question

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

The voice of the Grinch in the classic cartoon film of Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" is most famous for portraying what

This week's Question:

First three correct answers will win a coffee gift card.

By the end of this school year how many teachers have taught in Anoka-Hennepin for

Hollywood monster?

over 35 years?

Answer: A. Frankenstein

Congratulations to Duane Gast,
Hamilton, Holly Fenwick, Brookside,
Veronica Jacobson, Virtual Academy.

- a. 6 – 10
- b. 11-15
- c. 16 – 20
- d. 21 - 30

Please email your answer to
valerie.holthus@edmn.org



Important Public Service Loan Forgiveness, Student Loan Updates

Greetings, members!

We have important updates to share on student loans for all borrowers and for those who are working toward loan forgiveness under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

As you may have heard, the federal government on Dec. 22 extended its pause on student loan payments, interest accrual and student debt collection until May 1, 2022. This means borrowers now have until the end of April to make plans on how they will restart their payments -- a welcome relief as pandemic concerns sharpen.

Also in December, we received an update from Federal Student Aid on the **expanded loan forgiveness provisions that were enacted via a federal waiver** on Oct. 6. This update is critically important for those who are going to be participating in Public Service Loan Forgiveness. It also impacts all borrowers who are going to continue to participate in Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

Federal Student Aid has issued updated guidance on which repayment plans will qualify for forgiveness. For payments made before Sept. 30, 2021, **any repayment plan will count toward forgiveness**. You will still need to consolidate loans if they are not Direct Loans AND certify your employment. **But from Sept. 30, 2021 and onward, only income-driven repayment (IDR) plans will count toward forgiveness**. Once payments resume after the federal pause

ends on May 1, 2022, ongoing payments need to be made on an income-driven plan. This clarifies guidance previously issued by the feds.

If you are already enrolled in an income-driven repayment plan, you don't need to do anything else based on this update. You should be all set.

If you are not enrolled in an IDR plan, you can enroll in one now to make sure your future payments are eligible for forgiveness. You can apply online via your account on studentaid.gov.

Please direct any questions to our Degrees, Not Debt program at DND@edmn.org.

Thank you for the essential work you do.

Election 2022: Union Rights are on the Line!

Right now, the balance of power in our state government protects our rights to bargain collectively. **Election 2022 could change that.**

Conservative politicians want to revoke these rights as they did in Iowa and Wisconsin. They have a real chance of being elected in 2022 and we are likely to lose collective bargaining rights, **unless we vote!**

If Governor Walz were to lose the election, and an anti-union house and senate were to be elected, we would also see:

- No Prep-time subbing pay (as in non-union states)
- Cuts in Education funding
- Substandard contracts, low pay, and unaffordable insurance
- Large class sizes
- Unmet student needs

The Governor, Attorney General, MN House, MN Senate, are all up for reelection.

New educators and paraprofessionals are less likely to vote in mid-term elections. We cannot let that happen. Conservative politicians will try to divide us on race, class and the pandemic.

We cannot repeat the 2014 election when 33,000 of our own member educators skipped voting.

Here is what you can do to make a difference:

- Make sure you are **registered to vote**
- **Sign-up** to attend the half-day virtual political conference on Jan. 29, featuring a member Q & A forum with Governor Walz.
- Learn about EdMN endorsement process, where you get to help choose our candidates for 2022. All details at edmnvotes.org
- Lead get out the vote efforts in your building. Contact our Government Relations Chair & Get Out the Vote Leader, Aaron Balzer aaronbalzer@yahoo.com for more information.

AHEM COVID Protocol Survey

On Tuesday an email was sent to your home email address from Jennifer.Adriaens@edmn.org with the subject "AHEM Covid Protocol Survey." Please take the two-question survey by 10:00am Monday, January 10.

If you did not receive the survey at your home email address, please use the link below to enter a valid non-school email address:

<https://forms.gle/xWLRutycF2n8HG48>

New Communication Starting Soon

AHEM will begin using *Constant Contact* to send communications to avoid using the district email system. As you probably know, the district email system belongs to the district, and they have total access to our emails. Communicating through a different platform will ensure our emails remain completely confidential. Your building rep and/or your member engagement person will be given building member lists and they will ask you to verify your personal email. We hope you verify your home email to continue receiving your union's communications and be guaranteed that your personal email address will not be shared with anyone else.

Coming Up

- School Board Meeting – Jan. 10, 6:30 pm SEC
- Representative Assembly – Jan. 10, 4:45pm AHEM
- Pay Day – Jan. 14
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Jan. 17
- Member Rights Advocacy Training – Jan. 22, 9am-Noon
- Executive Board Meeting – Jan.24, 4:45pm, AHEM
- School Board Meeting – Jan. 24, 6:30pm, SEC
- AHEM filings Close – Jan. 25
- Pay Day – Jan. 28
- Pay Day – Feb. 11



Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota
3200 Main Street, Suite 360
Coon Rapids, MN 55448