

**STRONGER TOGETHER**



**ANOKA HENNEPIN**

*Valerie Holthus*

*President*

*May 13th, 2022*

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# FRIDAY BLAST

## Meet and Confer Update

The last Meet and Confer of the year occurred on May 4 at the ESC. Attending were several AHEM members, Superintendent Law and most of his cabinet, Board Chair, Marci Anderson, School Board members Kacy Deschene, Erin Heers-McArdle and Matt Audette. The evening started off with a welcome from President Val Holthus, and continued with AHEM Vice President/Secretary, Jon Kohnen, who gave an update on previous meet and confer topics. He also spoke about the need to prepare for a new normal of instruction delivery following the negative effects of Covid. Jon also gave a reflection of LETRS as intensive training continues and requested that the board continue to prioritize smaller class sizes as well as hiring additional staff to support the increase in SEL needs.

Caitlin Burns then spoke very eloquently about the value of LIT (Literacy Intervention Teacher) support, and requested that it continue to be staffed in the future. Later, School Board member Erin Heers-McArdle agreed that LIT is very valuable, and students benefit from the service.

Anna Bellefeuille and Derek Barto, who work in the Virtual Academy School, gave an update of its first year, accompanied by an insightful video of themselves teaching virtually.

Jon Kohnen then spoke about the effects of para staffing challenges at Title Schools and requested the timing of class placements for the following school year be aligned with the district's pink slip announcements and mid-April job postings.

Next, Cathy Jo Tastsides, Northdale Middle School, relayed information about the

challenges special education case managers encounter, and the increasing amount of time and effort required to provide the services our students need.

Mark Duffy, Anoka-Hennepin Regional High School, spoke about the inequities of AHRHS compared to the other high schools. Students at Regional are not offered the same experiences as other high school students, and he displayed pictures of the inadequate gym space, the aging and neglected facility and the crumbling parking lot. His speech resulted in a compassionate standing ovation of his colleagues. Superintendent Law mentioned that the District does not own the property, and it would not be reasonable to make significant improvements on a property the District did not own.

The night concluded with thankful comments from the school board and a farewell to David Law by Vice President/Secretary Jon Kohnen.



## Sick of subbing on your prep? *Know your Rights!*

We have been hearing from a lot of teachers that they are feeling burnt out from subbing during their prep all of the time, they are being pressured by administration to cover during their prep, and they aren't sure what to do about it.

Article X, Section 11, Subd. 3 outlines subbing during your prep (Pg. 15).

Essentially this language boils down to the fact that **you have the right to say no** if asked to sub during your prep.

Otherwise, if you agree to sub, you can either be monetarily compensated for your time or with prior approval of building administration earn substitute leave time up to an additional two days per year for subbing during your prep.

Here is the full language:

Subd. 3. Teaching during Prep Time and Substitute Leave Time: If a teacher is requested by a building/program administrator to teach during assigned preparation time to cover an unfilled absence and the teacher accepts the assignment, the teacher will be compensated at the rate of \$22.50 for an elementary school hour preparation time or a six and seven period day school; or \$27.00 at a five period per day school.

Upon approval of the principal/program supervisor, teachers may cover time with another teacher to teach during that teacher's preparation time in lieu of compensation.

In lieu of the payment above and with the approval of the building/program administrator, a teacher may earn substitute leave time. At the high school level, five class periods of substitution will qualify for a full duty day of substitute leave time. At the middle school level, seven class periods will qualify for a full day of substitute leave time. At the elementary level, three hundred and sixty minutes will qualify for a full day of substitute leave time.

A teacher is limited to earning two days of substitute leave time per school year. Any earned days must be taken (1) within the school year earned; and (2) in full day increments. Earned 'substitute leave time days' are considered "personal leave days" for purposes of the limitations imposed in Article XIV, Section 2. Subd. 1 and Subd. 2. In addition, a teacher may not conjoin personal leave days or seniority days to substitute leave days. Teachers may use the two 'substitute leave time days' conjointly.

You have the right to say "no", and you should exercise that right. If you and your colleagues are feeling pressured or even bullied by your administration to cover, reach out to our office and we will assist you in speaking up to your administration and/or help members at your building organize around saying "no".

## Trivia Question

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

The answer to last week's question was:

Baron, Silicon, Arsenic, Germanium, Antimony and Tellurium are all:

d. Metalloids

#### ***Congratulations to:***

Alissa Knutson, ESC  
Brittney Kurtz, Anoka High School  
Heather Leppert, Hamilton

*Honorable Mention* for recognizing the miss-spelling of Boron: Kim Eich, OVMS and Jason Harper, Andover HS

*Honorable Mention* for the "other" answer: Street Names in Ramsey, Lena Stevenson, Brookside

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

First three correct answers will win a coffee gift card.

Which building can the below mural be found?

1. Brookside
2. Rum River
3. River Trails
4. Mississippi
5. None of the Above

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



## Union Wear Still Available

We have some extra pieces of union clothing, and if you are interested in buying one or more, please email [Becky.marshman@edmn.org](mailto:Becky.marshman@edmn.org). You can still use your \$25 credit if you haven't done so.

Men's ¼ Zip: Size L, \$36

Pink Women's Fleece: Size M and L \$36

Men's Performance Full Zip: Two Size L \$42

Women's Performance Full Zip: Size XL \$42

Hooded Sweatshirt: Size XL \$37

Long Sleeve T-Shirt: One L, Two XL \$25

Women's Softshell Jacket: Color: Red, Size S; Color: Black, Size M, \$42

## Member Benefits

### NEA Travel Dollars

Check out the [NEA Travel Dollars program](#). They will give you an initial \$500 in travel for being a member of the NEA. Unfortunately, it does not work in booking airfare, but does for other travel expenses. Often times they offer free cancellation which other travel websites, or agencies do not. It is worth checking out before you book your next trip as members have reported saving money on hotels, condos and other rentals through this easy to use website before!

## Community Organizer - Summer Opportunity

AHEM is looking for members to work as Community Organizers this summer! Community organizer will work 20



hours over the course of the summer and would pay \$30/hour. You can find out more information and [apply here](#). Our school community goes beyond the walls of our buildings and AHEM is committed to creating relationships with parents, caregivers, and community partners who have shared values and a commitment to public education. We believe that by working together we can achieve bigger and better things for the students and educators in our communities.

[APPLY NOW](#)

## Volunteers Needed

In 2022, we have the power through our democracy and union to vote for public education and protect our collective bargaining rights.

But we need educators at the forefront of that movement. Please help interview or screen political candidates for possible endorsement, so we can put the candidates in office who we know will support us, our students and our profession.

Please email [anokahennepinem@gmail.com](mailto:anokahennepinem@gmail.com) to volunteer to be a screener. No experience necessary.

## Legislative Updates

**Pledge to Vote:** Keep an eye out for Pledge to Vote cards. Many educators have been missing out on having a voice at the ballot box, especially when there is not a presidential election. Teachers need to continue to be heard and voting is the strongest way to do that!

**MN Legislature:** The legislature is in conference committee regarding the education omnibus bill (**HF4300**). Despite the state agreeing to higher funding during the last session, schools are still down 5-7 billion per biennium in state funding from what it was just 20 years ago. Continue to write to your legislators regarding what is important to you this session, including mental health, support staff, class sizes, and the overall state funding gap. [Tell state leaders to start investing NOW and help our schools.](#)

**Governor's Race:** Elections have consequences. Minnesota is able to provide a better education to its students than most states in the Midwest, yet schools are still losing ground financially. Hopkins School Board Member Jen Westmoreland Bouchard recently shared, "The Senate has proposed spending eight times more on tax cuts for wealthy people making \$250,000 or more per year than on education. Make no mistake – without a supporter of public education in the governor's office, we will see larger class sizes and teacher layoffs across Minnesota."

# Our WALs Program is BACK!

If you were here in 2018 you might remember a person in your building being referred to as a WALs, which stands for Worksite Action Leader. This person helps facilitate Get Out The Vote events at your site. Get Out The Vote events are fun, creative events at your building that promote voting in the upcoming gubernatorial election. There is money available to you to make these events fun and interactive. We also have staff that are able to provide you with some ideas, and assistance if needed.

**Expectations** – In the fall 2022 school year, host 2 non-partisan voter engagement activities in your building. Share non-partisan voter education materials about the candidates with members in your building. Conduct one-on-one conversations with targeted voters in your building. Participate with at least one other member from your site in a door knock for an EDMN endorsed legislature, and stay in contact with our GOTV leaders Aaron Balzer and Jinna Collins-Jwacu.

**Training**- Attend one 60 minute training on either Tuesday and Thursday at 5pm starting May 10th. New WALs should attend a single 1-hour training: [WALs Trainings](#)

**Pay** – There is a \$150 stipend available for a WAL at each building.

**Ready to Apply?** Please email [aaronbalzer@yahoo.com](mailto:aaronbalzer@yahoo.com) and register on our [EDMNVotes WAL Website](#).

***Elections matter, and your vote counts!***

***Aaron Balzer*** and ***Jinna Collins-Jwacu***

AHEM Get Out the Vote Leaders

## Capital Connection

[\*Click here to view your Weekly Capital Connection\*](#)

*"We cannot always build a future for our youth, but we can always build our youth for the future."*

*-Franklin D. Roosevelt*

## Coming Up

- When can I afford to Retire? [Click for more details](#)
- May 13-14: GOP Convention, Rochester, MN

- May 16: Full Flower Moon
- May 17: Candidate Filing Opens for Primary Races
- May 20: Pay Day
- May 20-21: DFL Convention, Rochester, MN
- May 21: Armed Forces Day
- May 23: Last Day of Legislative Session
- May 23: Executive Board Meeting 4:45pm
- May 23: School Board Meeting 6:30, SEC
- May 30: Memorial Day
- May 31: EdMN Degrees, not Debt Webinar 4:30-6:30pm, [Click here for more details and to register.](#)
- June 21: ICYMI Minnesota Statewide Virtual Job Fair for Educators 3-7pm, [Click here to Register](#) and [Click here for More Details](#)



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