

STRONGER TOGETHER



ANOKA HENNEPIN

Valerie Holthus

President

January 27, 2023

Vol 5, No.18

Friday Blast



MEA online is now up and running!

Coffee & Politics

coffee & politics



AT CARIBOU COFFEE

Join Education Minnesota Members on Saturday morning for a free drink (even the fancy ones) and breakfast while chatting with your lawmakers from district 34 about what is going on in your classroom and what is important to you and your students.

When: Saturday, January 28th, 9 am.

Where: 8559 Edinburgh Centre Dr, Brooklyn Park 55443

Who: Sen. Hoffman (confirmed) & Rep. Nadeau (confirmed)

EdMN Collective Bargaining and Organizing Conference

Education Minnesota held the 2023 Collective Bargaining and Organizing conference at the St. Paul River Center last week. AHM was well represented by our president, negotiations team and various members of the Negotiations Advisor Committee (NAC). As a first-time attendee there was so much to be



learned. The main topic was discussions on the process of moving negotiations from a closed-door practice to opening the actual negotiations for members to come and observe so that the discussions and obstacles are brought to the light of day for all members to be aware of. The rationale behind this move is open bargaining will build power. This becomes a highly participatory, transparent process that facilitates intentional conversations with our members and brings the

community to engage and support us in this process.

This process generates communication, member engagement, and trust. I know many times I have felt powerless and apathetic toward negotiations and had a mindset of "it is what it is" but I realized how wrong I was!

[Click to read on](#)

AHEM Store Re-Opens!

Your AHEM Union Gear Store is OPEN
Friday, January 27 - February 10th!
\$25 CREDIT TOWARD PURCHASE
(LIMIT ONE PER YEAR)

Click the link below for **HOW TO** place your order.

[How to Order](#)

Click the link below to **SHOP** and complete your order.

[SHOP](#)

Here's just a few options below

Womens Stretch Full Zip Jacket
#LST852



Womens Performance Full Zip
#LST241 - Red



Softshell Jacket
#J317

Black



Red



Tri-Blend 3/4 Sleeve
#DM136



Pension Updates



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Update No. 12

If you have missed any past updates, [they're available on here.](#)

Things are starting to heat up! The pension boards are moving forward with recommendations, the LCPR has started its work, legislators are laying verbal groundwork for pro/anti-improvement arguments and the number of members subscribed to our pension updates nearing 4,000!

Keep organizing, sharing and talking to your colleagues about our advocacy plan. [Sign up and forward this Education Minnesota Pension Updates signup today!](#) There's also a QR code at the bottom of this update you can use to sign up.

[Click to read on](#)

[Click here for most up to date articles](#)

United Health Care Benefits

This is FREE to all on the district's insurance, with the opportunity to earn gift cards, etc. - Available since the start of 2023!

[Rally](#)

Join Rally, the new wellness program, and earn rewards!

[Real Appeal](#)

Learn more about Real Appeal, an online weight loss program!

Pension Advocacy Session at AHEM

Pension Advocacy

Plan Update

PRESENTATION GIVEN BY
ADAM JANIAK OF
EDUCATION MINNESOTA



WHAT WILL BE COVERED

- How the pension works
- History of pension changes
- What EdMN's advocacy plan is for the 2022-23 legislative session
- How you can get involved
- Answer any questions

EVENT DETAILS

February 7th, 4:45-6:15 p.m.
Anoka Hennepin EdMN Office
3200 Main Street NW, Ste. 360
Coon Rapids, MN 55448

Light refreshments will be served.
Please submit your questions at registration.

REGISTER HERE:

<https://forms.gle/LPhVav2RCmcNAZoa7>

CONTACT US

Anna Dougherty

651-247-6255

Anna.Dougherty@EDMN.org

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Trivia Time

The answer to last week's question was:

What two days of the year are unlike any other day in terms of daylight?

The Winter and Summer Solstices

3 winners will be selected at random to win a coffee gift card. Submit your answer by 11:59pm Friday (day of Blast) to be entered to win!

Congratulations to last week's winners:

Harlan Pottinger, Oakview MS
Molly Vievering, AH Virtual Academy
Josiah Cole, Franklin Elementary

Please reply to this email to submit your answer.

anokahennepinem@gmail.com

Every year the District Calendar Committee, representing many aspects of district operations, meets and carefully devises a future school calendar, usually two years out. How many people serve on the calendar committee?

- a. 20
- b. 30
- c. 40
- d. 50

Government Relations

By Aaron Balzer, Government Relations Chair

Coffee and Politics: Head Reps should be sending out invitations for our first event for district 34 - Senator Hoffman will be joining us for sure, and maybe Representative Nadeau. This will be on Saturday at 9AM.

You can register here: <https://forms.gle/8gQpdNz5JDupB6N56>

Lobby Days: We will be conducting Virtual Lobby Days again this spring for our targeted legislators in districts 31, 32, 34, and 35. I need volunteers, especially for districts 31 and 32. For those I have already heard from, thank you! Please let me know, if you haven't already done so, your willingness to participate. It is a one-day commitment to speak for 3 minutes on a topic that is important to you in education.

The sign up is here: [Lobby Day Sign-Up 2023](#)

If you don't know which district you live in, use [Who Represents Me?](#) a handy quick resource to find out.

Pension: *A pension bill has already been proposed in the house- need to finish out before meeting.*

PELSB- need teacher volunteers for this board. We currently have no representative. Email [Val Holthus](#) or [Anna Dougherty](#) for details.

Fully Funding Education: Governor Walz is proposing 700 million over the next 2 years, with these increases tied to inflation.

School Board Races: These are the board members whose terms are ending this year:

- Erin Heers-McArdle
- Marci Anderson, Chair
- Nicole Hayes

We will be screening those who wish to run this year and make our

endorsements as a union likely over the summer.

Contract Connections

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CBOC

The Negotiations Team and other AHEM members attended Education Minnesota's Collective Bargaining and Organizing Conference (CBOC) in St. Paul on January 20 and 21. We joined locals from around the state to enhance our collective power and knowledge. A major theme of the conference was opening up bargaining to help members be more involved in the process (and ultimate outcome). The AHEM team has started enacting some of these principles through our connections with our Local Contract Action Team (LCAT) and Member Engagement leaders. Formations of the Negotiations Advisory Council (NAC) also connects the work of bargaining more directly with members. As a team, we are working on additional ways to bring all members into the process. Watch this space for more information in the coming weeks and months. If you are interested in learning more about any of the groups above, contact the negotiations team at the email address below or the AHEM office.

Listening Session

On January 18th, we held our first virtual member listening session. This session was another part of our plan as a negotiations team to hear directly from members. The team will be using the information gathered to construct our survey that will be sent out later this trimester. Already some consistent themes have emerged from our conversations with members:

- Salary improvement is a major need, both due to inflation and as a tool to recruit and retain bargaining unit members.
- Health insurance costs remain a challenge.
- Addressing the unique needs of members that are not "traditional" classroom teachers is vital.
- Workload and time issues continue to mount and make the work of members extremely difficult across many different roles and across buildings.

Call to Action!

The Minnesota Legislature is meeting right now! Contact your state representative and state senator and let them know how important education funding is! There are also bills that would provide paid family leave and there are proposals to improve pension access. This is the year to make your voice heard!

What happens at the capital directly affects what happens in bargaining!

The negotiations teams can be reached any time at ahemnegotiations@gmail.com

In Solidarity,

Your AHEM Negotiations Team

John Wolhaupter - Lead

Luke Amundson

Mark Corcoran

Traci Intihar

Jon Plotz

Capitol Connection



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS



Happy Paraprofessional Week!

Gov. Tim Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan have declared this week Minnesota Paraprofessional Week, to shine a light on how essential paras are for our schools.

We know that ESPs are the backbone of our school system, that's why we're fighting for:

1. [*The ESP Bill of Rights*](#)
2. [*Unemployment for Hourly School Workers*](#)
3. [*Paid Training Time for Paras*](#)

Thank your paras this week, and every week. See the full signed proclamation [here](#).

[Click to read on](#)

Minnesota Teacher of the Year

Nine Anoka-Hennepin teachers are candidates for Minnesota Teacher of the Year

This year's program will name the 59th 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 down 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. The Minnesota Teacher of the Year banquet is set for May 7 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre.

Organized and underwritten by Education Minnesota, the Minnesota Teacher of the Year program receives support from Education Minnesota ESI, Educators Lifetime Solutions, EFS Advisors, Harvard Club of Minnesota Foundation, SMART Technologies and Expedition Credit Union.

Congratulations, and Good Luck!

Johanna Mueller, Hamilton Elementary School

Lisa Neaderhiser, Jackson Middle School

Kelley Nelson, Champlin Park High School

Wendi Delmore, McKinley Elementary School

Andrea Albright, Blaine High School

Rachel Brisbin, Hamilton Elementary School

Kristin Rutz, Brookside Elementary School

Lisa Thul, Ramsey Elementary School

Stephanie Ylvisaker, Blaine High School

Thinking of Retiring?

Thinking of Retiring? Check out this need-to-know information: AH#11 Retirement Benefits

To be eligible for Severance and/or Health Care Savings Program benefits, a teacher must have 10 years of service in the district, notify the district of intent to retire by February 1, of the year prior to retiring, and begin drawing TRA immediately upon retirement.

Retirement benefits from District 11 are contained in Article XVIII – RETIREMENT, which begins on page 14 of the Master Agreement. They consist of Severance, 403(b) contributions, and Health Care Savings Program benefits.

SEVERANCE PROGRAM

Only teachers hired *before* July 1, 1994, are eligible for Severance Payments. Severance was a benefit that gave teachers money at retirement for any unused sick leave, with certain conditions.

When severance was available, there was no 403(b) benefit. There were lawsuits that determined that severance was illegal as being age discriminatory, because the older someone was, presumably the more severance they were able to receive.

Severance is paid at the teacher's daily rate of pay at retirement, for the first 80

days of unused sick leave remaining at retirement.

Those eligible for Severance must meet several requirements:

- They must have been hired prior to July 1, 1994
- They must have 10 years active service on contract with the district.
- They must retire from the district and begin drawing TRA retirement benefits.
- The district gets a credit for any district matching contributions made into a retiring teachers 403(b) match.

The district credit is only for district contributions to the 403(b) and is only applicable to those who receive Severance benefits. If a district match into a teacher's 403(b) exceeds the severance balance, the teacher gets no severance, but does NOT have to repay the district for any money received as a 403(b) match.

HEALTH CARE SAVINGS PROGRAM

The district has allowed teachers to take unused sick leave over the amount payable in severance to be used for health premiums in retirement since at least the mid 1980's.

HEALTH CARE SAVINGS PLAN: funded by unused Sick Leave in excess of 80 days.

ELIGIBILITY:

- Must be in the district health insurance plan at the time of retirement.
- Must retire and begin collecting TRA right away.
- Must have 10 years of allowable service.

New SEED Leaders Wanted

Have you considered taking your SEED journey to the next level? Are you interested in helping teachers grow their equity and inclusion toolbox? If so, check out this link for New SEED leader position prerequisites and expectations, and apply here for this paid position.

[SEED Leader Application click here](#)

If you have any questions, please contact SEED Co-coordinators Beth Heimerl (bethlynn33@gmail.com) or Beth Popalisky (sweetlily@gmail.com, 612-940-4441)

We look forward to hearing from you!

Happy Birthday!!!



January 29 - February 4

John Wrobel
Kelly Johnson
Stacy Zehr
Matthew Everhart
Miranda Frank
Brenda Lavik
Constance Guenther
Katrina Develice
Carol Goers
Ann Steinle
Sonee Bergquist
Mallory McKinney

Michele Isaacson
Shannon Ruda
Lindsay Murray
Kathleen Weiland
Jeffrey Batts
Adam Banse
Michele Fennick-Pinkham
Jonathan Plotz
Jennifer Birkmeier
Deanna Heath
Joseph Geiselman
Dominic Krebsbach

Mariah Jungles
Emily Meland
Mickenzie Blasing
Pamela Taylor
Darla Heil
Kristine Kalmoe-Smith
Peter Ockuly
Brent Driscoll
Greta Simpson
Mary Scales
Kyle Ooms

**If you don't see your name and you should, please email us to let us know!*

Special Education Workload Survey

Special Education Teachers and Service Providers: Please take Education Minnesota's Special Education workload survey!

In our efforts to support Special Educators through legislation and in collective bargaining, we are gathering data on Special Educator caseloads, paperwork, and what supports might help alleviate some of the pressures of this work. We will be sharing this survey with members who are identified as Special Education teachers or in any related services that support students with IEPs, such as school social worker, school counselor, school psychologist, physical therapist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, music therapist, and DAPE teacher.

Please complete the survey no later than Friday, January 27:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EdMNSpecialEdSurvey2023>

We will be sharing results with legislators and other education stakeholders, and our negotiations team.

2023 Elections

Candidate filing is now open for AHEM President, EdMN Representative Convention Delegate and NEA Representative Assembly Delegate.

The President position is a three-year term beginning July 2023. Duties of the President include representing and overseeing matters as chief executive of the Association. The position of President is a full-time position. To file for the position of President or EdMN or NEA delegate contact Becky.Marshman@edmn.org. Filing will remain open until Monday, January 30, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Voting will take place electronically on February 22 & 23 for office of President, convention delegates (if needed), changes in local Constitution and Bylaws, and renewal of Qcomp.

Coming Up

January 30 - AHEM Filings Close
January 31 - NAC Meeting, 5 p.m., AHEM
February 1 - Black History Month Begins
February 2 - SEED Meeting 4:40-7:30 p.m., AHEM / Groundhog Day
February 6 - Rep. Assembly Mtg, 4:45 p.m., AHEM
February 6 - School Board WS, 5:30 p.m., ESC
February 7 - Pension Advocacy Session, 4:45 p.m., AHEM
February 8 - LCAT Mtg, 4:30 p.m., AHEM
February 13 - Executive Board Mtg, 4:45 p.m., AHEM
February 14 - Valentine's Day
February 20 - President's Day - AHEM Office Closed
February 22 - Ash Wednesday
February 22/23 - AHEM Election
February 25 - MN Twins Spring Training Begins
February 26 - Pike and Walleye Winter Season Ends
February 27 - School Board Mtg., 6:30 p.m., SEC

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