



# The 1148er

The official newsletter of the West St. Paul Federation of Teachers

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greetings 1148ers!

We received a wonderful compliment after the spring membership meeting a few weeks ago. A member told me that the union feels like a family. That felt good, and it felt accurate, after getting to honor such a great group of our retirees. We had a large turnout. Good food. We honored WSPFT members that have a wide range of perspectives and experiences. We had retired members in attendance, too. There were a lot of laughs, a few tears, and probably some eye rolls...at least when I had the mic in my hand! I'm not sure how your families operate, but all of that describes an extended family event in my world!

We also invited a teacher who is no longer a member of WSPFT, because we knew that person is close with one of the people we were honoring. I imagine that may have been where I got some of the eye rolls, but like the handful of our colleagues that are not in our union, I wanted that person to know that they're welcome back when they're ready, and I told them as much. What we have in common – a passion for delivering an exceptional education to our students, and a belief that we should be treated (and compensated) as the professionals we are – should matter more than whatever is happening in Washington, D.C. Not to mention the fact that while some of our non-union colleagues may be in political associations that at first glance may attempt to parrot what a union could provide, a deeper look reveals there's simply no substitute for the collective power we've built together over 75 years here in WSPFT, and in our larger Labor Movement!

Like a family, we stand ready to welcome back those that have strayed. And like a family, we will have hard times. We'll have arguments. We'll shed tears. But we'll also have good times. We'll celebrate success. We'll laugh together. And through it all, we'll keep moving forward—together.

Thank you for all of your efforts, small and large, to continue to build **a stronger together** for our union family, the West St. Paul Federation of Teachers Local #1148! Your passion and commitment are reflected in our students' successes: in the classroom, on stage, in the athletic arena, and throughout the community. I'm proud to serve alongside all of you, and I wish you all a well-deserved summer break.

In solidarity,



## WHAT'S INSIDE:

President's Message: 1  
McCarthy Elected to GB: 2  
Spring Membership Recap: 2  
Internal Job Reminder: 2  
2025 Negotiations: 3  
Read Act Stipends: 3

Social Media: 3  
Member Recognition: 3  
Union Thank Yous: 4  
Pension Bill into Law: 5  
OFS Update: 5  
Union After Retirement: 5

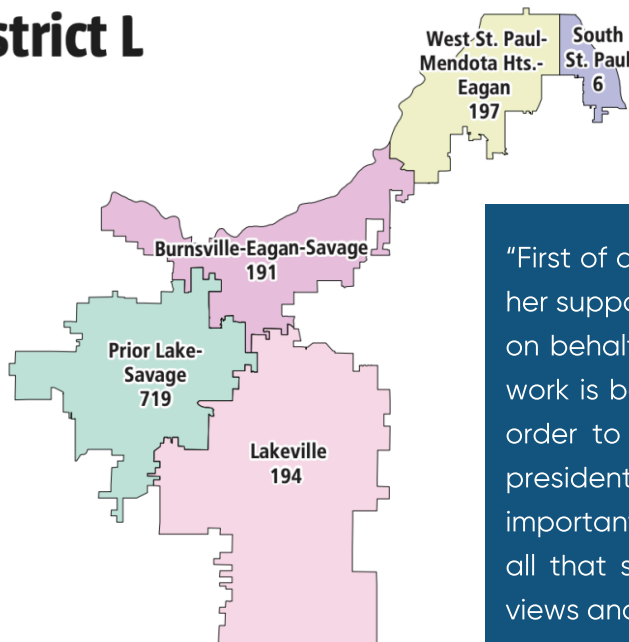
Union Plus: 5  
Know Your Contract: 5  
Future Issues: 6  
People to know: 6  
Executive Board Mtgs: 6  
Contract info updates: 6

# MCCARTHY ELECTED TO GOVERNING BOARD

At the Education Minnesota Representative Convention in April, our president, Brian McCarthy (TR), was elected as the representative of District L (see image below) of the EdMN Governing Board (GB). Operating like our Executive Board but at the state level, our GB meets throughout the year to set dues, adopt a budget, and carry out directives passed at the Representative Convention. Brian ran at the urging of another local president and governing board member, and after securing the support of our past GB representative Wendy Drugge, President of the Burnsville Education Association. The new GB will meet in late July to work with new officers: President Monica Byron (Richfield), Vice President Marty Fridgen (SoWasCo), and Secretary Ryan Fiereck (St. Francis) to set the course for EdMn for the coming year.

## Election District L

BURNSVILLE  
BURNSVILLE CULTURAL  
FAMILY LIAISONS  
LAKEVILLE  
LAKEVILLE ESP  
LAKEVILLE ESP KID ZONE  
PRIOR LAKE ESP SECRETARIES  
PRIOR LAKE-SAVAGE  
SOUTH ST PAUL  
SOUTH ST PAUL ESP  
WEST ST PAUL



"First of all, I want to thank Wendy not only for her support, but for all of the hard work she did on behalf of all of us in District L. A lot of that work is behind the scenes, and certainly a tall order to add to the duties of being a local president! The work, however, is incredibly important, and so I hope that I can build upon all that she has done for us in elevating our views and voices at the state level."

-Brian McCarthy

## SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING RECAP

On May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1148ers gathered at Foodsmith Bistro-pub to celebrate some of our fabulous retirees and enjoy time together as we wrap up the school year! There was a big showing from Two Rivers as they have 5 of the 8 retirees! We celebrated Linda Zurn (TR), Tom Myers (TR), Charlie Skemp (TR), Dan McCormick (TR), Pat Killian (TR), Eileen Gilligan (H), Ruth Underdahl (PK) and Nancy Coffeen (TR). We are beyond grateful for their years of service, the work they've done to support students, and how they've built this community to be what it is today! The legacy they are leaving is one we hope to replicate in years to come!

## INTERNAL JOB POSTING REMINDER

### Internal Job Posting Reminder

If you have been considering a possible job change in-district, don't forget to keep an eye on your 197 email account for potential job postings this summer, and be prepared to get your completed application in on time! Per our contract, the posting period will be five (5) working calendar days between August 1 and October 1, and ten (10) working days during the remainder of the year. Openings for teaching positions will be emailed to all current licensed staff.

# 2025 NEGOTIATIONS

## KNOW WHERE YOU STAND!

Dear Colleagues,

We want to provide you with an update on recent bargaining activity. The WSPFT Negotiations Team met both internally and with District representatives on May 14 and May 28, 2025. During these sessions, we engaged in meaningful discussions focused on potential contractual improvements and changes in the following key areas:

- Leaves
- Lane Changes
- Federation Rights
- Salary Payment Dates and Deductions

At this time, we are awaiting updated financial information from the District, which is expected on June 16, 2025. This data will be essential in shaping the next phase of our negotiations. We plan to continue meeting over the summer to advance discussions around financial matters and finalize language proposals. We remain committed to advocating for fair and equitable terms on behalf of all members. Thank you for your continued support and solidarity. We will keep you informed as negotiations progress.

In unity,

WSPFT Negotiations Team

Anne Bolsem, Matt Beniak, Kristy Otte, Phil Hayes, Brian McCarthy

## READ ACT STIPENDS ARE COMING!!

If you were required to take state mandated READ Act training this past year you can expect to receive a stipend on a separate paycheck between June 20th and June 30th. As of publication we are waiting for the district's legal team to complete their review of the memorandum of agreement that we negotiated with them, but that process will be complete by the June 16th School Board Meeting. If you missed the notes from our last Executive Board meeting, a \$200 stipend will be paid out to all eligible participants that successfully completed the training. For those participants that successfully completed the training via CAREIALL, they will receive an additional \$233.10, as it required time beyond the duty day. The MOA will be made available to our EB members upon its signature, and will also be posted on [our website](#).

### SOCIAL MEDIA



@wspft1148



@wspft1148



@wspft



<http://wspft.mn.aft.org>

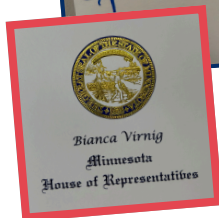
### MEMBER RECOGNITION

Know of a member who is doing extraordinary things that deserves a shout out? **Email Brian** and we will look to get them into the next e1148er and on our social media feeds!

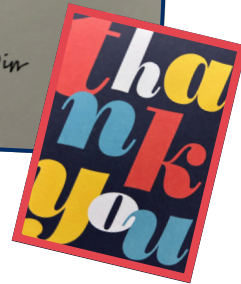
# UNION THANK YOUS!

Recently, we've gotten thank you cards and notes from union members, WSPT scholarship students and Representative Bianca Vernig that we wanted to share with you!

Dear West Strait Federation of Teachers Members,  
Thank you for your unwavering dedication and strength during the challenging times your commitment to our students & families does not go unnoticed. Your work matters and is appreciated more than words can express.  
With Deep Gratitude,  
Bianca



Thank you for the scholarship money. My future plans are attend Simon Fraser University and work towards a degree biomedical physiology. I plan use this money to help pay it.  
Thank you.  
Gavin Bir



Dear  
Thank you very much for the amazing retirement Party, the recognition of my retirement & mostly for the leadership of our union! Thanks for the reminder to the unions for us all



Thank you so much for this Scholarship.  
I will be putting this money towards my freshman year at Michigan technological University studying civil Engineering  
Much Appreciated  
Elsie Jacobs



WSPT EXECUTIVE BOARD.  
THANK YOU FOR THE GENEROUS GIFT FOR MY RETIREMENT. THANK YOU ALSO FOR THE FESTIVE AND CELEBRATORY PARTY AT FOODSMITH. IT WAS AN HONOR TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE UNION AND TO CELEBRATE WITH OTHER DEDICATED RETIREES. THANK YOU TO ALL THE WORK YOU HAVE DONE! (I AM OFFICIALLY A "UNION RETIREE".) THANKS  
TOM MYERS



Thank you 1148er members, for the wonderful retirement celebration at Foodsmith and the check for my retirement. ISD has been such a part of my life from being a Sibley grad, having my children attend Garlough, to being a FACS teacher for 28 years! As I retire, I feel honored to have been part of this community.  
- Linda Zurn (TR)

Dear WSPT Members,  
Thank you for supporting my dream of becoming a wildlife biologist. I plan on attending Bemidji State this fall. I appreciate the scholarship I received and will put the money to good use.  
Thanks, Autumn Clem

5287



# AT THE CAPITOL: PENSION BILL SIGNED INTO LAW!

As the 1148er went to press, a special session of the legislative session has yet to be called, with some important budgetary work that needs attending to. However, a big win this session was of course the signing of the **pension bill** into law! It creates a 60/30 enhanced career rule, giving teachers more flexibility to retire after decades of public service while preserving cost-of-living adjustments for current retirees. While it was not all that we fought for, it is a meaningful step in meeting our goals. Thank you to everyone who sent emails, made phone calls and lobbied legislators to support this critical legislation. We couldn't have done this without you and the hard work of our lobby team! A special thanks to our Pension Action Leader for this session, Tom Raymond (TR), for leading our efforts at WSPFT! His singular passion for this issue was critical in making our voices heard at the Capitol!

## UPDATE FROM OFS

- WSPFT Organizing for Settlement (OFS) team is looking people who want to help organize our members and support our negotiators through this next round of negotiations. Because of our EdMN OFS grant, we are able to offer a \$400 stipend for someone at each building who would like to serve as a Site Action Leader (SAL). SALs will focus on site-based, personalized recruitment specifically for OFS actions during negotiations. This person is outgoing and has positive influence at their site. SALs commit to attend, help execute, and recruit for OFS activities, which may include attending school board meetings, letter-writing events, Homecoming Parade, etc. Members may apply via [Google form](#).
- The OFS Committee is also seeking personal emails and cell phone numbers to communicate 'members-only' information during negotiations. We are also seeking your shirt size for WSPFT spirit wear. Please complete this [Google form](#).

## UNION MEMBERSHIP AFTER RETIREMENT

Thinking of retiring in the next few years? Education Minnesota offers membership for retirees.

You may be eligible for a membership at no cost to you!

Have a [look here](#) to see if you are eligible and the benefits of staying an EdMn member.

## UNION PLUS: EVEN MORE BENEFITS!

If you haven't already, check out [Union Plus](#) for myriad types of fringe benefits that come with our membership in the AFL-CIO. They offer [scholarships](#), mortgage assistance, credit and medical bill assistance, shopping/travel discounts and more!

## KNOW YOUR CONTRACT!

You can find our contract on both [our website](#) and on the [197 website](#). Be sure to keep it readily accessible but above all, know your rights! If you ever need any help understanding them, your building reps stand ready to help!

# PEOPLE TO KNOW:

## OFFICERS:

- Brian McCarthy (TR), President
- Lora Messer-Nilles (FHMS), VP
- Laura Scott (TR), Treasurer
- Beth Rabe (MO), Secretary
- Phil Hayes (FHMS), Past President
- Kim Zellmer, ATPPS Coordinator

## NEGOTIATORS:

- Anne Bolsem (PK)
- Phil Hayes (FH)
- Kristy Otte (H)
- Matt Beniak (PK)



## BUILDING REPS:

- Margaret Citta (TR)
- Matt Malmberg-Merthan (TR)
- Janelle Christensen (TR)
- Jodie Darwitz (FH)
- Patrick McCormick (FH)
- Angela Penttila (H)
- Kristi Cooper (H)
- Hayley DeMers (H)
- Lea Beniek (ELC)
- Michelle Smith (ELC)
- Lisa Jasper (GEMS)
- Julia Linehan (GEMS)
- Samantha Schiltz (ME)
- Anna Thul (ME)
- Anna Banti (MO)
- Shari Niemczyk (MO)
- Joann Cudo (PK)
- Julie Fitzgerald (PK)
- Mary Nelson (S)
- Lori Thomas (S)

## FUTURE 1148ER ISSUES



Have ideas for future issues or want to help in the production of the e1148er? We'd love to [hear](#) from you!



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

Just a reminder that Executive Board meetings are open to all Local 1148 members. For a complete list of meeting times/dates, you can always refer to our [website](#)! If you would like to attend you can reach out to any EB member who can provide more information. All are welcome!

## CONTACT INFO UPDATES

Do you have a NEW address? Do you have a NEW last name? Do you have a NEW building assignment/FTE? Please contact Laura Scott, our Treasurer, at [wspft1148treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:wspft1148treasurer@gmail.com) with any and all changes to keep our records up to date, and our lines of communication with you uninterrupted.