

# The 1148er

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

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

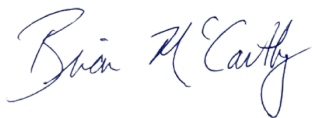
Greetings 1148ers!

I'm going to do something in this column that I have yet to attempt, which is to be brief! This year we have all been through a lot, and gone above and beyond the call of duty. We started with a tough bargain, brought on because of budget cuts at the district level, and the financial strains of a health care crisis at every level. On top of that we stood up against Operation Metro Surge and the unconstitutional attacks that were levied in its name toward our students and our community. Building **a stronger together** means that we were able to stand together to see us through to this point, because we know that facing challenges together is the only way to overcome them. It has strained us at times, but I thank all of you for doing your part in getting us through so far. I take comfort knowing that whatever comes next, I will be standing shoulder to shoulder, in union with each and every one of you when it comes.



For now I wish you a well earned Summer Break that includes all of the peace, laughter, and joy that you deserve.

In solidarity,



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## AT THE CAPITOL

It was a busy legislative session with WSPFT members joining our union siblings, sisters, and brothers from across Education Minnesota to advocate for policy changes centered around our three legislative priorities of improving the **health care** system via a statewide plan, improving teacher **pay** with competitive baseline salaries, and a full restoration of our **pensions**. While the big lifting will be next session as it is a fiscal/funding year, a number of meaningful gains were made.

Some of the highlights from this session include:

- Bipartisan support to fund the first comprehensive study of the spiraling health insurance costs of Minnesota school districts.
- Spending another \$10 million on compensatory aid, which supports schools with students from low-income families (including in District 197)
- Sending a constitutional amendment to the voters in November that would increase revenue for public schools. If passed, it would increase the annual draw from the Permanent School Fund, an account funded by timber sales and mining royalties that dates to the state's founding.
- Funding for behavioral school-linked mental health grants (\$12.25 million), a system for reporting threats to schools anonymously (\$5 million) and mobile response units for school violence (\$3.8 million).
- Passing a bipartisan bill that would allow property tax revenue from seasonal and recreational properties to remain in the region rather than go to the statewide general fund. For cabin-country school districts with lots of seasonal or recreational properties, the bill would help lower the property tax burden for homeowners on voter-approved operating levies.
- The appropriation of \$3.4 million to improve pension benefits for current and retired St. Paul Public Schools teachers. This follows a **\$40 million appropriation last year for the Teachers Retirement Association**, which provides pensions to most licensed teachers in the state.
- Pro-education legislators resisted another push to use taxpayer dollars for exclusionary private and religious schools. The governor refused to join President Donald Trump's new national school voucher program, which would reduce the amount of money available for public schools that serve every student.

We're grateful for all of our members that made phone calls, wrote letters and emails, lobbied and testified to continue to advance our statewide goals, and to work to fully fund our schools so that every child has access to an excellent education no matter their zip code!



Click on the  
screenshot to watch  
Brian's testimony at  
the Capitol!

# SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING RECAP

Recently, we were honored to celebrate some of our retirees in person (and the rest in spirit) at our annual spring celebration at FoodSmith Bistro Pub! It was lovely to hear about the work that Shari, Stacie, Mark, Michael, and Stan have done throughout their tenures in District 197!

It's a joy to get to celebrate the end of the year with colleagues and cheer on these retirees as they move into the next phase of life! Thank you to all our retirees, including those who couldn't be with us, for your years of service, the impact you've had on our students, Local 1148, and community, and the friendships you've formed throughout the years! ❤️💛



## LOOKING TO BUY A HOME SOON?

No down payment? No problem! You may not need a down payment to buy your first home! Yes, really. Through the Tradition Community Assistance program, and our Education Minnesota partnership, eligible first-time homebuyers can receive up to \$25,000 in down payment assistance, structured as a second mortgage at a fixed 2.99% interest rate (3.081% APR). That means your upfront cash requirement could be dramatically reduced – and in some cases, eliminated – making homeownership possible sooner than you might think. Contact us today for a free personalized review and find out if you qualify – we're here to answer your questions every step of the way.

Carrie White | 952.252.4490 | [info@mneducatorshomes.com](mailto:info@mneducatorshomes.com) | [mneducatorshomes.com](http://mneducatorshomes.com)

Individual NMLS #397493 | Tradition Mortgage, LLC NMLS #286998

## 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.*

## 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!

## 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.

## MEMBER BENEFIT FLYERS

Check out the flyers on the next two pages for information from Education Minnesota about access to free benefits from NEA, AFT, Union Plus and more! You can also access support for things like Home and Auto Insurance, Financial Planning, Healthcare, and more!

### 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!

# Free Benefits? Yes Please!

As a member of Education Minnesota, you also have access to free member benefits from the National Education Association (NEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and UnionPlus! Member benefits are designed to support you in every aspect of your life. Follow the steps below to get started!



## NEA Member Benefits

- Click on “SignIn” and click on the prompt for creating a new account.
- Page 1: First Name, Last Name, personal email address, password
- Page 2: Address and Date of Birth – NEA uses this to verify membership
- You will receive an email asking you to verify your email address.

## AFT Member Benefits

- Scroll halfway down the page here it says “MEMBERS ONLY” –
- Create or log in to your AFT account – Click GO.
- Select “Create an AFT Account”
- Enter “MN” + member number\* (ex MN0009872948) •  
Local union number “0” + local number (ex 04746)
- fill in your last name, email address and password.



## Union Plus

- Select Log In / Sign up on the top right corner of the website
- Select AFT as your union – this is important!
- Fill in the remaining information – Name, email, zip code, password

## More Benefits

- Scroll through the webpage and select which benefit you want to learn more about

*\*Your member number can be found on the mailing label of the Minnesota Educator magazine. Contact [ESI@edmn.org](mailto:ESI@edmn.org) for help finding your member number or local.*



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# Education Minnesota ESI State Partners

Supporting you at every step of your journey



## Tara Jo Olson – Home & Auto Insurance Agent

Home & Auto Insurance and more. We shop with multiple companies to ensure EDMN members are receiving the best options to compare for their insurance needs. We can also insure all the 'toys' (boat, motorcycle, snowmobile, RV, etc).

612.486.3341 | [tarajo.olson@comparioninsurance.com](mailto:tarajo.olson@comparioninsurance.com)

[www.comparioninsurance.com/educationminnesota?agent=taraolson](http://www.comparioninsurance.com/educationminnesota?agent=taraolson)



## Sandra Juetten- Healthcare Options in Retirement



We help Education Minnesota members navigate their health insurance as they move into retirement. For more than 15 years, we've supported members with Medicare plans, Medicare enrollment, and selecting the Medicare plan that fits their needs. We also offer unique plan options available only to EDMN members.

952.222.2100 | [info@schatzbenefits.com](mailto:info@schatzbenefits.com) | [www.schatzbenefits.com](http://www.schatzbenefits.com)



## Carrie White – Home Financing Options | Purchase and Refinance

Whether looking to refinance or purchase a home, Education Minnesota members receive discounted rates and loan fees for financing with Tradition Mortgage.

952.252.4490 | [info@mneducatorshomes.com](mailto:info@mneducatorshomes.com) | [www.mneducatorshomes.com](http://www.mneducatorshomes.com)

Individual NMLS #397493 | Tradition Mortgage, LLC NMLS #286998



## EFS - Financial Advisors

As Educators you spend your lives guiding others, so we're here to guide you. We help teachers and school staff clearly understand retirement options, choose investments that fit the overall plan, and learn tax-efficient strategies to keep more hard-earned dollars. Our goal is to make planning for retirement simple, supportive, and aligned with your financial goals. Contact us today for a personal planning conversation!

763.689.9023 | [efsadvisors@efsadvisors.com](mailto:efsadvisors@efsadvisors.com) | [www.efsadvisors.com](http://www.efsadvisors.com)



## Securus ID – in partnership with Aura

Securus ID partners with Aura (#1 rated all-in-one digital security program) to protect members from the threats of identity theft, scams, and fraud. All active teachers, ESP support and retired members have access to a complimentary identity recovery program (member only), courtesy of Education Minnesota / ESI Member Benefits. Registration for the complimentary plan is simple using the member website. Once registered, members have access to three Aura upgrade plan options (individual or family) at a substantial member only discount.

612.238.0340 | [info@securusid.com](mailto:info@securusid.com) | <https://educationminnesota.securusid.com>



## Expedition - People-first banking

Here at Expedition Credit Union, we exist to help people on their journey to financial wellness and make their lives better. We take pride in getting to know our members, educating our members with our amazing products and services, and we serve with kindness, compassion, and empathy.

651.264.0669 or 1.800.229.2848 | [www.expeditioncu.com](http://www.expeditioncu.com)



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# PEOPLE TO KNOW:

## OFFICERS:

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

## 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 Flies (ME)
- Anna Banti (MO)
- Kaitlyn O'Neil (MO)
- Joann Cudo (PK)
- Julie Fitzgerald (PK)
- Mary Nelson (S)
- Lori Thomas (S)

## NEGOTIATORS:

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



## 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.