



The 1148er

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Welcome back, 1148ers!

I wish you all well as we begin another year together. I'd like to also extend a warm welcome to our new members! We were pleased to provide a great Boca Chica lunch for thirty four new teachers at New Teacher Orientation last week, thirty of which signed up and got a WSPFT t-shirt and a lap top sticker! When you have a chance, introduce yourself to the new folks at your site, give them your union WHY, and connect with a Building Rep to make sure they've gotten signed up! As per usual this time of year, there is a lot of disinformation out there denigrating public education and the work we do in union together to provide a first class public education. Providing our WHYs are the best defense against these bad actors. However, if you find you need more resources to better articulate the importance of our strong union and how it benefits our students, and our members, please take a [look at this](#), as well as [this message](#) from Education Minnesota President Monica Byron.



As we enter into what is the first year of my third term serving as your president, I couldn't be prouder to be an 1148er! This past year in particular, we have displayed our strength and solidarity in myriad ways including our collective response to keeping our families and community safe during Operation Metro Surge, our continued advocacy at the capitol to fully fund our pensions, and leading on our newest and most urgent fight: working to provide statewide educator health insurance for all educators and their families! Getting our [EGIP Bill](#) passed will help get health care costs under control not only for us, but for communities across our state, and I commend our Health Care Action Leaders Vice President Kristi Cooper (H) and Hayely DeMers (H) for leading the way on this. Indeed the work we are doing to build *A Stronger Together* here in the WSPFT is on notice across our state with 1148ers either on the cover or featured in the last three [Minnesota Educator magazines](#)! More behind the scenes, I had the opportunity to speak to approximately 1500 members of the Illinois Education Association to share our member's heroic work during Metro Surge, and also met with Governor Tim Walz to do the same thing. Our members once again were at the capitol in St. Paul testifying and lobbying legislators to press forward our legislative agenda so that we can better deliver for our students and families. I'm grateful for all that you have done to be a part of these and other efforts to make us who we are today, and I look forward to whatever the world throws our way this year, knowing full well we will be up to the challenge because we will face them together!

You can expect our first full edition of the *1148er* in mid October, before MEA Break. Until then, have a great Labor Day weekend (brought to us by the Labor Movement), and have a great start with our kids next week!

In solidarity,

WHAT'S INSIDE:

President's Message: 1
Longevity Payments: 2
New Teacher Lunch: 2
Why Join WSPFT: 2

•Solidarity at the Saints: 3
•26 Homecoming Parade: 3
Know Your Contract: 3
Member Recognition: 3
Social Media: 3

Future Issues: 4
People to know: 4
Executive Board Mtgs: 4
Contract info updates: 4

LONGEVITY PAYMENT REMINDERS

This is just a reminder that the longevity payment our negotiating team won for us at the bargaining table last year applies to continuous years of service as a licensed teacher in District 197. Eligibility for the payment begins in the 16th, 20th, or 25th year of continuous service in District 197 and are not prorated. These amounts are intended to be distributed across your selected payment schedule (21 or 26 checks) beginning with the first paycheck of the year in Skyward. For detailed information on how to see this payment in Skyward, please review the email sent by Tye Michaels, Director of Human Resources, on Friday August 28.

NEW TEACHER LUNCH

💛💛 WSPFT is so excited to welcome over 30 new members to Local 1148 as we begin our 2026-2027 school year! Local 1148 Executive Board members and ISD197 new teachers gathered to enjoy lunch from @BocaChica (provided by our current membership) and hear the benefits of joining our union! We are thrilled to have new teachers in our community that want to build *A Stronger Together* with us as they create a space for their students to grow, succeed, and shine! 💛💛



WHY JOIN WSPFT?

If you've gotten this *1148er*, you're already part of our union! We're so glad you're with us building *A Stronger Together*! Sometimes our new educators aren't sure about the benefits of union membership or why Local 1148 is special. Hearing from the person next door, a mentor, a friend, or even just a friendly face can make a huge difference! Brian created this video to help share why to join WSPFT that you can share with them or use to create some talking points for your conversations!



SOLIDARITY AT THE SAINTS GAME

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH @6:37PM

Join fellow WSPFT members for fun and camaraderie as the St Paul Saints take on the Syracuse Mets at 6:37 pm on Friday, Sept, 11, at CHS Field, 360 N Broadway St, St Paul. The game starts at 6:37 pm.

Join us beforehand in the Saints Tailgating parking lot at 431 E. Kellogg. Tickets and Saints Bucks (for concessions) will be provided! A few reserved parking spaces are available for those able to bring a car full of WSPFT members. **Wear your WSPFT garb!** See flyer on the next page!

RSVP to Kristi Cooper at <https://forms.gle/VKPBjSbsKtxEaga4A>

2026 HOMECOMING PARADE!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2ND

Please join us in the 2026 Homecoming Parade! The parade begins at Garlough Elementary and ends at Two Rivers High School (1 mile). It's a fun, feel-good event where we throw candy while students cheer for us, as we remind our community how beloved we are and how vital we are to our students.

If you'd like to participate, please reach out to [Kristi Cooper](#)! Kids are welcome to join our float! We'd love to have you join us!



2nd Annual Solidarity at the Saints Game!

Join WSPFT members for fun and camaraderie at the Saints Game!

St. Paul Saints vs. Syracuse Mets



*wear WSPFT attire!



September 11th

game start: 6:37

Game:

CHS Field
360 N Broadway St.

Tailgate:

CHS tailgate lot
431 E Kellogg Blvd.

Tickets and Saints Bucks* provided!

Tailgate before the game tailgate: 4:30-6:15

RSVP to Kristi Cooper. Email questions to wspftorganizingforsettlement@gmail.com

*Saints Bucks are good for NA beverages and food only. Tickets are for WSPFT members only. Parking spots available for those bringing a full car!



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!

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 1148er and on our social media feeds!

WARRIOR 5K

Brian has 2 free entries for the Warrior 5K on September 26th! The first 2 WSPFT members to email Brian with the subject "GIMME ONE" get them!

PEOPLE TO KNOW:

OFFICERS:

- Brian McCarthy (TR), President
- Kristi Cooper (H), VP
- Laura Scott (TR), Treasurer
- Athena Gause (TR), Secretary
- Phil Hayes (FHMS), Past President
- Kim Zellmer, ATPPS Coordinator

BUILDING REPS:

- Matt Malmberg-Merthan (TR)
- Janelle Christensen (TR)
- Karen Erickson (TR)
- Amanda Mahlstedt (FH)
- Patrick McCormick (FH)
- Angela Penttila (H)
- Hayley DeMers (H)
- Lea Beniek (ELC)
- Michelle Smith (ELC)
- Lisa Jasper (GEMS)
- Matt Olson (GEMS)
- Samantha Schiltz (ME)
- Anna Flies (ME)
- Anna Banti (MO)
- Samantha Eisenbraun (MO)
- JoAnn Cudo (PK)
- Julie Fitzgerald (PK)
- Mary Nelson (S)
- Lori Thomas (S)

NEGOTIATORS:

- Matt Beniak (ME)
- Margarette Citta (TR)
- Kristy Otte (H)
- Anne Bolsem (PK)



FUTURE 1148ER ISSUES



Have ideas for future issues or want to help in the production of the 1148er? 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 with any and all changes to keep our records up to date, and our lines of communication with you uninterrupted.