

# *the* GREEN SHEET



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## Our Path Through These Turbulent Times

*By Matt Williams, MSCF President*

At the start of this year, the word that is on my mind is empathy. As tired as we are of yet another semester dealing with COVID and teaching during a global pandemic, and as caustic as the public discourse has become over a whole range of issues, what I am hearing the most are stories of members finding ways to take care of each other. I can't underscore how remarkable this is in our current climate, where controversy and disagreement have been weaponized so that many individuals are no longer able to see anything that might unite us together in a common cause.

That is, of course, the point of weaponizing controversy and disagreement. It is a gamble that people no longer have the capacity for empathy. The powerful elites who orchestrate and manipulate outrage over various issues rarely care about the issues themselves. For them, it's all divide and conquer. Thankfully, as unionists, we can see this a mile away. Whereas historically this tactic may have been something deployed at a single worksite, we're now seeing it deployed throughout all corners of our country.



Of course, this does not mean practicing empathy is easy. And within our union, like many other unions, we are being challenged every day. The manipulators are savvy in what issues they are whipping up controversy over: workplace safety, democracy in the workplace and in our communities, public education that serves every student, etc. In other words, some of the most foundational concerns we have as organized labor. This is a direct challenge to us because these issues are tied to values for which we cannot and will not compromise.

Thankfully, in our union, we're not taking the bait. As a quick example, I have been struck by the conversations I have heard among faculty figuring out how to ensure their colleagues with children under 12, who still aren't eligible for a COVID vaccine, are safe on the job so that they can keep their own families healthy and safe at home. For many, it has meant wearing masks around them, even before the CDC guidelines recommended they do so. It has meant joining together and demanding more comprehensive solutions on their campuses to keep people safe. In short, it has meant seeing beyond the disagreements we have been invited to have and instead understanding we are both stronger and safer when we take care of one another.

Never have our bonds of solidarity, forged through our capacity for empathy, been so severely tested. And yet, every day, MSCF members continue to show up for each other. I remain humbled and honored to be a part of our union, and for the ways we will continue to help each other get through these turbulent times.

# Addition or Division?

By Matt Dempsey, MSCF Vice President

With the start of a new academic year, we are all making plans for our classes. When teaching, I would often take a fresh look at the Common Course Outline just to ensure I was covering what was expected. There is no CCO for the MSCF Vice President, but there are some guiding principles and statements in the MSCF Purpose and Mission and Core Values (all posted on our website and worth a look if you haven't recently). As I read those documents two ideas kept coming back to me: addition and division (yes, I am mathematics instructor).

There continues to be more issues than I expected threatening divisions within our union. Don't misunderstand, division is different than disagreement. We don't elect our leaders with unanimous votes, nor does every delegate vote in favor of every resolution at the Delegate Assembly. It is healthy to have disagreements and principled debates, as that makes our union stronger. Divisions arise when we no longer agree on foundational ideas



as expressed in our Purpose and Mission and Core Values or feel that those are no longer the foundation of our union.

If divided, our ability to realize our purpose and our mission suffers. It is through the addition of our voices and our efforts that we see momentum toward our shared goals. "The strength of active, engaged members" may be last in the list of our Core Values but it could be argued that is it the most important. It is only through addition, and not division, that we realize our collective strength.

What we need from you is to add your voice and your efforts when and where you can. There are many ways to do that. You might start at the campus level or even within your department. If you aren't sure, ask one of your campus leaders how you can get involved. We also need faculty to add their time and energy at the state level. Consider volunteering for a committee or task force, but if you aren't ready for that, be sure to bring your thoughts and ideas forward when issues arise. Check out the list of committee members on the MSCF website and reach out if a topic of interest is coming before one of those groups. Of course if you want to have the biggest impact, consider taking on a leadership position.

Individuals will disagree with our union on some issues and we must respect that diversity of opinion without division. We are strongest when we add our voices together and that addition will accelerate our work in "maintaining and improving two-year college education."

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## Revocation Window

The revocation window is the period of time when a current member may revoke their authorization to have union dues deducted from their paycheck. The revocation window is Sept.

1-30. A written request must be submitted to the MSCF state office during this time period.



[www.msCFMN.org](http://www.msCFMN.org)

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# 2022 MSCF Delegate Assembly Updated

By *Gretchen Long, MSCF Secretary*

The pandemic has drastically altered the way MSCF conducts its business, and this is perhaps no more evident than in how our last two Delegate Assemblies were conducted. Normally the largest annual convening of our members, 2020 and 2021 required that convening to be conducted virtually. However, a complete reconsideration of the logistics of the Delegate Assembly (DA) also provided an opportunity to reconsider other aspects of DA business and processes. At their spring meeting, the Board of Directors convened a workgroup to do just that. Over the summer, the workgroup reviewed our current processes, documents, and practices, and presented a series of recommendations that were adopted by the Board of Directors at their most recent meeting.

We all hope for a return to an in-person Delegate Assembly soon, and the recommendations are intended to ensure the DA is able to process business efficiently and allow for the broadest possible member involvement in an in-person forum. Recommendations range from revising our existing documentation, to pre-DA virtual convenings, to facilitating member interactions the day of the assembly. Highlights include:



differentiated forms for submitting business items to be considered by the DA including those related to policies, action items, Constitution and Bylaw amendments, and Resolutions; pre-DA virtual convenings for new delegates and to provide information on resolutions; facilitating delegate interactions with committees and caucuses of common interest; and incentives to increase participation at all chapters.

A key recommendation of the workgroup was to increase communication with the broader membership about the Delegate Assembly, its purpose, how it functions, and its significance. To that end, we will be holding an information session this fall to familiarize members

to the DA and provide specific details on the changes adopted by the board. We are also preparing several written communications to share with members this fall as well. In the interim, you can view the full report of the workgroup as well as additional documentation on the MSCF website, [www.msclfmn.org](http://www.msclfmn.org), under the Governance tab.

The Delegate Assembly exemplifies the democratic process our union strives for. While the members of the workgroup believe these recommendations will contribute to increasing participation and transparency, the democratic spirit of our union ultimately depends on the participation of all members. If you are new to MSCF or unfamiliar with the Delegate Assembly, we encourage you to visit the website for more information, talk with your chapter leadership about becoming a delegate, and watch for an invitation to an information session this fall.

Many thanks to the members of the workgroup: Monica Erling – Hennepin Tech, Brooklyn Park; Carolyn Cook, Century; Mark Grant, DCTC; Maggie Zimmerman, Saint Paul College; and Matt Dempsey, Vice President MSCF. We look forward to seeing many of you at the 2022 MSCF Delegate Assembly.

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## Join or Update Your MSCF Hiring Hall Information!

For decades – particularly within the trades – unions ran a “hiring hall” that connected their members with jobs. MSCF has created our own 21st-century version of an academic “hiring hall” to help connect contingent members with college hiring managers looking to fill classes. Contingent members of MSCF can join

or update their Hiring Hall information online. The deadline for updates for the Fall list, which will be sent for spring semester hires, is September 30. For full details on how to sign up or update your information visit the website – [www.msclfmn.org](http://www.msclfmn.org) – and click on Contingent Faculty. Get connected now!

# For The Faculty, For MSCF

*By Kent Quamme, MSCF Treasurer*

By the time you are reading this, I am hoping things are back to normal, although I know they are not. It wouldn't be possible to be back to the normal we once knew. Our classrooms have changed, our pedagogy has changed, our workplaces have changed, and our lives and our students' lives have changed.

Walking through campuses, you will notice a very different culture. Some campuses are busy, not bustling, but busy. Some campuses are barren, very few students in the hallways and very little activity on campus. Some programs have many students in the shops and labs, and other programs are hemorrhaging students. Some of our faculty are faring well during this time and other faculty are struggling. This is the time for true unionism. This is the time for us to stand together a support each other and to be there for all faculty.



We at the MSCF state office are here to also give the support that is needed. We are continuing to stand up for faculty rights and to make sure faculty have the support to do their jobs and to help students succeed. Campus visits are forthcoming, masked up of course, to listen to issues, concerns, and accomplishments. MSCF will continue with town halls to listen

to concerns and needs. MSCF will continue with training to allow leadership to do their jobs at the local level. MSCF will continue to bring forth faculty issues to Minn State through formal meetings, informal conversations, committee work, etc...

The Emerging Leaders College will be starting its fifth class this fall. The College was created to educate and train MSCF faculty across the two year colleges in areas such as the MSCF contract, the history of MSCF, the roles of various positions in MSCF, organizing and member engagement, and how MSCF works with other organizations within the Minn State system to give our faculty the best working conditions. Through education and training like the College, we will be better and we will do better for MSCF.

This year it is more important than ever to be a union. To stand together and to be there for all. To be there for MSCF.

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## Welcome New and Newer MSCF Members!

If you are new to MSCF, or maybe have been a member for a while but would like to learn more about MSCF, please join us at one of our New Member (virtual) Information sessions this fall semester. We will provide an introduction to MSCF – our history, how we function as an organization, and our role in the lives of our members, updates on current issues we're watching, and, most

importantly, ways for new members to connect and engage with their local chapters and members across the state. To view specific dates and times and register for a session, please visit the website – [www.msfcfmn.org](http://www.msfcfmn.org) – and click on the events tab. While the sessions are geared towards newer members, all members are welcome to attend. We look forward to seeing you!



# Federal Reconciliation Budget

*By Mark Grant, MSCF Legislative Chair*

For obvious reasons, we on the MSCF Governmental Relations front stay primarily focused on the legislative happenings centered in St. Paul. However, there is currently a lot of activity on the federal level that could have profound effects on Higher Education landscape in Minnesota, so I thought it might be worth it to pass along a brief update.

Let me begin by saying, there is A TON we still don't know about this bill. It passed out of the Senate in early August and is now being worked on by the relevant committees in the house. It passed out of the Senate in its current "amorphous" form, in part, so the House could hammer out the details. And, as we all know, that is where the devil resides.

Although I don't usually track federal budget bills that closely, the current Budget Reconciliation Bill is a massive 3.5 trillion dollar budget bill that contains several provisions that could affect all of Higher Education but in particular, two year colleges and MSCF.



For example, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions received \$726 billion which could be used to include

- Tuition Free Community College
- Increase in maximum Pell grant award
- College completion fund
- Pandemic preparedness
- Workforce development and training

Among the MANY unknowns we are still waiting to learn is what will the impact of a potential federal subsidy have on state investment? Will there be Maintenance of Effort provisions? What's the definition of a community college? Does that

include all two year programs? Diplomas and certificates as well as degrees? Does it include technical colleges? Does it include the first two years of a four year university?

These are the kinds of questions we will continue to try and clarify as this bill moves through the legislative process. The bill is being pursued through reconciliation, which means it only needs a simple majority to pass. Senators Manchin (West Virginia) and Sinema (Arizona) have already said they won't support a bill this big but even if it gets pared down significantly, some of the higher education provisions may survive. With a budget deadline of October 1st to avoid a government shutdown, we should see some movement on this soon and I will send out relevant updates as they become available.

There are several nationwide organizations working on this, so if you would like to be more involved in advocating for these provisions in the legislation, please drop me an email. At minimum, feel free to email Senator Klobuchar and Senator Smith and tell them to support these Higher Education provisions of the budget bill.

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## The MSCF Store is Open!

Show your MSCF pride with your very own union made, American made MSCF gear. Go to [www.msclfmn.org](http://www.msclfmn.org) and click on STORE.

Place your order, show off your quality threads, spread the word, and check back regularly for new additions.

# Mental Health Resources for MSCF Members

As a member of MSCF, you are eligible for special programs and services from Education Minnesota ESI Member Benefits, NEA Member Benefits and AFT+ Member Benefits. All three provide a variety of options including mental health resources. If you need assistance accessing any of these programs, please contact ESI at [esi@edmn.org](mailto:esi@edmn.org).

## *AFT Trauma Counseling Programs and Services\**

AFT members work hard—now more than ever—to educate, heal, help and serve our communities. Sometimes our own stress is compounded by a personal or workplace trauma; still, we struggle to be fully present for others. Now the AFT is offering a new, free benefit—trauma counseling—to provide help and healing for our members, whenever needed, wherever a member may be.

These AFT-paid trauma counseling sessions with highly trained therapists are completely private and set up to take advantage of the latest communication technologies—phone, text, video and even artificial intelligence. They are free and available to all active working members, including those on leave status. The broad list of covered injuries is both work-related and beyond, including:

- Aggravated assault
- Domestic violence
- Sexual assault
- Mass shootings/terrorist acts
- Major disaster
- Bullied, harassed or threatened
- Traumatized by witnessing a violent incident
- Infection by contagious disease
- Secondary trauma

## *Coverage®*

A new member-paid benefit allows for expanded coverage and is available for members to purchase for themselves or their entire family at a reduced cost, specifically for AFT members. This extends the coverage for members beyond the AFT's free trauma counseling. It includes recovery care, income replacement, a death benefit and optional family coverage.

Trauma Coverage is exclusively for AFT members. Please visit [www.aft.org/members-only](http://www.aft.org/members-only) to create an account and access the program.

## *NEA Mental Health Program\**

The NEA Mental Health Program with Sanvello is an evidence-based mobile app care solution created by clinical experts that allows members to access on-demand help for stress, anxiety and depression.

## *Benefits available to NEA members*

Sanvello provides free access to Sanvello Self-Care to anyone who downloads the app. NEA members are eligible for the following special offers:

- Sanvello free version of the app is available for anyone 13+ at no cost.
- Free access to Sanvello Premium for 30 days for members and spouses/domestic partners. Premium subscribers have access to additional journeys and tools.
- 25% discount off Sanvello Premium subscriptions following the 30 days as a direct-to-consumer subscriber (discount rate of \$6.75 per month or \$40.49 per year). Available to individuals age 18+.
- 10% discount off the Sanvello Premium + Coaching subscription for members who pay as a direct-to-consumer subscriber on Sanvello Coaching (discount rate of \$45.00 per month or \$315.00 per year). Available to individuals age 18+.

## *Sanvello*

Sanvello allows you to access on-demand help for stress, anxiety, and depression. Sanvello uses clinically validated techniques such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) that are designed to work together to help you learn how to feel happier. Our mission is to help people build the life skills they need—anytime, anywhere, and in any way they choose.

The NEA Mental Health program is only available to members. Visit [www.neamb.com/products/nea-mental-health-program](http://www.neamb.com/products/nea-mental-health-program) to create an account and access the program.

## *\*Important note*

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and having thoughts of hurting yourself you should promptly call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or 911. You can learn more from the Suicide Prevention Hotline at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) or call 1-800-273-8255.

# Constitutional Officer Elections

The nomination period for President, Secretary, and Treasurer is open! The nomination period will close on Friday, December 3 at 11:59 p.m. Filing forms and election information may be found on the MSCF website, [www.msfcfn.org](http://www.msfcfn.org), under Members Only, Officer Elections, or via your local chapter president. Any MSCF member can self-nominate or nominate another MSCF member with written permission from that member. Candidates will have the opportunity to attend the October and/or January Board of Directors meetings and participate in a candidate forum in February.

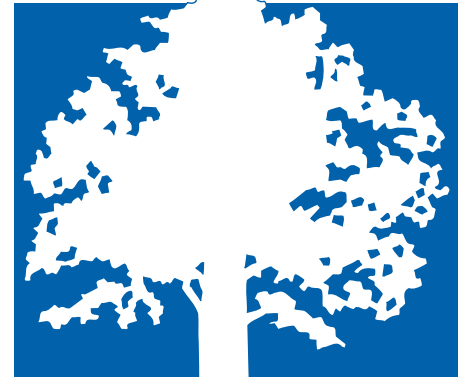
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## The Foundation

The Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning offers grants to Education Minnesota members, which includes classroom teachers, post-secondary faculty, and education support professionals. The Foundation offers grants for members to team up with a nonprofit organization that shares our goals to create systemic change. We also offer scholarships for licensed teachers obtaining National Board Certification. The Collaboration Lab supports staff and administration in working together toward common goals.

For more information on available grants, visit [www.edmnfoundation.org](http://www.edmnfoundation.org).

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### *MSCF staff*

Kari Ann Cruz, 651-767-1272  
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Matt Ryg, 651-767-1270

### *MSCF Board Meetings*

October 29, 2021  
January 28, 2022  
April 9, 2022

### *MSCF Delegate Assembly*

April 8, 2022