

# MSCF Connection Stronger Together



## President's message - The Colleges Our Students Deserve

*MSCF President, Matt Williams*

As we close out the semester, the year, and the decade, it's appropriate to both look back and look ahead.

In the past six months, we conducted over 700 1-on-1 meetings with faculty as part of the historic workload arbitration settlement as well as brought the 2019-21 contract negotiations to a tentative agreement.

While neither of these milestones have fully concluded yet, we are already pivoting to what's next.

The next two years have the opportunity to be truly transformational for us, our students, and our campuses.

In 2020, we have both the census—something that is always critical in terms of political representation—and an extremely important election cycle. As important as these two things are, they are merely setting the stage for 2021.

Consider what 2021 looks like if we elect pro-education candidates in 2020 and have all three branches of state government committed to fully funding public higher-education. 2021 is a year in which Minnesota will enter the budgeting process and also when we will begin our next round of contract negotiations.

To take advantage of this situation, we have to see the next two years as essentially breaking down into three interlocking components. First, we have to work to elect politicians who are willing to commit to fully funding public education. Second, we have to hold these politicians accountable to their commitments once elected and during the development of the state budget. If we're successful with these first two things, then we must follow the lead of our colleagues in Chicago and "put it in writing" in an enforceable contract—and that means through bargaining.

In short, there's a decent chance that we will have a once-in-a-lifetime window of opportunity to fight for changes that will make our colleges truly the colleges our students deserve.

The potential successes of the next two years are proportional to the amount of preparation and work we will have to put into this effort.

As I consider this work, I am reminded of something a mentor of mine once invited me to consider during an organizing campaign: we, the members, get to decide how strong we will be.

This will be our choice—something no other person or group can decide for us.

As we take some time away from the classroom between semesters, I want to invite all of us to spend some time and imagine what full funding of our colleges would mean. How would it change our lives? How might it change the lives of our students? What would it mean for our communities and for our country?

Ignore for the moment the policy specifics of "full funding." Instead, imagine what your day would look and feel like if every decision wasn't driven by a scarcity of resources.

As we contemplate this future, we all individually must ask the hard questions: Is this vision powerful enough to motivate us to act? Will we as individuals decide to be strong enough as MSCF to make this vision a reality? Ultimately, it will be the strength of many, not the strength of a select few, that will make this vision a reality. We at the state office are ready, but we won't be able to do this alone.

So enjoy the break, take some time to recharge, and let's start the new decade off by talking about what our schools could be and what we're going to do to get there.

## Things to know

### Unity Summit/Political Conference

The upcoming Political Conference/Unity Summit is live! In 2018, Education Minnesota re-shaped our election work -- focusing on getting out the vote at the worksite level. Voting is still a high priority in 2020. To learn more about the Unity Summit/Political Conference, [click here](#).

### Take action

We've built a very simple survey to help identify people ready to have a conversation about action. You can fill it out [here](#).

### United Educators Foundation grants and scholarship programs

United Educators Foundation's mission is to generate and provide contributive funding and resources that advance educational initiatives, and support charitable causes within the educational communities United Educators Credit Union cooperative serves. To learn more about United Educators foundation and its grants and scholarships, [click here](#).

### Spring Retirement Information Sessions

MSCF will be offering retirement informational sessions again this spring. The sessions include MSCF contract retirement provisions (phased retirement, post retirement annuitant, sick leave liquidation), TRA, and IRAP. Dates for the sessions will be requested from campuses in January/February and registration will be sent out at that time.

### Important Dates:

#### MSCF Executive Meetings

Jan. 10

Feb. 21

March 20

#### MSCF Lobby Day

Feb. 19-20

#### MSCF Board Meetings

Nov. 15

Feb. 21

Apr. 4

#### MSCF Delegate Assembly

Apr. 3

#### Education Minnesota Rep. Convention

Apr. 24 - 25

# Join MSCF for Lobby Day!

At the end of last session, Gov. Walz acknowledged he, "still has a lot to learn about higher education", and knowing the most effective advocates for our campuses in Minnesota are you, the faculty, we are organizing a state-wide MSCF lobby day.

This event, scheduled for the evening of February 19th and morning/afternoon of Thursday the 20th will provide an opportunity for faculty to:

- Engage with key lawmakers in Higher Education
- Share their experiences and stories with their campus' legislators.
- Engage with other faculty from across the state
- Develop invaluable relationships with legislators
- Impact the legislative process
- Demonstrate our unity and collective strength

[Click here to register!](#) Registration is due by noon on Monday, January 27, 2020. If you have any questions, please contact Mark Grant the MSCF Governmental Relations Chair/Lobbyist at [mark.grant@edmn.org](mailto:mark.grant@edmn.org).

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