

# Union rights and collective bargaining

## The freedom to join together

Educators, and other public employees in Minnesota, still enjoy the freedom to stand together in union. We can negotiate a fair return for our work and use the power of our numbers to advocate for the resources and policies our students need to succeed.

Unfortunately, a few greedy CEOs and wealthy corporations are trying to take away that freedom. They are funding a national strategy of lawsuits and propaganda to destroy the union movement in America, including Education Minnesota.

For the last two years, many educators have received emails and postcards, and have seen social media posts, from a front group for the Center of the American Experiment called Educated Teachers MN. This group gets much of its funding from right-wing billionaires like Betsy DeVos.


If we don't organize and resist, the wealthy few who use their influence to rig the rules will win. Without unions in the way, their plans to cut Medicare and Social Security, privatize public education, divide us along race and class lines, disenfranchise people of color and pollute the environment are more likely to succeed.

## Four things to know (and a chart)

- Workers covered by a union-negotiated contract earn, on average, 13.2 percent more than similar peers in nonunion worksites. The pay gaps between working people of different races and genders are much smaller in unionized worksites, according to the Economic Policy Institute.
- Millennials see the value of unions. Pew Research says 68 percent of Americans younger than 30 have a favorable view of unions. So do 55 percent of Americans overall.
- American unions are diverse — 58 percent of members are women. The EPI says a third of members in unions of public employees are Black, brown or Asian-American.
- Public employees in Minnesota have only been able to bargain collectively since 1971, when the Minnesota Legislature enacted a law, called PELRA, giving them that power.

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

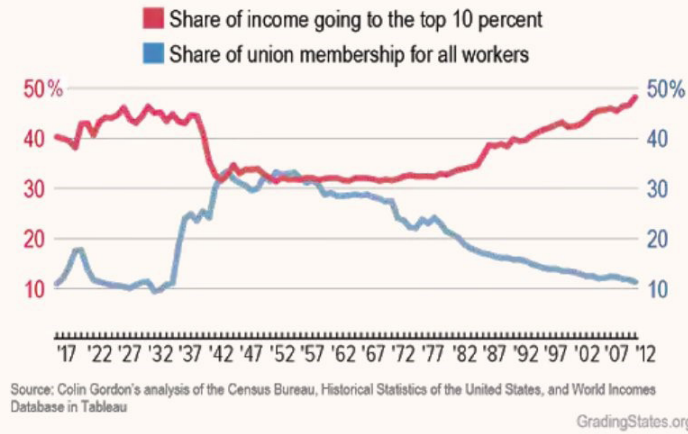
Education Minnesota is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and AFL-CIO.  1664



FOR 100% VOTING  
FOR FULL FUNDING OUR STUDENTS DESERVE  
FOR WELCOMING SCHOOLS FOR EVERYONE

**#EDMNVOTES**

## As Union Representation Fell, the Share of Income Going to the Top 10 Percent Rose, 1917 - 2012



Pew Research: "Young people view labor unions more favorably than business corporations." <https://pewrsr.ch/2Me2afw>

### Taking charge

- Gov. Tim Walz supports the rights of public employees to bargain collectively, but the Minnesota Senate is controlled by those who want to enact Betsy DeVos' anti-union agenda. Only by flipping the Minnesota Senate and keeping a pro-worker majority in the House in 2020 can Minnesota educators prevent anti-union legislators from taking back educators' collective bargaining rights, as lawmakers did in Iowa and Wisconsin.
- Giving everyone an equal opportunity to join or form a union will require stronger enforcement of federal labor laws, so remember to vote pro union in races for U.S. House and U.S. Senate in 2020.
- Volunteering your time, expertise and energy to your local union will keep your union strong during these attacks.