

2021 NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Human and Civil Rights Award Winner

■ EDUCATION MINNESOTA



For almost a quarter century, Education Minnesota has been heralded as one of the nation's strongest labor organizations, with a storied reputation as advocates for educators and public school students with equal commitment.

Knowing that the key to quality educational opportunities for youth is a strong support system for those charged to nurture them, Education Minnesota is much more than just a union. It is a coalition of parents, teachers, administrators and community leaders, all working in

concert towards the common goal of improving the quality of life for young people.

Education Minnesota is committed to meaningful, intentional, and ongoing work to advance racial and social justice for its members and Minnesota students and communities; spearheading their Racial Equity Advocates (REA) program and advancing the work of its Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee (EMAC). Rooted in an examination of self-reflection, opportunities to engage with others, and an exploration of the systems of injustice, Education Minnesota provides opportunities for members and staff to engage and lead in justice work, and sets clear organizational goals and encourages reflection to ensure growth on its equity journey.

Education Minnesota was at the forefront of creating curricula that reflects diversity, and their mission continues; ED provides educators with strategies to eradicate culturally insensitive practices in the school system.

Education Minnesota's hard work has resulted in initiatives that improve the day to day classroom experience for teachers and students, such as self-care during Covid seminars, cultural competence training, lesson plans about Minnesota's diverse history, student driven immigration oral histories, and more.

Education Minnesota does not just give lip service to the issues that affect the educational system; they put their philosophies into action with policy makers on the state level, and in Washington. Many progressive developments in American public education started as part of the Education Minnesota brain trust.

The dynamic educational namesake of this award, Rosena J. Willis, lost the ability to teach when her Virginia school district closed rather than desegregate. Thanks to the efforts of Education Minnesota, no child, or teacher will ever be left behind due to race, creed or color.