



From the President's Desk — A note from the City about ESST

by Beth Ulrich, President

In May of 2024, the Minnesota State Legislature amended Minnesota Statutes 181.9445 to 181.9448 known as the Minnesota Earned Sick and Safe Time Law. The amendment includes a significant change to the law effective January 1, 2025, that requires employers to permit employees to use all paid leave that is awarded to them, including the leave covered under the collective bargaining agreement (CBA), for ESST-eligible reasons. This effectively ends any additional restrictions on leave earned over and above the amount required by the ESST law. This does not include leave covered under short- or long-term disability or sick leave accrued prior to January 1, 2024. Eligible uses for ESST identified in [MN Stat. 181.9447 subdivision 1](#) are:

- (1) an employee's:
 - (i) mental or physical illness, injury, or other health condition;
 - (ii) need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or
 - (iii) need for preventive medical or health care;
- (2) care of a family member:
 - (i) with a mental or physical illness, injury, or other health condition;
 - (ii) who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or other health condition; or
 - (iii) who needs preventive medical or health care;
- (3) absence due to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking of the employee or employee's family member, provided the absence is to:
 - (i) seek medical attention related to physical or psychological injury or disability caused by domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking;
 - (ii) obtain services from a victim services organization;
 - (iii) obtain psychological or other counseling;
 - (iv) seek relocation or take steps to secure an existing home due to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking; or
 - (v) seek legal advice or take legal action, including preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or resulting from domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking;

- (4) closure of the employee's place of business due to weather or other public emergency or an employee's need to care for a family member whose school or place of care has been closed due to weather or other public emergency;
- (5) the employee's inability to work or telework because the employee is: (i) prohibited from working by the employer due to health concerns related to the potential transmission of a communicable illness related to a public emergency; or (ii) seeking or awaiting the results of a diagnostic test for, or a medical diagnosis of, a communicable disease related to a public emergency and such employee has been exposed to a communicable disease or the employee's employer has requested a test or diagnosis; and
- (6) when it has been determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care professional that the presence of the employee or family member of the employee in the community would jeopardize the health of others because of the exposure of the employee or family member of the employee to a communicable disease, whether or not the employee or family member has actually contracted the communicable disease.

For the purposes of this subdivision, a public emergency shall include a declared emergency as defined in section [12.03](#) or a declared local emergency under section [12.29](#).

Additionally, the amendment changed recordkeeping requirements including that employers are no longer required to provide ESST balances on pay statements so long as they provide a reasonable system to track ESST hours earned and used by employees. These recordkeeping changes are effective as of August 1, 2024. At the time of this draft, neither the City nor School District has informed PEA of an alternative method for record keeping.

City of Saint Paul Labor Relations staff has informed PEA that the City will comply with the expanded use of all earned sick leave under the CBA effective August 1, 2024. City employees will no longer be required to choose between ESST and standard leave thanks to this early implementation by the City.

The Corner

by Mike Wilde, Legal Counsel

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”
— George Bernard Shaw

It seems to be a fairly obvious fact that we think much faster than we talk. After all, it’s not a flattering comment when one reminds another to think before they speak. It’s assumed that our natural state is one where the mind has far outpaced the surrounding events and experiences. Our minds are in perpetual overdrive, whether in beneficial problem-solving mode or the destructive anxiety state that focuses on fear of what is yet to come.

It’s also all too common to fill in the void with our own assumptions. We complete the picture when we likely have only a few of the facts. Since this is one of the most human things about our brains, it’s all too common for us to assume certain facts, even take them for granted, despite a completely different reality that exists. I guess this applies often in communications, thus Mr. Shaw’s “illusion of communication” exists in all organizations. PEA has received a few reminders of this in just the past month. For example, our City contract now has a performance-based compensation plan that allows members who have topped-out on their salary steps with an option of gaining greater compensation by achieving agreed upon goals.

The plan was reviewed and rolled out recently. The months that preceded this unveiling were filled with a lot of PEA consternation. We envisioned all sorts of troubles. But then it was rolled out as planned. We were even told that some departments had already been implementing the incentive plan with our members. Having heard no details, the PEA Executive Board members filled the void with beliefs that all was fine... until we learned otherwise.

Thanks to the eventual communication from a good member, PEA learned that the performance plan was already being hijacked in one department as a Director’s creative endeavor to unwittingly rewrite job descriptions. We didn’t cast evil intent on anyone, but this plan was NOT negotiated to quickly transform science-based professions into social media content creators. It was NOT to be devised as a fiat from department heads to those seeking to excel within their existing jobs. And it is certainly NOT dependent on budgets.

With more communication came more details and less assumptions. In one particular department, it was revealed that the performance plan was being implemented in a manner that was NOT negotiated. Less assumptions and more facts have already put us on a corrective path. We hope to have more detail on the successes we expect our members to have in the coming months. Until then, detailed communication is always better for all.

Help us in this regard and communicate with details about how this or any PEA provision is actually being carried out. Otherwise, we might mistakenly assume all is well, even when it’s NOT.

Mission Statement

The Professional Employees Association is dedicated to bargain, administer, and enforce labor agreements in a responsible, prudent, and lawful manner for the overall improvement of members’ working conditions, with emphasis on general advocacy, education, and communication.

*** Nomination and Election Notice ***

Nominations and elections for the seven (7) executive committee positions will be held on **Tuesday October 8, 2024** during our PEA general membership meeting.

The incumbents below have informed the Board that they intend on running again in their same position or in a new position that will be vacated at the end of the term:

- President – *Sara Nurmela* (currently VP)
- Vice President –
- Treasurer – *Kelsey Curran* (incumbent)
- Secretary –
- Personnel – *Mary Henke-Haney* (incumbent)
- Negotiations (SPPS) – *Mike Dosedel* (incumbent)
- Negotiations (City) – *Patty Lammers* (incumbent)

Beth Ulrich has decided to step down from the President position, and Bri Herrera is stepping down from the Secretary position. Sara Nurmela has served as Vice President and is running for President. Open positions will be filled through the October election.

Qualifications

Pursuant to the Constitution and Bylaws as ratified and amended at the April 2018 General Membership meeting, “*members are qualified to run for office on the Executive Committee or hold steward positions provided they have joined as a member in good standing one year before the election or appointment for the Executive Board or selection for a steward position and have attended at least one general membership meeting in the past 12 months.*”

PEA wants to be inclusive to all members who would like to run for office. Also stated in the Constitution and Bylaws “[e]ach nominee is encouraged to submit a short biography that will be submitted in the meeting notice and/or newsletter preceding the election meeting”*. Qualified members that are nominated from the floor understand that they will not have had the opportunity to submit such biography for the meeting notice or newsletter.

* If there are new candidates, a Special Edition Election Newsletter will be sent out with submitted biographies if there are new candidates and they submit a biography by August 30. Otherwise bios for many of the incumbents can be found at <https://peaonline.org/newsletters/> in the Elections Special 2023 newsletter under 2023.

Nominations and biographies should be sent to Mike Wilde (mike.wilde24@gmail.com) or made through participation at the meeting. Nominations can be made for any position. Nonmembers cannot participate in the nomination process, election, or voting.

Diversity is important in the healthy functioning of all organizations. All eligible members are encouraged to fully participate and consider running for office.

Fall General Membership Meeting

& Executive Board Elections

Tuesday October 8, 2024

Mancini's Char House
531 7th St W, Saint Paul

5:30pm – Registration & Appetizers
6:00pm – Dinner
6:30pm – Meeting - including Elections
& gift card giveaway

Cost: FREE for Members,
\$40 for Nonmembers
(payable at the door by cash or check)

PEA's General Membership Meetings are a time to connect with other members, talk to union leadership, hear about the current state of PEA, and learn more about opportunities available to our members.

Don't know anyone who will attending? Don't worry, we'll help you get connected and meet new people!

RSVP by Friday September 27, 2024
to sara.nurmela@ci.stpaul.mn.us with your choice of entrée:
steak, chicken, walleye, or vegetarian

To request accommodations or ask questions about accessibility, please include a note with your RSVP email to sara.nurmela@ci.stpaul.mn.us to allow time to make arrangements if necessary.



Everyone represented by PEA can attend the dinner/meeting, but only members may vote and participate fully in PEA. If you are not a member, please consider becoming a member today so you can be an active participant in your Association. Attendance at a general membership in the previous year is a requirement to run for an elected position in PEA.

PEA Schools Contract Settled

update from Mike Dosedel, Schools Negotiations Chair

Introduction and Thank You

The PEA negotiations team has reached a tentative agreement with the district after a long and challenging negotiation process. First, thank you to everyone who was involved in this process. We intended to make the process as democratic as possible and appreciated the information, ideas, and efforts of all members involved. This includes those of you who completed the contract priority survey at the beginning of the process, were a member of our larger negotiations committee that met early on to steer the process, or even just took the time to attend our information and voting sessions. I especially thank PEA attorney Mike Wilde and negotiation table team members Michelle Bergman Aho and Charlie Colvin. I also would like to thank Kelsey Curran, our current PEA treasurer, former negotiation team member, and steward, for informal but valued consultation throughout the process.

The Process

We started this process last fall to get ahead of teacher negotiations and settle our contract faster than in previous years. Clearly, this was not entirely successful, given that as I write this, it is August 1st. Despite our team working to be prepared and starting the process last fall, it took a long time to get to a settlement for two main reasons: labor relations and district hardline positions.

First, the lead negotiator with labor relations was out on several longer medical leaves and some reduced days or hours when working. The district refused to provide additional or alternative staff to keep the process moving forward and instead required us to wait. Additionally, throughout the process, labor relations was often ill-prepared for negotiation sessions. For example, they frequently did not complete tasks that they had promised to complete prior to meetings. They also attended sessions without having the authority to make decisions on issues that were the primary focus of the session (including during mediation).

Secondly, the district took several hardline positions and was unwilling to discuss the motivations or logic behind their stances. This included demanding the elimination of civil service rules, refusing to add additional certifications to the certification list for human resources staff, and attempting to unilaterally and arbitrarily lower the grade/pay of an existing position (with two people working in that title).

We fought hard on multiple issues and even took the district to mediation for the first time in over 25 years. Through these efforts, we secured a contract that is financially better than most of our peer unions and our previous several contracts. Despite our best efforts, we could not protect the civil service rules and lost on this issue. Future newsletters will include information about the potential real-world impacts of this change.

The Outcomes

Contract Length

This contract is 2.5 years long, running from January 1st, 2024, to July 1st, 2026. This was done as a compromise with the district to get our negotiation time 'off-cycle' with the teachers. We plan to move back to two-year contracts after this. The district wanted 3-year contracts for all non-teaching unions, but our members had notable and reasonable concerns.

Language Changes

- Defeated districts attempt to lower the grade/pay of an individual title arbitrarily.
- Changed longevity step language from the end of the year to the beginning of the year (effectively, you will get your longevity steps one year sooner)
- Updated parental leave policy to remove the gendered language, replacing "father" with non-birthing parent.
- Modified sick leave language to align with new sick and safe leave law.
- Cleaned up and added more certifications to the approved list for step advancement (see Appendix B)
- Full Elimination of Civil Service rules from our contract.
- Implementation of recommended changes based on Evergreen study (see Appendix A)

Wages/Cost of Living Increase

- Year 1: 3% effective April 1, 2024 (Backpay to April 1 for all employees on the payroll on 4/1/24)
- Year 2: 3% effective Jan 1, 2025
- Year 3: 2% effective Jan 1, 2026 (note our contract ends 6/30/26)

SPPS Contract Settled continued on page 6

Insurance

- Year 1 Monthly increase: Individual \$45, Family \$100 Monthly (backpay to 1/1/24 for employees who are on the payroll August 21st, 2024)
- Year 2 Monthly increase: Individual \$30, Family \$50
- Year 3 Monthly increase: Individual \$12, Family \$50 (note our contract ends 6/30/26)

Deferred Compensation

- Increase district match by \$150 yearly (\$1400/\$1600, before/after 2014 hire date)

Next Steps

Implementation and backpay

The contract was ratified by PEA on 6/25/24. The SPPS school board is expected to vote and ratify our contract on 8/20/24. Backpay will be issued after that; we expect it in September but have limited control. Watch for updates. Employees should expect backpay for health insurance back to 1/1/24; other backpay (wages and evergreen) employees will receive backpay to 4/1/24.

Action Items:

- Increase or review your deferred comp by at least \$150 to take advantage of the increased matching amount. If at all possible, all employees should contribute at least \$1400 if hired before 2014 or \$1600 if hired after 2014. If you are not doing this, you are leaving free money on the table. <https://www.spps.org/about/departments/human-resources/payroll/pensions-tsa/403b-and-457-plans>

- Carefully review your backpay when it is issued. Reach out to PEA if you have questions or concerns.
- Contact PEA if you are up for promotion; this relates to the elimination of the civil service rules.

Appendix: A

Evergreen Study Implementation:

All changes will be implemented effective April 1st, 2024, with backpay to that date.

To be eligible for the backpay the employee must be on the SPPS payroll as of the date of contract ratification (expected August 21).

Increasing the grade of the following positions as specified below

- Research Analyst 1 → PEA 10
- Accountant 1 → PEA 11
- Facilities Project Coordinator → PEA 12
- Accountant 2 → PEA 13
- Marketing Comm Sr. Assoc → PEA 14
- Research Analyst 2 → PEA 14
- Construction Project Manager → PEA 16
- Facilities Project Manager → PEA 16
- Research Analyst 3 → PEA 18
- Facilities Senior Project Manager → PEA 21
- Construction Sr Project Manager → PEA 21

Steps 1 and 2 will be eliminated from the pay scale.

Individuals in Step 1 or 2 as of 4/1/2024 will be moved to Step 3 immediately, and a lump sum backpay to 4/1/2024 will be issued.

All other individuals will remain at their current step, and step progression will continue as normal. Steps will not be renumbered.

Looking for new stewards for the City!

Current Stewards in the Office of Financial Services/Empowerment, Parks, and PED are stepping down and we need folks to take on the role. Many thanks to Alex Klarich, Adam Strehlow, and Sarah Zorn for all their work during their tenure.

Stewards help members understand and navigate workplace rights, communicate with members and leadership, and attend quarterly meetings - including our April and October General Membership Meetings. Stewards don't pay dues, and get support from the rest of the PEA leadership team.

To be eligible to be a steward, you must have been a member for the previous year, and attended at least one of our last two General Membership meetings.

If none of the eligible folks in those departments are interested, we'll open the positions up to anyone in the City, so even if you're not in OFS, Parks, or PED, think about it! If not for this round, maybe the next one!

If you have any questions about being a steward, reach out to Mary.Henke-Haney@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Appendix: B

Updated Certification list for one-time step advancement * or ** indicates new or updated certification
ALEP – Accredited Learning Environment Planner

APR – Accreditation in Public Relations
Asbestos Inspector – Minnesota Department of Health
AZ-700 – Designing and Implementing Microsoft Azure Networking Solutions*
BEMC – Basic Emergency Management Certificate (MNDPS, HSEM)
CBAP – Certified Business Analyst Professional
CCCA – Certified Construction Contract Administrator
CCIE – Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert
CCM – Certified Construction Manager
CCNA – Cisco Certified Network Associate
CCNP – Cisco Certified Network Professional
CCS – Certified Construction Specifier
CCSP – Certified Cloud Security Professional
CDT – Construction Documents Technologist
CEH – Certified Ethical Hacker
CHMM – Certified Hazardous Materials Manager
CISA – Certified Information Systems Auditor
CISSP – Certified Information Systems Security Professional
CLRP – Certified Labor Relations Professional
CMA – Certified Management Accountant**
CMP – Communication Management Professional
CPA – Certified Public Accountant
CPP – Certified Payroll Professionals
CPSI – Certified Playground Safety Inspector
CSP – Certified Safety Professional
Evergreen – Data Visualization Certification Program*
FPC – Fundamental Payroll Certification
Google – Project Management Certification
GPC – Grants Professional Certification
HAZWOPER – Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
JAMF-200 JAMF – Certified Technician
JAMF-300 JAMF – Certified Administrator
LEED – Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design
MCSE – Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert

MN AELSLAGID – PA Architect Registration
MN AELSLAGID – PE Professional Engineer Registration
MN AELSLAGID – PLA Landscape Architect Registration
MO-201 – Microsoft Excel Expert**
NCIDQ – Certificate National Council of Interior Design Qualifications
OSHA – General Industry Safety (MN Safety Council 30-hour course)
PACE – Professional Administrative Certification of Excellence**
PL-400 – Microsoft Power Platform Developer**
SC-900 – Microsoft Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals*
SCMP – Strategic Communication Management Professional
Security+ – CompTIA Security+
ServSafe – Certified ServSafe Instructor
SFA – Specialty Food Association Food Buyer Certificate
SHRM – SHRM Talent Acquisition Specialty Credential**
SHRM-CP – Society for Human Resource Management Certified Professional
SHRM-SCP – Society for Human Resource Management Senior Certified Professional
SSCP – ISC2 Security Systems Certified Practitioner
Tableau – Certified Data Analyst
Tableau – Desktop Specialist
Tableau – Server Certified Associate
TRUE – Waste Advisor Certificate**

Any project management certification examples include:

- » Google Project Management Certification
- » Project Management Institute's PMP, CAPM or, PMI-PBA
- » American Academy of Project Management's CIPM or, MPM



Professional Employees Association

CITY OF SAINT PAUL & INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625

www.peaonline.org

Executive Committee

President	Beth Ulrich <i>beth.ulrich@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	PED – 1100 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6689
Vice President	Sara Nurmela <i>peanewsletter@gmail.com</i> <i>sara.nurmela@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	HREEO – 280 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8974
Treasurer	Kelsey Curran <i>kelsey.curran@spps.org</i>	360 Colborne St., 55102	651-767-8115
Secretary	Brianna Herrera <i>brianna.herrera@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-1807
Personnel	Mary Henke-Haney <i>mary.henke-haney@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 North Hamline Ave., 55108	651-248-6500
School Negotiations	Mike Dosedel <i>michael.dosedel@spps.org</i> <i>peanegotiations.spps@gmail.com</i>	360 S. Colborne St., 55102	
City Negotiations	Patty Lammers <i>patricia.lammers@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5455

Staff & Others

Legal Counsel	Mike Wilde, Esq. <i>mike.wilde24@gmail.com</i>	353 7th St. W Saint Paul, MN 55102	612-227-8425
Member Outreach & Education Coordinator	Michelle Bergman Aho <i>michelle.bergman-aho@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-2226
Member Outreach & Education Coordinator	Tim Buer <i>tim.buer@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1225 Estabrook Dr., 55103	651-487-8271
LMCHI (City)	Kathleen Conger <i>kathleen.conger@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Sun Ray Library 2105 Wilson Ave, 55119	651-266-7000
LMCHC (SPPS)	Laurie Niblick <i>laurie.niblick@spps.org</i>	360 Colborne St., 55102	651-603-4347
Newsletter	Sara Nurmela <i>peanewsletter@gmail.com</i>	HREEO – 280 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-8974
Webpage <i>www.peaonline.org</i>	Claire Huber <i>claire.huber@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	Libraries (SPPL) – 90 W 4th St., 55102	651-266-7475
Mailing Address	Professional Employees Association	PO Box 7333 Saint Paul, MN 55107-0333	

Stewards

Police, Fire, Emergency Management, Public Health	Derek Peterson <i>derek.l.peterson@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	367 Grove St., 55101	651-266-5725
CAO, DSI	Jean Filipkowski <i>jean.filipkowski@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	CAO – 500 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., 55102	651-266-6262
OFS	vacant		
Libraries	Peter Borgen <i>peter.borgen@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i> <i>PeterBorgenUnionSteward@gmail.com</i>		651-695-3700
Libraries	Sarah Gerdes <i>sarah.gerdes@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>		651-266-7482
OTC, HREEO	JD Miller <i>jd.miller@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1200 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6730
Parks & Recreation	Adam Strehlow <i>adam.strehlow@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1100 Hamline Ave N, 55108	651-632-2432
Parks & Recreation – Zoo & Conservatory	Anne Ahiers <i>anne.ahiers@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	1225 Estabrook Dr., 55103	651-487-8274
PED	vacant		
Public Works	Bill Vos <i>bill.vos@ci.stpaul.mn.us</i>	900 City Hall Annex, 25 W. 4th St., 55102	651-266-6113
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School District	Pam Bookhout <i>pamela.bookhout@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	651-744-5475
School Districtf	Alex Miller <i>alex.miller@spps.org</i>	1930 Como Ave., 55108	612-437-2767
School District	Laurie Niblick <i>laurie.niblick@spps.org</i>	360 Colborne St., 55102	651-603-4347
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