

Colleagues,

I received some early responses to my communication last night that have raised issues I take so seriously that I feel the need to clarify them immediately, even though I know we are all receiving many communications from all directions right now.

I want to be absolutely clear on the following points that may have been confusing in our first communication:

- MSCF did not agree--nor was asked to agree--to the suspension of parts of collectively bargained agreements in the public sector. This was an executive order, within the context of the declared peacetime emergency, that is within the scope of the Governor's power to decide independently and without our or any other public sector labor union's consultation and/or agreement.
- It is our current understanding that only some provisions of collectively bargained agreements are currently suspended and PELRA itself has not been suspended. We will be working as hard as we can in the hours ahead today to clarify the full meaning of the executive order for faculty in the two-year colleges.
- Even though some provisions of all public sector agreements are currently suspended during this peacetime emergency, we as MSCF will continue our work as a labor union to relentlessly push for the safety and wellbeing of our members as well as fair treatment of all workers in every way we can.

Part of our critical work now is to ensure all parties in power acknowledge the level to which we are going above and beyond our normal duties. We must push to get agreements at all levels ensuring collectively bargained agreements in the public sector be fully restored as soon as this peacetime emergency ends. We will not allow what happens during this public emergency to set new precedents and standards, or permanently erode important protections fought for and won in our agreements.

I want to say again this last part so that there is no confusion: we will not now nor ever cease to function as a labor union, committed to using our full collective voice, in order to address the needs and interests of our members, our workplaces and of our communities. The suspension of some parts of collectively bargained agreements during this unprecedented public health emergency in no way changes that.

Again, thank you for your continued understanding and support while we are all under tremendous pressure. I remain inspired by our solidarity.

In unity,

Matt

PS: there has been little media coverage of this move, but this article provides a bit of a larger window into responses to this EO: <https://workdayminnesota.org/breaking-gov-walz-suspends-some-collective-bargaining-rights/>

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

