

**Peterson, Sandra E.  
(Espeseth)**



of New Hope, Minn. Born in Benson, MN. to Lynn and Ethel Espeseth. Sandra passed away peacefully on Oct. 24, 2015. Beloved

mother, grandmother, wife, partner, friend and colleague. Sandra touched many lives and especially loved time spent with her grandchildren, family and friends. A former teacher, union officer and legislator, she was a visionary leader and pioneer in Minnesota public education for more than 40 years. Peterson was a co-president of Education Minnesota at the union's founding in 1998. A former president of the Minnesota Federation of Teachers for 11 years, Sandra served in the highest offices of Education Minnesota until 2004, upon which time she ran her first campaign for the Minnesota House seat. She won that election and three subsequent elections, representing the citizens of New Hope, Plymouth and Crystal in District 45A. She retired from the Minnesota House after serving four terms and went on to serve on several advisory boards, bringing her professional expertise in education and policy to groups including the MN Children's Museum. She came to union work while a teacher in Robbinsdale Public Schools for 17 years at Sunny Hollow Elementary, Pilgrim Lane Elementary and Armstrong High School. She began teaching in Robbinsdale in 1970 after holding teaching jobs in Mounds View, Minn.; Palatine, Ill.; and Minot, N.D. She attended Macalester College, receiving her B.S. in Education in 1967. She also attended the University of Minnesota and Harvard University, earning graduate degrees and leadership credits. Survived by siblings, Dave (Karen) Espeseth; Marilyn Espeseth; Randy Espeseth; Kevin Espeseth; sister-in-law, Carolyn Espeseth; sons, Stephen (Jeannine) Peterson; Eric (Sonya) Peterson; Mark (Sue) Teien; Paul (Joan) Teien; grandchildren, Nick, Jacqueline, Charlie, Anna, Christine, Ellie, Maria. Preceded in death by parents Lynn and Ethel Espeseth; brother, Robert Espeseth; husband, Richard Peterson; life partner, Alfred (Bud) Teien; brother-in-law, Darryl Erickson. Sandra held numerous positions in education, legislative, labor and civic organizations, including: Vice President, American Federation of Teachers; Vice President, Minnesota AFL-CIO; Federal Reserve Bank Advisory Board; Minnesota's Economy Working Group; Minnesota Education Advisory Group; Vice Chair, Minnesota Job Skills Partnership; Governor's Workforce Development Council; Minnesota News Council; League of Women Voters; Board of Directors, Minnesota Children's Museum; Childcare and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan Advisory Group; Office of Early Learning Advisory Council. Among many awards, she was honored as a Minnesota DFL Woman of Distinction in 2013. Funeral arrangements are pending. Memorials preferred to MN Children's Museum.

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