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Solidarity!

MTI Officers Installed; Medearis to Retire

While new officers and newly elected members of the Union's Bargaining Committee were installed at last week's MTI Faculty Representative Council meeting, there was a bit of musical chairs. Outgoing President **Paula Ferrara-Parrish** (Elvehjem) introduced the new officers and passed the gavel to incoming President **David Medearis** (Mendota). In his remarks, **Medearis**, who was elected President Elect a year ago, **announced that he has decided to retire at the end of the 2007-08 school year.** **David** has served on the MTI Board of Directors since 2003, and also served a term as MTI President for the 2006-07 school year. Toward the end of the Council meeting, **Medearis** explained that under the MTI Bylaws, President Elect **Steve Pike** (West) would assume the Presidency. **Pike** has been a member of the MTI Board since 1996 and has served as Vice President since 2005. **Pike** was elected President Elect in April's MTI general election. His term as President was to have begun in May, 2009. He will now serve as MTI President for two years.

Other MTI officers elected and installed were: **Art Camosy** (Memorial) - Vice President; incumbent **Kerry Motoviloff** (Elvehjem) - Secretary; and incumbent **Fred Rosevear** (East) - Treasurer.

Installed on the MTI Bargaining Committee were: incumbent and current Chair **Bob Arnold** (Lowell) as Elementary Representative; **Lori Hamann** (Cherokee) as Middle School Representative; incumbent **David Irwin** (West) as High School Representative; incumbent **Kent Wells** (Chavez) as At-Large Representative; and incumbent **Mary Larson** (Whitehorse) as Educational Services Representative.

SIMS Concerns Escalate; Faculty Rep Council Creates Union Task Force

At the May 20 MTI Faculty Representative Council meeting, **members were invited to share concerns over the District's planned implementation of SIMS** (*Student Intervention Monitoring System*). The enthusiastic conversation lasted for over an hour. **Members expressed concerns** regarding the practical limitations of implementation (such as time constraints), the impact on instructional time and student learning, and that SIMS could be used in their evaluation as well as for those who had earlier worked with the student in question.

Chief among the *concerns expressed was that the District has developed the student intervention management system without the input of those who manage student interventions - teachers, and that it is being forced on staff.*

Given the extent of the expressed concerns, **MTI's Faculty Representative Council adopted a motion recommending that all MTI members refrain from utilizing SIMS until an MTI Task Force concludes its work and reports its findings and recommendations regarding SIMS.** This is planned to occur before the beginning of the 2008-09 school year.

Any MTI member who would like to share their concerns and/or is interested in participating on the MTI SIMS Task Force should do so via the SIMS location on the MTI web page www.madisonteachers.org.

Celebrate Executive Director John Matthews' 40 Years of MTI Leadership

Please mark your calendars for **Thursday, May 29th, from 4:00-8:00 p.m., to celebrate John Matthews' 40 years of service to MTI and the greater Madison labor community.** In his honor, MTI will host an open house at the Avenue Bar (1128 E. Washington Avenue). Light snacks will be provided, with a cash bar available.

Now's the Time to Get TUFF

The time for reform of Wisconsin's school finance laws is NOW, and the Union's plan for this fall's legislative election is to elect those for whom school finance reform is a priority.

Throughout the summer of 2007, a group of MTI members met to discuss school finance issues, including ways to organize MTI members to build support for legislation and for a school referendum should one materialize. The group adopted the name of **TUFF** (*Teachers United for Fair Funding*). The District's receipt of unexpected Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) money enabled the District a one year reprieve from the the multi-million dollar budget cuts which had been experienced annually over the past decade, as a result of the legislated revenue controls on school boards. Because of the TIF money, no referendum was needed, so the work of TUFF was put on hold. **NOW'S THE TIME TO GET BUSY.**

(continued on reverse)

Get TUFF (continued)

The 2008-09 school year will be a pivotal year in the nation, as well as in the District. In addition to the Presidential election, November will be an opportunity to elect education-friendly politicians to the State Assembly. This is particularly crucial given the current make-up of the State Senate and party of the Governor. A favorable State Assembly would finally make possible the prospect of school finance reform and the end of 15 years of funding erosion. **NOW'S THE TIME TO ELECT EDUCATION-FRIENDLY POLITICAL LEADERS!**

Speaking of school finance, we finally have a number of reform proposals to consider, including a Foundation Plan which would eliminate both the QEO and revenue limits, restore local control to school boards, and provide significant money to educate EEN students, ELL students and TAG students. **The Foundation Plan has been developed by MTI Executive Director John Matthews, former WEAC Executive Director Morris Andrews, former WEAC President Jim Blank, and a group of other current and former teacher union leaders. MTI staff are also working on a school finance plan with the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools (WAES), and WEAC is also working on a school finance reform plan along with a coalition including the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, the Wisconsin PTA, and other groups. NOW'S THE TIME TO PUSH FOR SCHOOL FINANCE REFORM!**

While we work to elect pro-education politicians, and seek their commitment to implement school finance reform, we need to realize that this will not happen without your involvement. In the short term, we must also work to pass a school funding referendum in the MMSD. Without a referendum, the School Board is projecting that they will need to cut over \$10 million for the 2009-10 school year. That would be the single largest annual cut since revenue limits were implemented in 1993, and after the last fifteen years of cuts (\$60 million in cuts to the District's same-service budget), it would have a devastating impact on public education in Madison. **NOW'S THE TIME TO PASS A REFERENDUM TO BRIDGE THE GAP BEFORE FINANCE REFORM IS IMPLEMENTED!**

Any MTI member interested in being part of the solution is invited to join TUFF as we reconvene over the summer to map out our strategy for 2008-09.

NOW'S THE TIME TO GET INVOLVED! Join TUFF by contacting Doug Keillor at MTI Headquarters (keillord@madisonteachers.org).

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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 MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org
 MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org

EA-MTI: Know Your Rights: Assignment to and Transfer from the Surplus Pool; Layoff

As nearly every school year has ended for the last several years, the District has declared as surplus at least one educational assistant in nearly every school. The MTI-MMSD Collective Bargaining Agreement governing educational assistants at Section IV-I-4 provides that any EA who has had part or all of their hours reduced at their school are placed in the EA surplus pool. Said EAs are then reassigned, in order of seniority and in accordance with their preference to vacant positions for which they are qualified and/or certified. In accordance with a Union victory in a grievance arbitration case, *the District is also obligated to make every reasonable effort to reassign EAs to positions of at least the same number of hours they currently work; however, they are not obligated to create hours in the school from which the EA was surplussed.* Therefore, **EAs need to assert their right to their same number of hours, even if it results in their being moved to a different school. All too often, EAs give up their hard-earned right to their same hours when they accept an assignment for fewer hours in order to remain in their current school.**

Educational Assistants also have transfer rights. When transfer opportunities become available, the District is obligated to consult the list of surplussed EAs, such that a more senior EA in the surplus pool has rights to a posted position over a less senior EA who has not been declared surplus, but has also applied for the same position, so long as the EA in surplus is qualified and/or certified for the position.

Finally, if a reduction in staff (layoff) is determined by the District to be necessary, EAs are laid off in inverse order of seniority, pursuant to Section IV-K of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. A layoff could include EAs who were not previously surplussed from their schools, as layoffs are done District-wide, rather than on a school-by-school basis. If layoffs occur, MTI will provide assistance to EAs regarding their unemployment insurance benefits rights.

Calendar of Events/Deadlines

- **Wednesday, May 28, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- **Thursday, May 29, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
Permit License Substitute Teachers
- **Wednesday, June 4, 4:00 p.m., MTI**
MTI Labor Solidarity Committee
- **Friday, June 13, Last Day of School**