



821 Williamson Street \* Madison, Wisconsin 53703-4503 \* Phone (608) 257-0491 \* Fax (608) 257-1168

# Solidarity!

## Election Countdown: Only 28 Days To Go; Do Your Part

- Had enough of *No Child Left Behind*?
  - Suffered enough under *State-imposed Revenue Controls*?
  - Suffered enough under the *wage controls on teachers*?
- They won't go away on their own! Are you willing to help to correct these wrongs, these pieces of legislation which are so very harmful to educators and to your education of children?*

**This fall's elections are of utmost importance to educators. They are perhaps the most important ever. Whether we elect candidates who will continue or eliminate this harmful legislation, is in our hands.**

**Changes don't come without effort. Join MTI's efforts to elect candidates who are committed to quality education and to ridding educators of this harmful legislation.**

Call or email MTI Assistant Directors Ken Volante ([volantek@madisonteachers.org](mailto:volantek@madisonteachers.org)) or Doug Keillor ([keillord@madisonteachers.org](mailto:keillord@madisonteachers.org)) and join your MTI colleagues in this year's election effort.



## Registered to Vote? Are You Sure?

**A decision by Judge Maryann Sumi will not be rendered until October 23 as regards Attorney General Van Hollen's challenge of Wisconsin's voter registration lists.** Van Hollen challenged approximately *one million Wisconsin residents. This challenge is based on one using a middle initial on their voter registration, but not when they got their driver's license, having an old address on their driver's license, and a new one for their voter registration.*

**MTI is assisting those who wish to make sure their voter registration is consistent with their driver's license or to correct an address.** MTI Assistant Directors **Ken Volante** and **Eve Degen** are deputized to register voters or make the necessary changes in voter registration. *They are willing to visit your school/work location if there are multiple staff who wish to complete new registration, or they are available at MTI Headquarters.* Calling to confirm a day/time is recommended. Degen and Volante will also be at MTI's October 21 MTI Faculty Representative Council meeting for this purpose. The Council meeting commences at 4:15 p.m., at the Labor Temple (1602 S. Park Street).

**Vote today, tomorrow or soon.** *To avoid the long lines on November 4, go to your city/town clerk and vote on an absentee ballot, or vote in the comfort of your home.* For Madison residents, absentee ballot request forms are available from your MTI Faculty Representative.

## Health Insurance Annual Choice/Open Enrollment

MTI's various Collective Bargaining Agreements **provide that between October 15 and November 15 each year there will be an annual choice to switch health insurance providers, between/among the insurance carriers named in the Contracts.**

While members of MTI's teacher and substitute teacher bargaining units continue to have the option of WPS' Statewide Indemnity Plan or GHC, **because of the District's challenge and Arbitrator Malamud's decision, members of MTI's clerical/technical, educational assistant and security assistant bargaining units no longer have the WPS option.** Their choice is now among the HMOs - GHC, Physicians Plus and Dean Health Plan.

**ANNUAL CHOICE** is the period during which MTI represented employees who are already covered under an MTI negotiated District health insurance plan **may choose, without having to prove insurability, an alternate available plan. Implementation of coverage under the new plan will be effective January 1, 2009.**

**OPEN ENROLLMENT** is also available as a result of gains made during MTI's 1999 negotiations. Enrollment in health insurance is available to any employee who is benefit eligible (*an assignment of 19 hours per week or a teacher contract of at least 50%*). Those with health insurance who have an eligible dependent, **who is not now covered**, may enroll that dependent during this period. **The effective date for all new coverage is January 1, 2009.**

### *The Major Differences in the WPS and HMO Plans Are:*

- Under WPS one can self-refer to any WPS provider to obtain a second opinion, while under an HMO one must receive their primary physician's formal written referral to obtain a second opinion from a provider outside their HMO;
- Under an HMO, all family members must receive medical services from the HMO's providers;
- HMOs have limited mental health benefits, WPS does not.
- Mental health benefits under Dean, Physicians Plus and GHC all have an annual maximum per person of \$6,300.
- Dean, Physicians Plus and GHC each limit mental health visits to 20 per year;
- Physicians Plus limits inpatient treatment to 12 days per year;
- GHC and Dean limit inpatient treatment to 30 days per year;
- For transitional benefits, Dean and GHC each enable 15 days per year; Physicians Plus enables 18 days per year; and
- For all mental health services, via any of the designated HMOs, the maximum an enrollee has available per year is \$6,300.

## **Supt. Nerad Asks for Joint SIMS Implementation Team; Matthews Asks that Contract Be Respected**

At the September 29 meeting of the MTI SIMS Task Force and District administrators, **Superintendent Nerad requested that the parties create a smaller working committee to address the issues MTI members have raised surrounding the implementation of the District's Student Intervention Management System (SIMS).** MTI Executive Director **John Matthews** and MTI President **Steve Pike** agreed to Nerad's suggestion, but also **raised concerns that the District was currently in violation of the Contract by assigning SIMS work during elementary teachers' team planning time. Under the Contract, team planning time is designated to be used for instructional purposes only, and it is at teacher discretion,** not that of the District. In resolution, the parties agreed to first address any Contract issues and, once those are resolved, continue with the implementation issues raised by MTI members.

## **Caring For Our Community: 2008 Combined Campaign**

The 2008 Combined Campaign began on October 1 and runs through October 31. This is the annual MMSD workplace fund-raising campaign for which one can make donations to local, national and international umbrella organizations. Working together, these organizations represent more than 200 worthy non-profit agencies. The Combined Campaign allows employees to choose which agencies or umbrella groups will receive their charitable donations. Under MTI's various Collective Bargaining Agreements, one can make contributions through payroll deduction. Every person is aware of a charity that has helped a family member or someone they know. The Combined Campaign makes that possible. **Your gift, no matter how big or small, will have a positive impact.**

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### ***Calendar of Events/Deadlines***

- **Tuesday, October 7, 4:15 p.m., at MTI**  
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- **Monday, October 13, 4:15 p.m., at MTI**  
MTI Board of Directors
- **Tuesday, October 14, 4:15 p.m., at MTI**  
MTI VOTERS Political Action Committee
- **Wednesday, October 15, 4:30 p.m., at MTI**  
SEE-MTI General Membership
- **Tuesday, October 21, 4:15 p.m., at SCFL**  
MTI Faculty Representative Council
- **Wednesday, October 22, 4:15 p.m., at MTI**  
USO-MTI General Membership

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## ***Our Union Makes Us Strong!***

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MTI's web page - [www.madisonteachers.org](http://www.madisonteachers.org)  
MTI's email - [MTI@madisonteachers.org](mailto:MTI@madisonteachers.org)

### **School-Based Union Meetings**

## **Being Scheduled This Month**

At the September meeting of the MTI Faculty Representative Council, MTI President Steve Pike, TUFF (Teachers United for Fair Funding) Committee Chair Kathryn Burns, and MTI Assistant Director Doug Keillor promoted having school-based MTI meetings at as many schools as possible before November 4. The meetings are being organized by the MTI Faculty Representatives at each school. They will involve an MTI staff member, an elected leader and/or a teacher participant in TUFF. **The purpose of the meetings are two-fold: 1) to allow your Union staff and elected leaders to share the ways one can be involved in the Union,** particularly with the upcoming referendum campaign, but also in other ways; and 2) **to hear from MTI members about issues and concerns each** so that we can work together, as a Union, to address them.

Faculty Representatives have been asked to **identify a date, time and room location in each school** (after the Contract work day) when staff is available for such a meeting and contact Jen Nichols at MTI ([nicholsj@madisonteachers.org](mailto:nicholsj@madisonteachers.org)).

## **Mini-grants Available in 2008-09**

Mini-grants from the **Foundation for Madison's Public Schools**, the Evjue Foundation, Aristos, and the Rotary Foundation are available to District staff again this school year. Members may apply for funding for the 2009-10 school year, for award amounts ranging from \$3,000-\$10,000, **for innovative programs aimed at enhancing student engagement, learning, or relationships.** During the 2008-09 school year, the District's Grants and Fund Development Office will offer two workshops to share more information with potential applicants about how to successfully apply for and implement a mini-grant. Representatives from the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools, the Evjue Foundation, Aristos and the Rotary Foundation will be at the workshops to share an insider's perspective on the mini-grants and to answer your questions.

**October 7, 2008 from 4:15-6:00 p.m.**

at the Doyle Building, McDaniels Auditorium

**October 14, 2008 from 4:15-6:00 p.m.** at Memorial High School's Wisconsin River Neighborhood Center

Additional information on the mini-grants is available at <http://bpaweb.madison.k12.wi.us/grants/opportunities> or by contacting Marcie Pfeifer-Soderbloom, District Grants and Fund Development at 663-4947 or [mpfeifersode@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:mpfeifersode@madison.k12.wi.us).

## **“Back to School” Night**

**Although District management cannot unilaterally extend work hours for teachers, or direct members of MTI's “teacher” bargaining unit to attend Open House/Back to School Night,** MTI suggests attendance. Participation is good public relations and will likely result in good will with your students' parents. Similarly, teachers cannot be directed to attend other after school functions such as PTO/PTA.