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Solidarity!

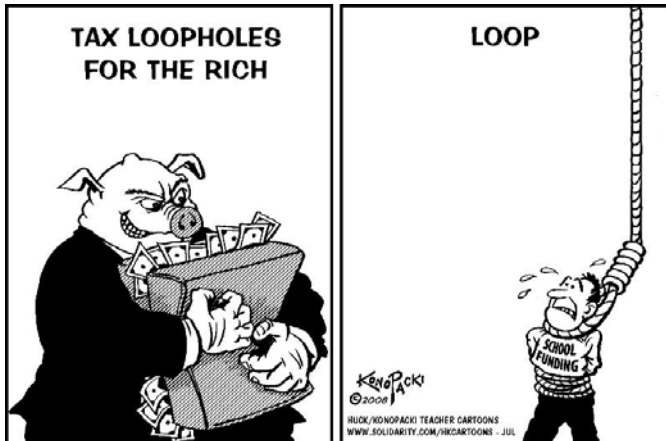
Large Response to Bargaining Survey

A major source of information in the Union's preparation for its biennial Teacher Contract negotiations with the District is member responses to the MTI Bargaining Committee's survey. And, this year's response was among the largest in many years. It even exceeded that for the 2007-09 negotiations. Data is now being tabulated for analysis. When completed, MTI Executive Director John Matthews will provide the analysis of the survey to the MTI Bargaining Committee.

Bargaining for the 2009-11 Collective Bargaining Agreement is expected to get underway in early 2009.

Election Opens the Door for School Finance Reform

Public education in Wisconsin has been shortchanged for 15 years, as have been teachers. It was 1993 when the



Governor pushed his budget through the Legislature, a budget by which the State usurped the authority of local school boards, and a budget which hijacked the process to negotiate teacher wages.

This fall's election clears the way for Governor Doyle to deliver on his promise that the war on teachers is over; and for the Legislature to restore the authority of local school boards to provide the quality of education demanded by the residents of their school district.

With the Governor and both houses of the Legislature controlled by one party, there can be no more excuses.

Negotiations Update

EA-MTI

The parties met on November 10 and 12 to commence earnest discussion of each other's initial proposal. There has been productive discussions over a variety of issues. **However, the District has made a low-ball salary offer of a 1.5% increase for each year of the two-year Contract. The Union's proposal is for a cost-of-living increase, i.e. to recover wages lost by the increase in the cost-of-living, so as to maintain one's wage.** The District remains steadfast in their denial of adding a compensated floating day off, up to two snow days, and an expansion of bereavement leave, all as proposed by the Union.

Bargaining is scheduled to continue in December.

SSA-MTI

The District and MTI exchanged initial proposals on October 29, and subsequently bargained on November 17. **MTI has proposed increasing the number of floating holidays from two to four; that SSAs be subpoenaed to testify in court; that the salary schedule be amended to increase the starting wage and hasten longevity payments; and increase wages by the cost-of-living.**

The District has proposed to limit transfer rights; increase management rights, thus limiting the right of MTI to bargain; and increase wages by only 1.5% each year of the Contract.

Bargaining is scheduled to continue on December 10.

SEE-MTI

The parties met on September 24, October 28, November 3, 11 and 19, and have made slow and steady progress on a number of issues. **The District is currently proposing a 2.25% increase in both years of the Contract. The Union proposes a 3.6% increase each year. The Union also continues to propose paid snow days and language which will ensure that health insurance benefits cannot be unilaterally changed by the District or the respective insurance carriers.**

Bargaining is scheduled to continue on December 1.

How Cold Is *Too Cold*?

With the return of winter to our fair city, temperatures have and will continue to plunge to freezing levels. When schools and other large buildings experience several days of sub-zero temperatures, heating systems strain to keep rooms warm. Classrooms frequently feel too cold. What can be done? Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter 64, states that “[T]he heating system shall be designed to maintain a temperature of not less than. . . *67 degrees Fahrenheit for classrooms and offices in schools and other places of instruction.*”

Staff who experience heating problems in District classrooms or offices should immediately contact their building administrator and custodian for assistance.

Whether the heating systems are insufficient, improperly installed or simply old cannot excuse schools/offices being too cold. The cost of energy is of concern to us all, but MMSD, like every other school district in Wisconsin, is experiencing financial problems because of the state-imposed revenue controls. Surely these impact funds for heating fuel, so energy must be used wisely. However, students and staff are entitled to a proper learning and working environment. *Let's hope this is one more reminder for Governor Doyle to return control of schools to local school boards, by doing away with the revenue controls.*

Members seeking the Union's assistance should contact **Eve Degen** (degene@madisonteachers.org).

Harassment Inservices

Among the few MTI/MMSD mutually agreed upon obligatory inservices in which all District employees must participate is a one and one-half hour inservice on harassment. One need only attend the inservice once. For those who have not yet attended the course, it will be offered during the 2008-09 school year on the following dates:

Dec. 4	Memorial Auditorium at 4:15 p.m.
Feb. 10	LaFollette C17 at 4:15 p.m.
March 12	Memorial Auditorium at 4:15 p.m.
April 27	LaFollette C17 at 4:15 p.m.

Leave of Absence Deadlines

Pursuant to Section VI-B (Leaves of Absences) of MTI's "Teacher" Collective Bargaining Agreement, all *non-medical leaves except academic, adoption and childrearing leaves, must be for a minimum of one full school year* and must commence at the beginning of the first semester. Academic or childrearing leaves must be for a minimum of one semester. Leaves and leave extensions are granted to teachers as follows:

Initial Request: One semester (academic or childrearing). **Extension:** One extension will be allowed for the semester following the semester of the initial leave, unless the initial request is for the second semester or the school year, then the extension must be for the entire school year.

Initial Request: One full school year. **Extension:** One extension consisting of the following school year.

Requests for an academic or childrearing leave of absence for the second semester of the 2008-09 school year are due by **DECEMBER 1, 2008.**

Other than for academic leaves of absence or extension of same, leave of absence requests for the first semester or the full school year for 2009-10, or to extend a leave of absence, must be made in writing through the principal/supervisor to Human Resources by **March 1, 2009.** A request for an academic leave or for an extension of same must be made to the Department of Human Resources by **May 1, 2009** for the first semester or the ensuing school year.

Given that one remains represented by MTI and has benefits available while on leave, partial dues for the period one is on leave can be paid either during the leave or upon return.

Calendar of Events/Deadlines

- **Thursday, Friday, November 27/28**
Thanksgiving
- **Monday, December 1**
Deadline to Apply for Leave of Absence
- **Tuesday, December 2, 4:15 p.m., Harmony Bar**
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- **Monday, December 8, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI Board of Directors
- **December 20 - January 4**
Winter Break

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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

“The moral test of a government is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.”

Hubert Humphrey, 1976