



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

Solidarity!

Can't See Forest for the Trees

Last week, Superintendent Daniel Nerad advised MTI Executive Director John Matthews that the District was canceling all overnight field trips for elementary pupils. For many years, 5th grade students have benefitted from overnight trips to the Mackenzie Environmental Education Center near Poynette.

Frequently referred to as the best in outdoor education, Mackenzie offers one of the most diverse experiences available. It encompasses 250 acres and has a variety of habitat types, including prairie and forest lands, nature trails, an arboretum, and an observation tower. It offers an excellent hands-on experience for pupils; some that pupils will never experience any other way.

The other primary distinction is Madison's Jackson School Forest. A significant ecosystem, the Madison School Forest has offered an excellent outdoor educational experience for many years. The 75 acres supports many kinds of woods, natural biological diversity, and over 40 species of birds. Madison children, for many years, have benefitted from the experience, a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many.

Now Madison's elementary pupils will be denied these experiences, and for no apparent good reason. Nerad offered no logical explanation, only that the District was no longer willing to enable students and staff the remainder of the day off, after a 27+ hour stint overnight. The instant controversy resulted from a trip planned to occur today for Orchard Ridge pupils.

Important February Deadlines:

Many dates of importance occur in February. **Salary Advancement Credit for passage over a salary barrier or for salary track advancement**, effective with the beginning of the second semester, are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 1**.

Sabbatical Leave applications for either the first semester of the 2010-11 school year or for the entire school year are due in the MTI Office by 5:00 p.m., **February 1**.

Teacher Retirement and Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program enrollment applications are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 15**.

Nonrenewal of Contract

Sections IV-I and IV-J of the MTI Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement set forth the procedures which principals are contractually required to use when management notifies a teacher that he/she is being considered for non-renewal of contract. By Contract, the District is obligated to advise a teacher before **March 1, if they are considering non-renewal**. Under Wisconsin Law, such a notice must be delivered to the teacher on or before March 15. Such notice could also be on one's February 15 evaluation.

MTI staff should be present at any and all meetings between the teacher and any administrator in this regard, given that the meeting may indeed affect the teacher's continued employment status. **The teacher has the legal right to MTI representation and does not have to begin or continue a meeting without representation.** See the reverse of your MTI membership card.

A request for a hearing before the Board of Education must be submitted within five days of the teacher's receipt of the notice that the Board of Education is considering non-renewal of the teacher's contract. **It is extremely important for any teacher receiving such a notice to immediately contact MTI.**

MTI Endorsements for Spring Election Primary is Tuesday, February 16

MTI's Political Action Committee, MTI VOTERS, interviewed candidates last week for this spring's election for Madison School Board and Court of Appeals District 4. MTI Bylaws mandate that the members who participate in the Union's political action program determine which candidates MTI will endorse, after receiving the Committee's recommendation.

To expedite the balloting process, all eligible voters in each of MTI's bargaining units may cast their ballot for MTI VOTERS' recommended candidates via MTI's website (www.madisonteachers.org) this week, January 25-29. Polls will close at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 29.

To vote, go to "Hot Topics" and click on "Spring Election 2010". Eligible voters are those in MTI's various bargaining units who contribute to the Union's political action program. Candidates' responses to MTI's questionnaire are available on MTI's *Spring Election 2010* webpage.

Contract Reduction Deadline March 1

Under the MTI negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreement provision **Temporary Reduction of Contract to Part-Time with the Right to Return to Full-Time** (see Contract Section IV-W), full-time teachers who wish to work part-time may do so for one year and have the right to return to full-time regular employment commencing with the subsequent school year. Requests for participation must be made in writing to the District's office of Human Resources on or before **March 1 for the 2010-11 school year**. Reducing one's contract without doing so by using this contract provision has major negative implications. Members considering this are urged to contact MTI Headquarters (257-0491).

Substitute Teacher Requests

MTI has received complaints that teacher requests for specific substitute teachers have not come to fruition.

Any teacher who has not been granted a requested substitute teacher should contact MTI. Please be prepared to detail the date of the assignment, the date and time of the request and, importantly, the substitute teacher requested. Such requests are to be given priority for all assignments of six (6) days or less per the USO-MTI Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Following from this, *substitute teachers who hold like certification to the vacant position shall next be called for assignments in seniority order.* Contact Ken Volante (volantek@madisonteachers.org) at MTI with any breach of this contractual provision.

H1N1 Update

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continue to encourage Americans to get the H1N1 flu vaccination. From April 2009 until mid-November 2009, H1N1 flu affected approximately 47 million Americans. This flu season has been more unpredictable than usual, and will likely last until May.

The Madison Public Health Department resumed school H1N1 vaccination clinics on January 20. **This round of clinics will run through February 11.** Clinics will be held beginning at 9:00 a.m. in all District schools that have not yet had a H1N1 clinic. MMSD staff can receive the H1N1 vaccine at the clinics held at their school work locations. Vaccinations are available to any MMSD employee who wishes to be immunized. The clinic schedule is as follows:

January 25	Gompers, Hamilton, Olson, Orchard Ridge, Spring Harbor
January 26	Lakeview, Lindbergh, Lowell, Muir
January 27	East High and Falk
January 29	Hawthorne and Toki
February 3	Jefferson, Randall, Schenk
February 4	La Follette, Van Hise
February 5	Affiliated Alternatives, Lapham, West High, Thoreau
February 8	Sennett and Whitehorse
February 9	Memorial and Wright
February 11	Allis & Nuestro Mundo, Cherokee, Crestwood, Elvehjem
February 11	Marquette & SAPAR, Mendota, Sandburg

Calendar of Events

- **Tuesday, January 26, 3:30 p.m., Doyle, Rm 129**
USO-MTI Negotiations
- **Tuesday, February 2, 4:15 p.m., Harmony Grill**
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- **Wednesday, February 3, 4:00 p.m., MTI**
MTI Bargaining Team
- **Monday, February 8, 4:30 p.m., MTI**
MTI Board of Directors
- **Tuesday, February 9, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI VOTERS
- **Thursday, February 11, 4:30 p.m., MTI**
SEE-MTI Board of Directors

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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

