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Solidarity!

Health Insurance Age 27 Mandate Improved for WPS Participants

After numerous communications between MTI, School District Human Resources officials, and WPS, it has been **agreed to implement, retroactively to January 1, 2010, coverage for dependent-to-age-27**, for those enrolled in WPS via the MTI/MMSD Collective Bargaining Agreement. Although the legislation mandates coverage until age 27 is reached, **WPS has agreed to continue the provision of the current MTI/MMSD policy and continue the coverage of a dependent child through the end of the calendar year in which age 27 is reached.**

GHC, Physicians Plus and Dean Health plans will similarly implement dependent-to-age-27 coverage effective **January 1, 2010**.

Other Mandated Benefits

Federal legislation, the Mental Health Parity Act, was also recently passed mandating coverage for mental health services. MTI's WPS plan has long provided coverage for "medically necessary" mental health services. **The federal legislation now mandates that such coverage be provided under all group insurance.** Additional costs for these services will impact the premiums of HMOs, which now provide only state-mandated services which have a maximum annual benefit of \$6,300.

Also included in the **state-mandated health insurance legislation is coverage for cochlear implants and autism.**

All of these mandates will become effective July 1, 2010 (the renewal date for health insurance under the MTI/MMSD Collective Bargaining Agreement) for those MTI members carrying health insurance coverage via **GHC, Dean Health, Physicians Plus and WPS.**

Dental Insurance

The dental plan set forth in MTI's various Collective Bargaining Agreements will also implement the coverage for dependent-to-age-27 effective **January 1, 2010**.

Contract Reduction Deadline March 1

Under the MTI negotiated Teacher 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).

Overnight Field Trips Resolved

Last week's ***MTI Solidarity!*** contained an article advising that *School District management had ordered no more overnight field trips for elementary school children.* **MTI complained that overnight field trips to such sites as Madison's School Forest and the Mackenzie Environmental Center were a staple in the experience for children in the Madison Metropolitan School District, and indeed had been for many years; that to deprive children of these offerings was to deny a once-in-a-lifetime experience in outdoor education, one that is not elsewhere available.**

In response, **Superintendent Nerad** called MTI Executive Director **John Matthews** to advise that the cancellation of overnight field trips had resulted from an error in communication between Asst. Superintendent **Sue Abplanalp** and him; that indeed teachers could continue with the overnight events. All that needs to occur, Nerad advised, was placement of those children whose parents could not accommodate them after their return, after the overnight experience. Matthews advised Nerad that teachers have always made arrangements for children in such a situation. Staff and all children whose parents have made other arrangements for them are not required to stay at school the day after the overnight.

Summer Institute Credit Opportunity through UW-LaCrosse

The Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse will offer a **three-week NEH Summer Institute on July 12–30, 2010**. This dynamic learning experience for K-12 teachers will explore how Native Americans and Euro-Americans have adapted to the Upper Mississippi River Valley, and how archaeology leads to an understanding of how human cultures change and adapt through time. The Institute will feature a one-day excavation experience, field trips to archaeological sites, hands-on laboratory and workshop activities, demonstrations, and classroom activities. Individual projects will help participants tailor the content to their own teaching areas. Participants receive a \$2,700 stipend to help offset their expenses. Application and other information on the Institute is available online at <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/neh.htm>. The deadline for applications is March 2, 2010.

Credits taken through this professional experience may be submitted to the Professional Advancement Credit Committee (PACC) comprised of three MTI members and three District representatives. The submission form can be obtained through the Department of Human Resources.

Section III-H of the Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement describes the rights and benefits for salary advancement through PAC credit. Contact Ken Volante (volantek@madisonteachers.org) with any questions.

MTI Delegates to SCFL

Nominations are being sought for any member interested in serving as an **MTI Delegate** to the South Central Federation of Labor. Terms expire in March for: **Troy Dassler** (Leopold), **Alan Ginsberg** (Van Hise), and **Andrea Funk** (Hawthorne). Terms are for two years. Members should contact MTI Executive Director John Matthews (matthewsj@madisonteachers.org).

Nominations will be received at the February 16 meeting of the MTI Faculty Representative Council, and the election at the March meeting. Each of these individuals is seeking re-election.

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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MTI's web page -

www.madisonteachers.org

MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org



Sign the Petition for the WAES "Pennies for Kids" Campaign

MTI has a long history of advocacy for school funding reform. The Union has worked for many years with the *Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools* (WAES). **Executive Director John Matthews** and Assistant Directors **Doug Keillor** and **Ken Volante** have participated in WAES meetings around the State for more than a decade, **in attempt to bring about progressive changes in school funding legislation.**

WAES' new campaign is to increase Wisconsin's sales tax of 1%. The new campaign arose as an emergency response to the drastic cuts resulting from the current state budget. **Madison schools were particularly hard hit with a 15% cut in state aid.** This outrageous cut came on the heels of a decade and a half of continued revenue limits imposed by the State, which continue to starve our public schools.

One easy first step to announce your support for much needed school funding is to sign the online petition which can be found at <http://www.apennyforkids.org>. This small step will add to a growing list of supporters and will also help keep one advised of rallies and events in support of the proposal.

The situation in school funding is dire but the WAES proposal comes at just the right time to stabilize funding for our public schools. For more information on the campaign watch for continued updates in ***MTI Solidarity!*** or contact Ken Volante (volantek@madisonteachers.org) at MTI Headquarters.

Calendar of Events

- **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
- **Tuesday, February 16, 4:15 p.m., SCFL**
MTI Faculty Representative Council
- **Friday, February 26,**
SWEIO Convention, Monona Terrace