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Solidarity!

Inclement Weather & Closing School

All five of MTI's Collective Bargaining Agreements with the District contain provisions which deal with the impact on members should schools be closed. Given this winter's severe weather, these Contract provisions are called to the attention of those who are represented by MTI.

The pivotal Contract is that governing members of MTI's teacher bargaining unit. Section V-K provides that *should schools be closed or the opening of school delayed, that notice will be on local radio stations by 6:30 a.m.* Should school be closed, teachers will be compensated for the day on their regular monthly payroll check. Section V-K of MTI's Teacher Contract also covers therapy assistants, interpreters, science materials specialists and special needs nurses.

Bilingual Resources Specialists: BRS are governed by Addendum H of MTI's Teacher Contract. Under this addendum, BRS who are tardy or absent due to inclement weather are allowed to receive compensation by using personal illness leave or electing to makeup the time by performing their regular duties or participating in staff development/training opportunities offered by the District.

EA-MTI: The EA-MTI Contract provides that EAs are now allowed the additional option of using personal illness leave to receive payment for time missed due to school closings, **along with being able to be paid up front** provided one makes up the missed time by attending District-provided staff development/training or by performing her/his regular duties by one week following the end of the school year.

SEE-MTI: The SEE-MTI Contract provides that when a member of the SEE-MTI bargaining unit is absent from work for more than one hour on a "snow day", or other emergency school closing, in addition to vacation time and compensatory time, the employee shall have the option to use **floating holidays** or **personal illness leave** to receive compensation for such days. In addition, said individuals are provided the option of receiving pay for the snow day **during the payroll period in which the snow day occurs** (without utilizing any accrued time) provided the employee makes-up the time by attending District offered **staff development/training** opportunities by the end of the school year. Said individuals will also continue to have the option to make-up the time by performing their regular duties provided they have their supervisor's approval.

SSA-MTI: The SSA-MTI Contract provides the options of using personal illness or floating holiday time to receive payment for time missed, along with being able to be paid up front provided one makes up the missed time by attending District provided staff development/training or by performing her/his regular duties by one week following the end of the school year.

Neither Rain, Nor Snow, Nor Gloom of ... H1N1

Questions have been raised regarding the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) school calendar requirements should the Department of Public Health close a school due to pandemic flu (H1N1). DPI says that there are two measures which must be considered when such a closing occurs: (1) Days where the Health Department closes a school count towards the 180 day State requirement; and (2) Hours of school. Hours are never waived by DPI. Thus, *if MMSD falls below the yearly minimum number of hours under State requirements (1050 hours for grades K-6; 1,137 hours for grades 7-12), it can implement their emergency response plan and/or add makeup minutes to the remaining school days.* **Any makeup time is a mandatory subject of bargaining. Therefore, any added time or days must be enabled by MTI's Collective Bargaining Agreement or negotiated by MTI and the District.**

The District may also apply for a waiver from DPI. Last school year, MMSD applied for a waiver after the snow days built into the Contract had been depleted. DPI turned down the requested waiver.

The good news? So far this school year, there have not been excessive staff absences due to H1N1, nor has any school been closed by the Department of Public Health.

Congress proposes to fully fund IDEA

After years of failing to fully fund the Special Education mandates, Senator Tom Harkin (D – IOWA) has introduced S. 1652: IDEA Full Funding Act. With its 11 sponsors, S. 1652 proposes to fully fund, through 2015, Congress' promises made in the Individual with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]. Many of MMSD's funding issues can be traced to the failure of Congress and the State Legislature to fully fund special education. Each year, the funding gap for IDEA, which currently stands at over \$30 million for MMSD, grows larger and thereby more funds are diverted from the general education budget to special education. Currently, S. 1652 is in the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. **MTI encourages its members to contact Senators Feingold and Kohl and urge them to support this bill.** Contact information is located in the MTI Calendar & Activities.

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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

Joint MTI/MMSD Committee Appointments

Negotiations for the 2009-11 Teacher Contract resulted in MTI and the District agreeing to appoint representatives to the following joint committees to deal with issues of great sensitivity to members of the Union's teacher bargaining unit.

Arena Scheduling - This Committee will *explore the creation of an Arena Scheduling concept and discuss current Contract provisions dealing with the posting of positions and the voluntary transfer process*. The process of the day reserved for "arena scheduling" would continue until all vacancies known as of that day, and caused by transfers on that day, are filled. The purpose is to expedite the filling of vacancies, rather than one transferring and then his/her position having to be posted the following week and the rolling process which that creates. Anyone interested in transferring would report to a location where all vacancies known at that time would be posted and filled. MTI appointees are: **Art Camosy** (Memorial), **Pete Smith** (Lowell), **Susan Covarrubias** (Midvale), **Peggy Coyne** (Black Hawk), **Karlton Porter** (Cherokee), **Don Tichenor** (East), and MTI Assistant Director **Doug Keillor** (keillord@madisonteachers.org).

Elementary & Middle School Report Cards - These Committees will *make recommendations for developing new report cards for use in all elementary and middle schools. This will include WHAT is to be reported, HOW it is to be reported, and WHAT CRITERIA forms the basis of that which is reported*. The new report cards are to be operational by the commencement of the 2010-11 school year. MTI appointees are: **Leanne Gilbertson** (Huegel), **Gerald Anderson** (Elvehjem), **Kathy Barry-Chamberlain** (Midvale), **Kathryn Burns** (Leopold), **Barbara Rogers** (Toki), **Cindy Ball** (Jefferson), **Cindy Barbera** (Hamilton), **Lori Hamann** (Cherokee), **Mary Ploeser** (Spring Harbor), and MTI Assistant Director **Eve Degen** (degene@madisonteachers.org).

Substitute Teacher Bargaining Commences

The negotiations for the new 2009-11 USO-MTI Collective Bargaining Agreement has commenced. The Union had an initial proposal, as directed by feedback from the USO-MTI membership, that included the following proposals: a higher long-term rate of pay for substitute teachers with a Masters degree, increased "miscall" pay, the ability to contest an evaluation to an arbitration hearing, restrictions at a particular school limited to the "remainder of the school year", increased substitute teacher orientation pay, ability to use personal illness with or without a pre-existing assignment, "snow day" pay, increased District contribution towards health insurance, and a "no fault" provision with an ability to maintain health insurance if one falls below the work criteria for one month.

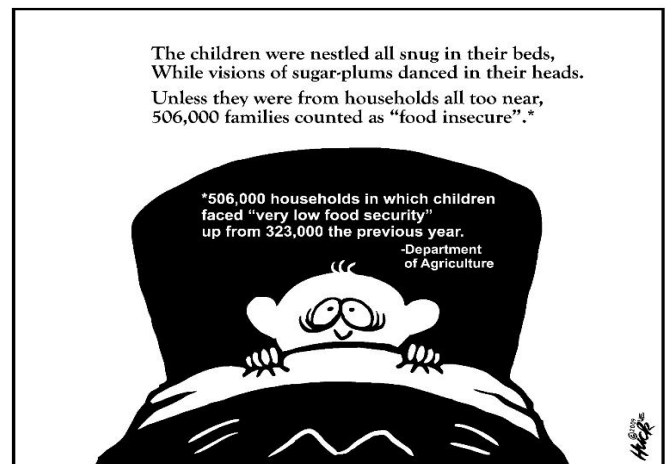
The School District has proposed that late arriving substitutes have their pay pro-rated, a significant cut in summer school pay, a change in the definition of long-term assignment

from seven (7) to nineteen (19) days, a change in the "buy in" health insurance provision that would increase the work requirement from one (1) to three (3) days, and elimination of printed contracts. MTI is waiting for District information prior to further discussion on proposed economic items; i.e., salary.

The elected USO-MTI Negotiation Team includes **David Mandehr**, **Rita Pieroni**, **Judith Zabriskie**, **Douglas Buege**, **Carolyn Schueppel**, **Helene Georgalan**, **Ken Volante**, and **Doug Keillor**. The MMSD Team includes **Heidi Tepp**, **June Glennon**, and **Sharon Hennessy**.

Winter Break/MTI Office Closed

This will be the last *MTI Solidarity* for 2009. MTI wishes everyone a safe, enjoyable and relaxing winter break. *When you wonder "who cares", rest assured that your Union cares*. The MTI Office will be closed on December 24, 25, 31 and January 1.



Studies have shown that hunger presents a significant obstacle to learning.

Calendar of Events/Deadlines

- **Monday, December 14, 4:30 p.m., MTI**
MTI Board of Directors
- **December 19 - January 3 Winter Break**
- **Tuesday, January 5, 4:15 p.m., Harmony Grill**
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- **Wednesday, January 6, 4:00 p.m., MTI**
EA-MTI Board of Directors
- **Monday, January 11, 4:30 p.m., MTI**
MTI Board of Directors
- **Tuesday, January 12, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI VOTERS Political Action Committee
- **Wednesday, January 13, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
USO-MTI Board of Directors