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Solidarity!

Progress Made in Negotiations over Early Monday Release: Elementary Structure of School Day & Planning Time

Twelve hours in negotiations over the above-referenced topics, *following appearances at the school board meeting on May 23 of 350 elementary teachers - and a 1976 MTI strike leader - have finally produced a reversal of the elementary school day to its former self, and resolution on how elementary teachers' planning time will be provided. The resolution, reached in negotiations last Tuesday, would not have been possible without the brilliant and passionate presentations by teachers at the May 23 Board of Education meeting.*

District management, enabled by the slant of the negotiation table enabled by Walker's Law, forced Contract changes which provided the District the discretion to adjust the elementary teacher contract day to begin 30 minutes before the student day (*currently 15 minutes*) and end 15 minutes after the student day (*currently 30 minutes*). The District intended to then call this 30 minute period before school started in the morning contractual planning time previously provided by Monday Early Release (*another change in the Contract which provided the District discretion on Monday afternoons*).

The proposed modification of the Contract day and the potential elimination of planning time on Monday Early Release were very sore subjects to teachers. *Regardless of District intent to provide before-school "planning time", the morning time would not be exclusively teachers because that time would necessarily be interrupted by students and parents arriving early. Likewise, the shortened Contract day after school presented student safety concerns, given teachers' ability to leave a school campus 15 minutes after student dismissal, not providing sufficient time for parent-teacher follow-up should students not arrive home as expected. Equally important, the block of time represented by Monday Early Release is generally considered the most valuable block of productive planning time in an elementary teacher's week. The District's inversion of the Contract day and its newfound discretion to control Monday afternoons created the possibility that teachers could lose all planning time on Monday afternoons. All of these concerns, so eloquently conveyed by a packed auditorium of teachers on May 23, have now resulted in a mediated recommended resolution.*

Under the agreed upon and recommended resolution, the District has agreed to maintain the elementary teacher Contract day starting 15 minutes prior to student arrival and ending 30 minutes after students leave. And, the time after school will not be considered planning time. Rather, teachers will continue to receive planning time on various Mondays each month and will also receive afternoon blocks of planning time on the dates formerly used for WEAC and SWEIO Conventions. Such will provide the 5.5 hours per week of planning time. The resolution provides the following:

- The first Monday of the month will be used for staff meetings;
- The second Monday of the month will be used for *individual teacher planning time*;
- The third Monday of the month will be used for staff development;
- The fourth Monday of the month will be split with *teachers receiving one hour for planning*, and the District provided 45 minutes for staff development;
- The fifth Monday of the month (3 of them) will be used for *individual teacher planning time*;
- *Planning time is available for one-half day (PM) on three days previously designated as Convention Days.*
- Early Release Days for Staff Development will **NOT** occur on Mondays.

Thanks to all MTI members who participated at the May 23 Board meeting in support of these needed revisions.

Act to Correct the Injustice

It was no coincidence that the *majority of the Supreme Court acted with unusual and unprecedented haste to issue their decision supporting Walker's Law, when pushed to do so by the Assembly/Senate Majority Leaders, the Fitzgerald brothers. This meant full implementation of the anti-public worker laws, Act 10, without the Legislature having to follow open meetings laws.*

What Next? The MTI Crisis Committee is **working in conjunction with "We Are Wisconsin" and other affinity groups seeking redress by RECALL.** *The mass movement for justice in Wisconsin has reached a critical stage, and needs your active support - now.* Our unprecedented labor mobilization has won support around the country and the world, but Republican Governor Scott Walker and the Republican-controlled Legislature are pressing ahead with their massive assault on working people. **This is a state of emergency for the American labor movement and all working people.**

In March, the Republicans defied the will of the majority of Wisconsinites by ramming through their proposal to destroy the collective bargaining rights of public sector workers. The entire budget is a nightmare for the people of our great state. Because of ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council), the right-wing think tank funded by the Koch brothers, Walmart and others, the same anti-public employee agenda is being advanced across the country, with Wisconsin Governor Walker and the Fitzgerald brothers taking the lead. **The budget reverses decades of social progress by gutting publicly funded health care, slashing funds for K-12 and higher education, destroying environmental protections, and much more.** The GOP has already passed legislation severely restricting the voting rights of the poor and minorities.

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Act to Correct the Injustice (continued)

MTI has been among the leaders to initially take up the fight for workplace justice and now to revitalize that effort by seeking **RECALL** of those Senators who supported Act 10. In addition to our legislative efforts and beginning last February, members have worked to paralyze corporate politics as usual, in an effort to turn our Capitol back into the "People's House".

MTI's struggle has been an example of genuine democracy - the exact opposite of the corporate agenda led by Walker and his allies. Where Walker and the Fitzgeralds have defied public meeting laws, ignored testimony, and run roughshod over democratic and constitutional norms, the Wisconsin Uprising - **spurred by teachers and other educators in Madison and across the state** - has inspired similar resistance elsewhere. Madison has become Solidarity City and we must remain so into the future.

Given the adverse and unprecedented action by the Supreme Court in overruling Judge Sumi, Act 10 will soon become law. With that decision any possibility of achieving employee-favorable, union-favorable modification in Act 10 quickly disappeared.

We in labor have historically said of events adversely impacting us, "**Don't Mourn, Organize!**" and this is certainly the time to renew that cry. Various events provide that opportunity:

- *Recall of Republican Senators*
- *Protecting Democratic Senators subject to Recall Elections*
- *Electing Democratic Representatives when current officeholders are elected to the Senate*
- *Recall of Governor Walker*
- *Continued Inter-Union Organizing*
- *Rebirth of WEAC*

MTI will continue its inter-union organizing and development by continuing to work in conjunction with other unions and pro-worker groups in these challenging times. **However, we must concentrate on the elections. Without control of at least the Senate, we can expect more anti-public worker legislation, and more legislation favorable to large corporations, less favorable to middle-class families.**

Planning for phase II, **replacing Walker supporting Republican Senators in the July and August recall elections.** To accomplish these two immediate goals, *we must engage many MTI members to work, work, work with the Democratic Party of Wisconsin ("Taking Back Wisconsin") and with the state AFL-CIO ("We Are Wisconsin").* Both groups have the plans and the organization to achieve our common goal, and are organizations with which MTI has a long history and productive relationship. **MTI is organizing groups of MTI members who will volunteer together, by school, by grade level with friends or colleagues, or whatever groups members may suggest.** MTI Assistant Director Eve Degen and MTI's Crisis Committee will continue to coordinate MTI members in this effort.

The MTI Crisis Committee met last Tuesday to discuss and further plan MTI's efforts. Many MTI members are already making individual efforts through various groups. *It was decided to expand individual participation into MTI group volunteer events by making phone calls, at MTI, to mobilize our fellow MTI members.* Join in MTI's phone banking and canvassing efforts through "We Are Wisconsin". "**MTI Thursdays**" began last week, with groups of MTI members going to the Labor Temple to phone bank and do data entry. Call or email MTI to join our group.

RSVP to Eve Degen at MTI (degene@madisonteachers.org) to volunteer on Thursdays between 3-9:00 p.m.

MTI recall canvassing began last Sunday in Senate District 14 in Baraboo. Call Jace at MTI (257-0491) to volunteer for future canvassing. Families, friends, colleagues are welcome (and encouraged) to come along with you.

MTI Night at the Overture 9/28 *Billy Elliot the Musical!*

Among MTI's efforts to build an even stronger Union is its promotion of social events which brings together MTI members and their families. Last year's "*MTI night at the Overture*" was such a smashing success and many requested a repeat this fall! And this year's event on September 28 will be also. MTI has purchased 104 tickets and all are spoken for. MTI has now purchased an additional 40 lower-priced tickets also on the main floor, but to the left side and near the other MTI reserved seats. Those interested should contact the Union promptly. When these tickets are taken, no more will be available via MTI.

Contact MTI (257-0491; mti@madisonteachers.org) now to reserve tickets. **Cost for the remaining tickets is \$43 on a first come, first serve basis.** One must pay for tickets before they can be reserved.

Thrilling audiences worldwide and winning ten 2009 Tony Awards® including Best Musical, "**THE BEST SHOW YOU WILL EVER SEE**" (*New York Post*) is coming to Madison! *Billy Elliot the Musical* is a joyous celebration of one young boy's journey to make his dreams come true. Set in a small town, the story follows Billy as he stumbles out of the boxing ring and into a ballet class, discovering a surprising passion that inspires his family and his whole community... "**A big musical with an even bigger heart, Billy Elliot will enchant the dreamer in all of us.**"

If that wasn't good enough, Billy Elliot is a son of a union man. One of the score's songs is "**SOLIDARITY!**" It is set in Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's time during the 1984 miners strike. **Billy's father is a leader in the strike and he is a typical working class man, conventional, tough and loyal to the union.**

Selkove Endorsed for 48th AD Primary Election July 12

Given Rep. Joe Parisi's election as Dane County Executive, a special election has been scheduled to fill the vacancy in the 48th Assembly District.

MTI members, acting on the recommendation of MTI's Political Action Committee (MTI VOTERS), have endorsed **VICKY SELKOWE**. Such is based on the candidates' responses to the Union's extensive questionnaire and the interview of all seven candidates. Ms. Selkove is Chief of Staff for State Representative Cory Mason, with whom MTI works closely. She previously worked for the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families. **She is considered a champion for education because of this and her work with Rep. Mason.**

MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org
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