



Solidarity!

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Vote to Recertify and Confirm Your Vote to MTI

MTI's recertification elections which began on November 5 are off to a great start, but 100% voting is the goal. **MTI Member Organizers across the District are encouraging everyone represented by MTI to vote, tracking who has voted, and reporting that information to MTI staff.** When a recertification voter is identified, they are removed from the MTI contact list, as regards the recertification process. Phone banks will continue to contact eligible voters who have yet to confirm their vote to Member Organizers or to MTI.

Why the big effort to turn out the vote? Two reasons: *A non-vote counts the same as a "no" vote, in the bizarre world of Act 10 recertification elections, which requires that 51% of all eligible voters to recertify a union.* Second, *the larger the turnout, the stronger the message that MTI-represented employees will continue to stand together to advocate for the needs of their students and their profession.* Anyone who has not voted is encouraged to do so today. And if you have voted, make sure to share that message with your work site MTI Member Organizer, or by calling MTI headquarters (257-0491). Recertification is not an opinionnaire - it will determine how MTI can represent its members next year. **Together we are stronger!**



Health Insurance and Wellness: No Co-pay of Premium

In 2012, with the authority granted to them by Governor Walker's Act 10, the Board of Education unilaterally changed health insurance carriers. Previously, the health insurance carrier had been a mandatory subject of bargaining given MTI's victory before the Supreme Court many years ago. MTI filed that lawsuit because the District had been trying to change the carrier away from WPS when MTI members had stated in the Union's bargaining survey that keeping WPS was their highest priority.

Given their authority under Act 10, at their October 27 BOE meeting, *the Board adopted the recommendations of insurance consulting firm M3 to institute a \$20 co-pay for office calls and for services received from urgent care facilities.*

A joint Union-District Committee on Health Insurance, which was created in last spring's bargaining, **recommended that the \$20 co-pay not apply to office/urgent care services for pediatric services, or for preventative care**, per the Affordable Care Act. The Board of Education agreed. The change to implement the co-pay will begin **January 1, 2015.**

The BOE also agreed to the joint committee's recommendation that *a District employee who becomes ill during the workday, or has a family member who gets ill during the workday, can leave their work site prior to the end of the workday, with their supervisor's approval. The purpose of this is to encourage clinic service rather than more expensive urgent care.* The above modifications **preserve the zero co-pay of premiums for Union-represented staff.** Act 10 enables public sector employers to charge up to 12% of the premium to employees. MMSD management pay 10% of their health insurance premium.

Another change that will be implemented **January 1** is the **District's Wellness Program.** *In an effort to hold down future*

premium increases, the joint Union-District Committee on Health Insurance recommended creation of a Wellness Program. Details are yet to be decided, but evidence is that wellness programs help contain costs. They usually include a health screening, which is confidential between the employee and his/her elected physician, or a mutually agreed upon firm which administers a biometric screening and an online health risk assessment. It is agreed that all information gathered in the Wellness process will be HIPAA-protected for confidentiality. The Program will commence February 1, 2015. Individuals and their spouse/partner have until January, 2016 to complete the process. Those who elect not to participate will be assessed up to 3% of their health insurance premium. That will increase to 5% in January, 2016, and 10% effective January, 2017. The Union and District will develop the means by which anyone who delays the health risk assessment and biometric screening can be relieved of the premium co-pay. MTI encourages members to participate in the Wellness Program.

American Education Week November 16-22

Though federal and state governments are obligated to provide **free public education**, *both fail to fully fund their financial mandates.* While every child in America deserves a quality public education, the failure of federal and state governments, and the *state usurping the authority of local school boards to adequately fund their schools, has placed American education in a very difficult situation over the last several decades.* America must provide students with quality public schools so that the next generation can grow, prosper, and achieve. NEA's **American Education Week** (www.nea.org/aew) presents all Americans with an opportunity **to honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every child receives a quality education** for the nation's 50 million students.

MTI & Religious Holidays

Last week, *MTI Solidarity!* contained an article about achieving equal rights for female teachers. **The same teacher who told MTI Executive Director John Matthews many years ago that she was pregnant and did not want to quit work because she was pregnant went to John and asked why the school calendar enabled only Christian holidays to be observed.** MTI challenged, claiming that the holy days of the woman's faith must also be recognized and an individual be free to observe the holy day when they fall on a school day. **MTI prevailed.** Several years later, MTI and the District agreed that any District employee may be off work to observe their religious holy days. *This provision is set forth in all of MTI's Collective Bargaining Agreements.*

Health Insurance Annual Choice/Open Enrollment Deadline - Today, November 17

MTI's various Collective Bargaining Agreements with the District **provide that, between October 15 and November 15 each year, there will be an annual choice to switch health insurance providers, among the insurance carriers named in each of the Contracts.** Members of MTI have their choice among the three insurers - GHC, Unity and Dean Health Plan.

ANNUAL CHOICE is the period during which MTI represented employees who are already covered under an MTI negotiated District health insurance plan *may choose, without having to prove insurability, an alternate plan which is available under the Collective Bargaining Agreement.* Implementation of new coverage will be effective **January 1, 2015.**

OPEN ENROLLMENT is available as a result of gains made during MTI's 1999 negotiations. Enrollment in health insurance is available to any employee who is benefit eligible (*an assignment of 19 hours per week or a teacher contract of at least 50%*). Those with health insurance who have **an eligible dependent, who is not now covered, may enroll that dependent during this period.** The effective date for all new coverage is **January 1, 2015.**

Inclement Weather & Closing School

All five MTI Collective Bargaining Agreements with the District contain provisions that deal with the impact on members when schools are closed. Given winter's sometimes 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, notice will be on local radio stations by 6:30 a.m.* Should schools 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 F 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 make up 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 allowed the **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 within one week of 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 within one week of the end of the school year.

Calendar of Events

- **November 5-25 - MTI Recertification Election - Vote YES!**
- **November 17-21 American Education Week**
- **Monday, November 17, 4:30 p.m., MTI**
MTI Board of Directors
- **Tuesday, November 18, 4:15 p.m., SCFL**
MTI Faculty Representative Council
- **November 26, Schools Closed - Teacher Comp Day**
- **November 27/28 - Thanksgiving Break**



Wear **MTI RED** on Mondays, **MTI LANYARDS** everyday, and sport your **"I VOTED MTI"** pin!

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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