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Solidarity!

Last Chance to Vote to Recertify; Join MTI's Huge Turnout

The vote for all who are represented by MTI to recertify MTI as their Union ends at Noon, on Tuesday, November 25. As of November 14, the mid-point of the 20-day election period, the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) confirmed that 3,196 of 4,513 MTI-represented employees had already cast ballots. This represents over 71% of all eligible voters. **MTI Member Organizers and Faculty Representatives are continuing their hard work to encourage those who have not yet voted to do so.** The larger the turnout, the more powerful the message.



If you have not voted, do so now by calling 1-866-458-9862. Call MTI for assistance.

Leave of Absence Deadlines

Section VI-B (Leaves of Absences) of MTI's "Teacher" Collective Bargaining Agreement provides that all *non-medical leaves except academic, adoption and childrearing leaves, must be for a minimum of one full school year* and must commence at the beginning of the first semester. Academic or childrearing leaves must be for a minimum of one semester. The Contract specifies that leaves and leave extensions are granted to teachers as follows:

Initial Request: One semester (academic or childrearing).

Extension: One extension will be allowed for the semester following the semester of the initial leave, unless the initial request is for the second semester or the school year, then the extension must be for the entire school year.

Initial Request: One full school year. **Extension:** One extension consisting of the following school year.

Requests for an academic or childrearing leave of absence for the second semester of the 2014-15 school year are due by **DECEMBER 1, 2014.**

Other than for academic leaves of absence or extension of same, leave of absence requests for the first semester or the full school year for 2015-16, or to extend a leave of absence, must be made in writing through the principal/supervisor to Human Resources by **March 1, 2015.** A request for an academic leave or for an extension of same must be made to the Department of Human Resources by **May 1, 2015** for the first semester or the ensuing school year.

Given that one remains represented by MTI and has benefits available while on leave, partial dues for the period one is on leave can be paid either during the leave or upon return.

How Cold Is *Too Cold*?

With the return of winter to our fair city, temperatures have and will continue to plunge to freezing levels. When schools and other large buildings experience several days of sub-zero temperatures, heating systems strain to keep rooms warm. Classrooms frequently feel too cold. What can be done? Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter 64, states that "[T]he heating system shall be designed to maintain a temperature of not less than ... *67 degrees Fahrenheit for classrooms and offices in schools and other places of instruction.*"

Staff who experience heating problems in District classrooms or offices should immediately contact their building administrator and custodian for assistance. Whether the heating systems are insufficient, improperly installed or simply old cannot excuse schools/offices being too cold. The cost of energy is of concern to us all, and MMSD, like every other school district in Wisconsin, is experiencing financial problems because of the state-imposed revenue controls. This impacts funds for heating fuel, so energy must be used wisely. However, students and staff are entitled to a proper learning and working environment.

Members seeking the Union's assistance should contact **Eve Degen** (degene@madisonteachers.org).



*Happy
Thanksgiving!*

Sick Leave Bank

The Sick Leave Bank (see Section VII-G of MTI's Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement) *is an innovative and progressive Contract provision and it is unique to teachers represented by MTI. Because of its value to those in need, unions across the country have tried to emulate it. A sign of Union solidarity, the Sick Leave Bank (SLB) has provided income to many teachers who otherwise would go without income.*

The SLB was created by MTI's 1980 negotiations. Days to fund the SLB are assessed in February, when the number of days required in the Bank falls below six per member of MTI's teacher bargaining unit. **BECAUSE THE BANK IS CURRENTLY ADEQUATELY FUNDED, NO ASSESSMENT WILL BE REQUIRED IN FEBRUARY, 2015.** It was originally funded by each member of MTI's teacher collective bargaining unit donating three sick days to the "Bank". The Sick Leave Bank *acts as a short-term disability policy for teachers forced to be off of work for medical reasons, and who have consumed their earned sick leave.* SLB benefits begin after a teacher has been absent eleven (11) consecutive work days and has exhausted his/her Personal Sick Leave Account. SLB benefits are payable for a maximum of forty-four (44) days, or until the Contract-provided long term disability benefit begins, whichever occurs first. **The SLB Contract provision enables pay at 100% of the individual's daily rate of pay for each work day from the SLB.** *Without the SLB, teachers without sufficient sick leave to cover an extended illness would be forced to go without pay until long term disability benefits begin when one is absent for 55 work days; i.e. until one qualifies for long-term disability coverage.*

Teacher recipients are not required to "repay" the Bank for days withdrawn; rather all teachers are assessed an additional day from their Personal Sick Leave Account, when the balance of days in the SLB drops below the contractually-defined threshold of six (6) days per teacher. *To help offset the need for assessment, MTI negotiated that 80% of the unused sick leave of the Retirement Insurance Account of one who resigns or dies is transferred to the SLB.* This has minimized the need for members of the bargaining unit to be assessed days to fund the Bank. **The SLB is yet another way that, through our collective efforts, MTI members are able to assist each other.**

The SLB is part of the Union's comprehensive Contract provision "*Income Continuation Plan*", which includes a **Retirement Insurance Account (RIA)** by which one's contractually-provided insurance premiums can be paid following retirement from one's earned but unused sick leave. One can earn 200+ days in his/her RIA. The RIA benefit is calculated by multiplying the number of earned, but unused sick leave days by one's daily wage at retirement. *The Income Continuation Plan dovetails one's sick leave earning, accrual and use; long term disability insurance; and insurance payments upon retirement (see Contract Sections VI-A and VII-G).*

Keep Your Own "Personnel" Records

Record keeping by an employee is important. *Don't wait for trouble to start before you begin to compile your own personnel records.* Having good records is also very important, should you become involved in a grievance over your Contract rights or benefits, or in a matter involving discipline or dismissal. To enable the Union to provide the best possible protection and representation, every employee should **maintain his/her own "personnel" records.**

One's file should contain such documents as: college transcripts, evaluations, accumulated sick leave and days used, direct deposit (wage) records, records of student disciplinary referrals, Wisconsin Retirement System (DETF) records, personal leave, documentation of honors and awards, notes on student accidents and confrontations with parents or administrators, copies of all correspondence with supervisor(s) and administrators, and for teachers - individual teacher contracts for each year, licenses, and teaching assignments by year with subjects taught.

Keep MTI Updated on Changes

Please call, write or email MTI if you have a change in name, home address, home email address, telephone number, work location, certification, or hours of work. Having this information allows MTI to serve you better, both personally and contractually.

Calendar of Events

- **November 5-25 - MTI Recertification Election - Vote YES!**
- **Monday, November 24, 6:00 p.m., McDaniels Auditorium**
BOE Regular Meeting
- **November 26, Schools Closed - Teacher Comp Day**
- **November 27/28 - Thanksgiving Break**

- **Monday, December 1, 5:00 p.m., Doyle Room 103**
BOE Instruction Work Group
- **Monday, December 8, 5:00 p.m., Doyle Room 103**
BOE Operations Work Group
- **Tuesday, December 9, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI VOTERS Political Action Committee
- **December 22 - January 2: WINTER 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