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Solidarity!

Governor and Legislature Threaten Public Schools

What did the people lose by failing to get to the polls last November? Among the valued possessions which could be lost is the very heart of every community - their public schools.

It has been a long, well-planned attack. In 1993, in an action against their own philosophy; i.e. decisions by government should be made at the lowest possible level, the Republican Governor and Legislature began actions to control local school boards. *They passed Revenue Controls on school boards to limit how much they can increase taxes.* This in itself caused harm by instructional materials and textbooks becoming out-dated. School Boards had to make choices between providing “current” materials and texts, or small class sizes to enable optimum learning. **Eventually, the legislated revenue controls caused a double-whammy - out-dated texts & materials and an increase in class size, because of layoffs** caused by the legislated revenue controls.

Next, the Governor & Legislature enabled **vouchers** so those who choose to send their children to private or religious schools can use “vouchers” which cause the public school, where the child could attend, *to forfeit public/tax funds to pay for the child to attend the private or parochial school.*

With revenue controls crippling the means to provide the best quality education and adequate financial reward for school district employees; and vouchers taking another big chunk, Wisconsin’s Governor and Legislature say of the schools that they have been starving to cause their failure, now, because of your failure, we will close your schools and convert them to for-profit private charter schools. This plan is to appease the Koch Brothers and others, who provide large sums to buy the elections of those promoting these privatization schemes.

Assembly Bill 1, in the 2015 Wisconsin legislative session, is designed just to do what is described above, and it is on the fast-track for approval, just as Act 10 was a few years ago. **If it is not stopped, it will rip the heart out of every community - the public school will be gone, as will quality public education for all of Wisconsin’s children.** The smaller the community, the bigger the harmful impact on Wisconsin’s towns and villages because of AB 1.

Call your Assemblyperson and Senator today.
Say **NO** to AB 1. **We, the people of Wisconsin,**
cannot afford the destruction of our public schools.

Ballots Sent for SEE-MTI Board Elections; Nominations Needed for Central Administration Positions

Ballots have been sent out for the SEE-MTI Board of Directors’ positions that expired on December 31, 2014. Nominated are the following: Former President **Travis Grover** for President; incumbent **Larry Palm** for Vice-President; incumbent **Jane Ninmann** for Secretary; incumbent **Ann Jesse-Schwabe** for Elementary Representative and **Elizabeth Contrucci** for Middle School Representative. All positions are uncontested. Ballots must be returned to MTI by **January 26, 2015**, with the newly elected leaders being seated at the February 4 SEE-MTI Board Meeting.

Nominations are also being solicited for two Central Administration SEE-MTI Board positions recently vacated. If you are a SEE-MTI member assigned to Central Administration and interested in representing your co-workers on your Union’s Board of Directors, nominations are due by the February 4 SEE-MTI Board meeting. Much important work needs to be done this year including work on the Joint Committee to develop the Employee Handbook which will replace the Collective Bargaining Agreements when they expire in June, 2016. You continue to have a voice, make it heard.

MTI Endorsements for Spring Election

MTI’s Political Action Committee, MTI-VOTERS, interviewed candidates for Board of Education, Mayor, Supreme Court and Circuit Court on January 13, as regards this spring’s election. The primary election will be held February 17 and the general election April 7.

An e-mail has been sent to MTI VOTERS’ members (*contributors to fund MTI’s political action*) to enable them to vote on the Committee’s recommendations. **Voting will be via electronic ballot.** A link to the survey is also available on the MTI website under “Important Information - Spring 2015 Endorsement Ballot”. Those for whom MTI has a personal email address do not need a password. However, a password is required to access the ballot on the website. Contact MTI (257-0491 or mti@madisonteachers.org), or contact an MTI Faculty Representative, EA-MTI Building Representative, or member of the MTI, SEE-MTI, EA-MTI or SSA-MTI Board of Directors for the password.

Balloting closes Friday, January 23, at 5:00 p.m.

Important February Deadlines

Salary Advancement Credit for passage over a salary barrier or for salary track advancement, effective with the beginning of the second semester, are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 1.** (See MTI's Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section III-G & H.)

Sabbatical Leave applications for either the first semester of the 2015-16 school year or for the entire school year are due in the MTI Office by 5:00 p.m., **February 1.** (See MTI's Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section VI-E.)

Teacher Retirement and Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP) enrollment applications are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 15.** (See MTI-negotiated Memorandum of Understanding.)

MTI Contracts and Memoranda are also available at www.madisonteachers.org. (Note: Contract deadlines which occur on weekends will be extended to the following Monday.)

"Our Song" Celebrates 100 Years

In 2011, hundreds of thousands joined the MTI led protests against the Right-wing proposed destruction of collective bargaining for Wisconsin's public workers. Wisconsin was the first state to pass legislation enabling public sector bargaining. As the protests got underway and continued for months – and years following via the Solidarity Sing-Along – spirits rose when the crowd burst into **SOLIDARITY FOREVER!** Last Saturday was the 100th anniversary of the great song, which has solidified the movement of police, firefighters, auto workers, teachers, clerical workers, educational assistants, security staff, substitute teachers, longshoremen, teamsters, and others as they stood their ground demanding social and workplace justice, safe working conditions, a living wage, insurance and retirement benefits. And together - through **union** - working people have been successful.

SOLIDARITY FOREVER! was written in 1915 by Chicago activist and cartoonist Ralph Chaplin. Anyone wanting a little excitement in their day should Google Chaplin, Pete Seeger or "**SOLIDARITY FOREVER!**".

Cold Weather Update

As staff continue to endure the Arctic chill which has invaded Madison over the last several weeks, MTI has received many phone calls about cold classrooms and heating malfunctions in District schools. MTI advises staff to initially contact their school principal and head custodian when there is a heating issue; in many cases, the principal is already working with the school custodial staff to rectify the problem. In cases where it is determined that there is a larger malfunction, such as a non-functioning blower fan or a pump breakdown, the custodian may already also be working with the District's Building Services Department. Members should also feel free to

call or email MTI (degene@madisonteachers.org) to report ongoing heating or other building issues. The Union is glad to intercede and advocate for Union members regarding cold classrooms and other building conditions.

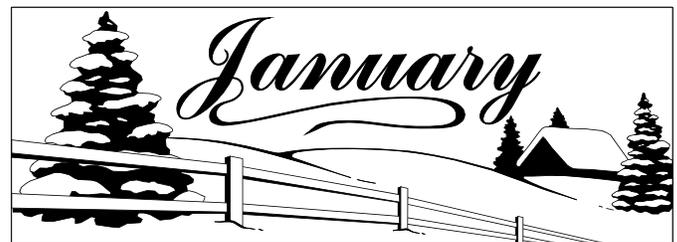
Although there is no district-wide policy regarding cold weather and recess, **the practice is to keep students indoors if the wind chill is lower than minus ten (-10).** Decisions are generally made at each school site. Sending or not sending children outside can be a surprisingly contentious issue, with parents often disagreeing with either decision. MTI advises staff to work with their school principal on this issue, and contact MTI with concerns. National Weather Services' wind chill chart: www.nws.noaa.gov/om/windchill/images/windchillchart3.pdf.



Wear Your MTI Red & Show Solidarity

MTI has various styles and sizes of **Solidarity!** shirts: a long-sleeved cotton/poly blend button-down shirt (\$25); a short-sleeved soft/poly polo shirt (\$15); the traditional MTI t-shirt with logo front and back (\$10); and the MTI sweatshirt (\$35). Members can stop by the MTI office any time to purchase MTI gear, order through an MTI Faculty Representative or call/email MTI.

Wear **MTI RED** on Mondays & **MTI LANYARDS** every day!



Calendar of Events

- **Monday, January 19, Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- **Tuesday, January 20, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- **Wednesday, January 21, 4:15 p.m., MTI**
USO-MTI Board of Directors
- **Friday, January 23, Semester Ends**
- **Monday, January 26, Doyle, McDaniels Auditorium**
BOE Regular Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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