



Solidarity!

821 Williamson St. * Madison, Wisconsin 53703-4503 * Phone (608) 257-0491 * Fax (608) 257-1168

Have You Voted to Recertify Your Union?

MTI's recertification election began last Wednesday (November 4) and continues through Noon on Tuesday, November 24. A "YES" vote by 51% of all eligible voters, in each of MTI's bargaining units, is required by Act 10 for MTI to continue as the certified Union for that bargaining unit. District employees employed as of October 1 are eligible to cast their ballot by phone or computer by following these directions:



- Call (toll-free) 1-866-458-9862 or log-on to www.aaaelections.org/WERC. The voting system is in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the voting period.
 - When prompted, enter the first four letters of your last name
 - When prompted, enter the last four digits of your Social Security number.
 - When prompted, VOTE "YES" for MTI to continue as your Union representative.
- When prompted, **CONFIRM YOUR VOTE. Do not hang up or log-off, until you hear or see a message thanking you or acknowledging your vote.**
- Anyone experiencing a problem with the automated voting system or who needs special assistance when voting, should call MTI (608) 257-0491 for assistance (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Technical voting assistance is also available at 1-800-529-5218 (Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.).

After you vote "YES" to recertify MTI, it is important that you *complete your recertification palm card, and return it to your MTI Faculty Representative or Member Organizer.* This is MTI's means of assuring that all members vote.

American Education Week November 16-20

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. 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.

"Beyond Measure" Film December 2

The film, sponsored by MTI & WEAC, paints a positive picture of what is possible in American Education. Ruth Conniff, Editor of *The Progressive* magazine, will facilitate a discussion following the film. The film begins at 7:00 p.m., at the Barrymore Theater. There is no charge to attend.

NOTE: Tickets can be reserved via:

<http://www.madisonteachers.org/beyondmeasure/>

PDP Reviewers Needed to Support Ongoing Licensure

Help support your colleagues by becoming a Professional Development Plan (PDP) reviewer. Currently, as a teacher in the District, PDP reviews are provided by the District at no cost. In order to continue this valuable service, teachers are needed to become certified PDP reviewers. Training for this critical job consists of a four-hour, online module and a four-hour, in person training. Professional Advancement Credit is awarded for participating in training. Credit can be used for vertical or horizontal movement on the salary schedule. See MTI's Collective Bargaining Agreement Sections III-B, III-G & III-H.

The next face-to-face training will be conducted on Wednesday, November 18th from 4:00-7:30 p.m. Any teacher willing to participate in this program, can sign-up at the following link on MTI's website:

<http://www.madisonteachers.org/licensing-and-evaluation/>

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org

MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org

Health Insurance Annual Choice/Open Enrollment

MTI's various Collective Bargaining Agreements with the District provide that between October 15 and November 15 each year there is a choice to switch health insurance providers, among the insurance carriers named in each of MTI's Contracts. MTI members have their choice among the three insurers - GHC, Unity (UW) 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 among those available under MTI's Collective Bargaining Agreements.* Implementation of coverage is effective January 1, 2016.

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 coverage under this right is January 1, 2016.

What the Right Couldn't Take: MTI's Ability to Collaborate

The present condition of politics in education is gloomy. School workers report high levels of stress, health problems, and thoughts of abandoning their career. Numerous teachers in Wisconsin already have, and it's caused a teacher shortage nationwide. Many pinpoint the source - a lack of respect for the professional by far-right legislators and governors, and that has become the new normal. However, a ray of hope broke its way through the malaise, with the announcement this fall of what has been accomplished with the Madison Metropolitan School District Employee Handbook. It is evidence of what the Right couldn't take. While Act 10 destroyed a 50 year history of collective bargaining for Wisconsin's public employees, save police and firefighters, it couldn't take away the voice or the spirit of MTI's collaborative ability. *There is still power in Union.*

The Employee Handbook was a result of the Union and District management working together to map out a path for the future of our students, our schools, and workers. One of the most powerful aspects of this Handbook is that it continues a grievance procedure which provides for a mutually-selected independent hearing examiner.

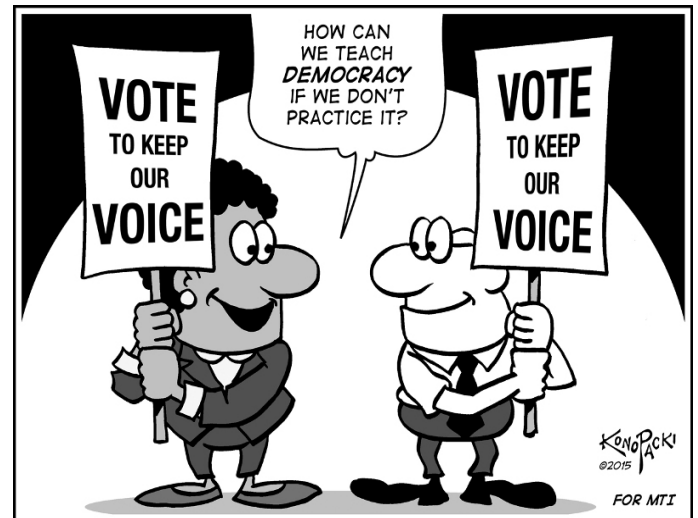
Also, within the Handbook is a process for its modification. Any modification will be the result of a joint employer/employee committee coming together to make a recommendation to the Board of Education. This follows a procedure similar to the process used to create the original Handbook. It honors collaboration and emphasizes the importance of workers' voices in the workplace.

While the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) employees' contracts will expire in June of 2016, the benefits and security contained within will not. The 4,700 employees represented by MTI will retain:

- Weingarten Rights - the right to be represented by a Union when threatened with discipline;
- Current salary schedule, benefits and sick leave;
- Planning time that is essential to serving our students;
- Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP);
- Seniority during times of surplus and layoff; and
- Just cause and due process.

The Handbook sets forth common language for MTI's five units, as well as for District employees represented by AFSCME and the Building Trades Council.

(Posted on Running Reflections October 18, 2015 by MTI Board Member Karen Vieth.)



Calendar of Events

- November 4-24 *MTI Recertification Election* - Vote "YES"
- Monday, November 9, 4:30 p.m., MTI
MTI Board of Directors
- Monday, November 9, Doyle
BOE Operations Work Group (5:00 p.m.)
- Tuesday, November 10, 4:15 p.m., SCFL
MTI Faculty Representative Council
- Tuesday, November 10, Fight for \$15
Rally at McDonald's - 12:00 noon (2402 S. Park Street)
Rally at City-County Building - 5:00 p.m.
(210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.)
- Thursday, November 12, 4:15 p.m., MTI
MTI Special Education Sub-Committee
- November 16-20 AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK
- Monday, November 16, 4:15 p.m., MTI
MTI Voters Political Action Committee
- Thursday/Friday, November 26/27 Thanksgiving