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Solidarity!

Last Chance to Vote to Recertify; Support *Your* Union



The election by all who are represented by MTI to *recertify MTI as their Union* ends at **12:00 Noon, tomorrow, November 24.** As of November 13, the mid-point of the 20-day election period, the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) *advised that over 50+% of MTI-represented employees had cast ballots.* MTI Member Organizers, Faculty Representatives and EA-MTI Building Representatives are continuing their hard work encouraging those who have not yet voted to do so. **The larger the turnout, the more powerful the message.**



Be sure you do your part. Keep the Union strong. Vote today by calling 1-866-458-9862. Contact MTI for assistance. Don't delay!

How Cold Is *Too* Cold?

With the impending return of winter to our fair city, temperatures will start plunging 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).

January Paycheck

MTI's Teacher and Substitute Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreements provide that the **January 1 paycheck is to be deposited on the first banking day in January. This year that will be January 4, given that January 1 is a Federal Reserve Bank Holiday.** A deposit on December 31 would cause one to have to pay taxes on those funds for 2015, i.e one would pay income tax on 13 months' wages in 2015. Confirmation of the deposit for teachers will be distributed at each person's work location on January 4, the day school resumes. For substitute teachers, verification will be on or about January 4.

Members of MTI's Clerical/Technical (SEE-MTI), Educational Assistants (EA-MTI) and Security Assistants (SSA-MTI) bargaining units' paychecks will be **directly deposited on December 24.** Confirmation of the deposit will be distributed at each person's work location on January 4.

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org

MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org

Upcoming Events/Presentations

December 1 - MTI is coordinating with the *Wisconsin Coalition for Retirement Security* (WCRS) to acquaint MTI members with an action plan to **protect the Wisconsin Retirement System and to build better retirement security for Wisconsin workers**. Keep *your money* in our state's economy, and out of the hands of Wall Street bankers. The MTI sponsored presentation will be held at the Labor Temple (1602 S. Park Street), commencing at 4:30 p.m. For more information about the WCRS see www.Wiretirement.org.

December 7 - *Student Loan Debt* presentation. In attempt to assist members with student loans, **MTI** is sponsoring a lecture by **One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Scot Ross**, who is one of the nation's experts on the crisis created for those with student loans. More than 800,000 Wisconsinites have student loan debt, topping \$19 billion. **One Wisconsin Now** and **One Wisconsin Institute** are national leaders on the crisis of student loan debt. *This session will discuss polling and research on student loan debt, the ongoing student loan voter campaign and additional mobilizing inside and outside of Wisconsin to make this issue a central discussion in the public policy arena in 2016 and beyond.* The presentation will be held on **December 7, at 4:30 p.m.**, at **WEA Member Benefits** (660 John Nolen Drive, 2nd Floor).

December 9 - *MTI/MMSD Employee Handbook Meeting*. MTI members interested in learning more about the **Employee Handbook** - *what from the Collective Bargaining Agreements continues, what has changed, and what this process means for the Union and its members going forward* - are invited to a **Joint MTI-MMSD Handbook Q & A session**. The session will be held at **LaFollette High School** (4:30-6:00 pm).

Labor History Essay Contest

The **Wisconsin Labor History Society** has announced that its annual *High School Essay Contest* is now open to all Wisconsin high school students (grades 9-12). Students are invited to write 750 words on the following theme: **"Unions have been important to my family and community because...."** Submissions must be postmarked on or before February 13, 2016. Cash prizes range from \$100 to \$500. For more information, go to the Wisconsin Labor History Society website at www.wisconsinlaborhistory.org.

Click and Shop Union: Affirm Your Values for the Holidays

Union-made goods and services are available for purchase online. The **Union Label & Service Trades Department of the AFL-CIO web site features all Union-made gifts**. Americans will spend \$1 trillion by December 1. Imagine the impact if just a fraction of those dollars goes towards products made by our Union brothers and sisters. Current offerings include clothes, shoes, computers, greeting cards, housewares, sports equipment,

toys and games. Millions of good family-supporting jobs have disappeared from the U.S. economy. You can save money and jobs by looking online for "Union-made Products" or "AFL-CIO Union Products." **Take a stand and make a difference!** Support good jobs by buying Union-made goods and services when holiday shopping. *Solidarity!*

The Americans With Disabilities Act

The federal **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** prohibits discrimination on the basis of one's disability. The law requires that *reasonable accommodations be provided by one's employer to enable a person with a disability to participate as fully as possible in their employment environment(s)*.

In 2008, Congress passed amendments to the ADA Act of 1990. The amended Act became effective on January 1, 2009. The improved Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAAA) clarifies who is covered under the law. *The changes were made in response to federal appellate court decisions that continually narrowed ADA protections by imposing ever higher, more onerous standards on employees to meet the qualification standards under the original ADA.*

The revised definition of "**disability**," created with the 2008 amendments, more broadly encompasses disabilities that substantially limit a major life activity. Congress clarified the definition of a disability to state that, *"An impairment that substantially limits one major life activity need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a disability";* and, *"An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active."* The amended language also provides that mitigating measures, including assistive devices, auxiliary aids, accommodations, medical therapies and supplies, (other than eye glasses and contact lenses) have no bearing in determining whether a disability qualifies under the law.

The purpose of the 2008 amendments is to make it easier for an employee seeking protection under the ADA to establish that he or she has a disability within the meaning of the ADAAA.

MTI staff have assisted many members with ADA issues. Anyone with questions regarding or seeking assistance with such issues, should contact MTI Assistant Director **Eve Degen** (degene@madisonteachers.org) at MTI Headquarters.

Calendar

- November 4-24 MTI Recertification Election Vote "YES"
- Thursday/Friday, November 26/27 Thanksgiving
- Monday, November 30, Doyle Auditorium
BOE Regular Meeting (6:00 p.m.)
- Wednesday, December 2, 4:15 p.m., MTI
MTI Constitution Committee
- Tuesday, December 8, 4:15 p.m., MTI
MTI VOTERS Political Action Committee
- Monday, December 14, 4:30 p.m., MTI
MTI Board of Directors