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Solidarity!

Judge Dismisses WILL's Challenge of MTI's Contracts

Once again, MTI has prevailed in Dane County Circuit Court, in its defense of the Union's five (5) Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Madison Metropolitan School District. On December 29, Judge Peter Anderson dismissed the claim made by the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL), which is the legal arm of the Bradley Foundation. WILL had recruited Norman Sannes, a Madison taxpayer, alleging his taxes suffered as a result of the MTI/MMSD Contracts for 2014-15 and 2015-16. WILL, using Sannes, claimed the Contracts could not be valid because of Act 10.

Judge Anderson ruled that the claim regarding the 2014-15 Contracts was moot because they had expired. As to the current Contracts, he determined that it **did not violate Act 10**, because the School District could have unilaterally adopted any of the terms of MTI's Contracts on its own, with the exception of dues deduction and fair share contributions. As to the latter, *Judge Anderson ruled that Sannes lacked standing to bring the lawsuit because he was not injured by the Contract provision.*

Judge Niess had earlier dismissed a similar lawsuit by WILL on behalf of David Blaska opining that he did not have legal standing for the complaint.

2016-17 Winter Break and Spring Break Schedule

During the joint MTI/MMSD discussions which produced the MMSD Employee Handbook, it was agreed that winter break would continue to be ten (10) days duration, spring break would continue to be six (6) days duration, and the dates for each would be determined annually. **Continuing that collaborative process**, MTI and District representatives met in December to review the 2016-17 calendar and to discuss the dates for winter break. *Because December 24, 25, 31 and January 1 all fall on weekends next school year*, it was agreed that:

- **Winter break** will commence on Wednesday, December 21, 2016, and continue through Tuesday, January 3, with school resuming on Wednesday, January 4, 2017.
- **Spring break** will commence Monday, April 10, 2017, and continue through Monday, April 17, with school resuming on Tuesday, April 18, 2017.

While the 2016-17 break calendar is resolved, MTI recommended that the District agree to a joint committee to discuss and resolve other calendar issues such as the scheduling of parent-teacher conferences, compensatory days, and the quarterly "staff only days" (formerly known as professional development days).

SEE-MTI, EA-MTI & SSA-MTI 2016-17 Holidays

District clerical/technical employees, educational assistants & security assistants represented by MTI receive paid holidays on December 24, 25, 31 and January 1. Because these days all occur on weekends next school year, MTI and District representatives have agreed that paid holidays for 2016-17 for the SEE-MTI unit will be: Friday, December 23, 2016; Monday, December 26, 2016; Friday, December 30, 2016; and Monday, January 2, 2017.

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 District's office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 1**.

Sabbatical Leave applications for either the first semester of the 2016-17 school year or for the entire school year are due in the MTI office by 5:00 p.m., **February 1**.

Teacher Retirement and Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP) enrollment applications are due in the District's office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 15**.

Special Education Plan for Student Services - Meeting January 20

In a joint effort to clarify various special education issues, Peg Coyne (MTI Assistant Director) and John Harper (MMSD Executive Director of Student Services) will host a **Q & A session on Wednesday, January 20, 2016**. The meeting will take place from 4:15- 5:15 p.m., at the WEA Member Benefits Building (660 John Nolen Drive, 2nd Floor). This is an opportunity to share current information and discuss the recently proposed Special Education Plan for Student Services. All interested District staff are invited.

Retiree Health Insurance

In MTI's 2009-11 Contract negotiations, a significant gain was made for retirees, including future retirees. It was agreed that one's MTI-negotiated Retirement Insurance Account can be used to pay the premiums for group health insurance plans other than the group health insurance plans which are part of the MTI/MMSD Collective Bargaining Agreement. This means that one can use their RIA to pay for coverage they have under their spouse's/partner's employer or other group or Medicare supplement plans.

Note: HMOs only provide emergency coverage outside their service area. See Contract Section VII-G-6-f for details.

Educational Assistants: Demand Your Lunch Time!

The EA-MTI Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section VI-J, provides "Educational assistants working four (4) or more hours per day shall be provided one-half (1/2) hour unpaid duty-free lunch." There is no equivocation. Those employees working four or more hours shall be provided a **duty-free lunch break**. Even if one is on a morning-long field trip, one still has the right to take a duty-free lunch.

Unfortunately, some members of MTI's EA unit have a schedule which "encourages" them to work through the lunch period. Agreeing to work such a schedule undercuts this hard-earned right. Those with a schedule created that requires them to work through their lunch time should bring this to the attention of their supervisor, and ask that it be modified to assure time without student supervision when the employee's lunch time is scheduled. For assistance, contact MTI Assistant Director Eve Degen (degene@madisonteachers.org).

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.

MTI Wear on Sale

Members are encouraged to wear MTI wear in the community to make a positive statement about education and educators. The following prices apply: t-shirt (\$10); polo-shirt (\$12); oxford button-down shirt (\$15); and sweatshirt (\$30). Show **SOLIDARITY** with your **MTI Sisters & Brothers**. Wear **MTI RED** on **Mondays** and **MTI lanyards every day!**

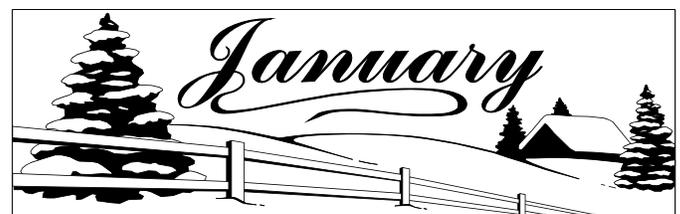


Keep MTI Updated on Changes

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.

January Calendar

- Monday, January 11, 4:30 p.m., MTI Board of Directors
- Monday, January 11, 5:00 p.m., Doyle Room 103 BOE Operations Work Group
- Tuesday, January 12, 4:15 p.m., MTI MTI VOTERS Political Action Committee
- Monday, January 18, *Martin Luther King Jr. Day*
 - Tuesday, January 19, 4:15 p.m., SCFL MTI Faculty Representative Council
 - Wednesday, January 20, 4:15 p.m., MTI USO-MTI Board of Directors
 - Wednesday, January 20, 4:15 p.m., WEA Q&A with Peg Coyne/John Harper
 - Tuesday, January 26, 4:15 p.m., MTI MTI Constitution Committee



Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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