



Solidarity!

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MTI Prevails in Open Records Case over Recertification Elections

MTI filed an action in Dane County Circuit Court last year challenging the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commissions (WERC) refusal to release voter lists during annual Union certification elections. Last Monday, Judge Peter Anderson **ruled in favor of MTI** and held that the WERC was required to produce the certification voter lists requested by the Union under the Public Records Law during the election period. Nothing in the decision allows the union to see “how” employees voted (that is rightfully kept confidential), but only whether an employee has voted. **This is critical, because in order for a union to retain its standing as certified labor representative, at least 51% of all eligible employees need to annually vote in favor for the Union to be recertified.** Those who do not vote are essentially counted as voting against recertification (*unlike political elections in which the majority of votes cast determines the winner*). In the past, the information on who voted was provided to the union only after the election was over. The decision will now allow unions to request this data during the election, allowing them to more efficiently focus the union’s get-out-the-vote activities on those eligible employees yet to cast a vote.

Why does this matter? While MTI has won recertification elections by large numbers in the past, such was the result of a great deal of effort and resources by MTI staff and hundreds of member organizers. Receiving the voter lists during the election will allow us to more efficiently conduct a campaign. Secondly, while MTI members have voted to recertify by large margins, such has not always been the case for other unions and the high threshold (51% of all eligible) can result in bizarre outcomes. In the 2013 certification elections, support staff in the Riverdale School District voted 26 to 0 to recertify their union, but lost the certification election due to the fact that they received less than 51% of the 53 employees eligible to vote. If one more employee had cast a ballot, the threshold would have been achieved and the union recertified. Had the WERC been required to release a voter list to the Riverdale support union during the 2013 certification election, union members could have more easily identified those yet to vote and remind them of the importance of doing so.

The WERC has indicated that they plan to appeal this decision. This year’s recertification election will be held between October 27 and November 16.

MTI/WEA Member Benefits Seminar September 29: 7 Mistakes Members Make with their Money

Making wise financial choices early in your career can have a significant impact on your future financial security. This seminar will help MTI members understand the benefits and consequences of important financial decisions. You will:

- Find out how to avoid the seven most common financial mistakes.
- Learn how having a written budget can give you permission to spend.
- Learn how paying yourself first can improve your financial future.

WHEN: Thursday, September 29

TIME: 4:30-5:30 p.m.

WHERE: WEA Member Benefits

MTI members only. Register on MTI’s webpage.

Mixing Work and Social Media

It is **important** for all to review the District’s **social media policy** before using electronic media to interact with families, students, colleagues and/or the general public. The District policy permits communication with parents and students via District-sanctioned electronic media and accounts, and cautions against interacting on your personal social media accounts or cell phones. Comments you make on Facebook, Twitter or other social media accounts that can be tracked to your work as a teacher or educational support staff can become problematic if they reflect poorly on the District or use unauthorized copies of students’ work, pictures or comments. The policy contains the following phrase: **Be advised that failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in disciplinary action.** *MTI strongly encourages members to review the policy and contact MTI with any questions or concerns.*

www.madison.k12.wi.us/social-media-guidelines

MTI & WEA Member Benefits Partnership & Financial Services for MTI Members

MTI and WEA Member Benefits have partnered to enhance the financial well-being of MTI members. Throughout the year, MTI members *only* will be invited to attend various group financial educational offerings which will be noticed in the MTI Solidarity newsletter and via e-mail. In addition to these group offerings, MTI members will also have access to individual appointments with Steve Pike, a retired MTI teacher and current Member Benefits Consultant for WEA Member Benefits, who is available to meet with MTI members at MTI headquarters. Steve will be offering two types of meetings.

Individual Financial Consultations: See MTI's webpage (www.madisonteachers.org) to sign-up for a free 30-minute financial consultation. This is ideal if you are just getting started, have specific questions, or would like a quick check-in. Because the consultations are held at MTI, it's a convenient way to meet with someone face-to-face to get some general help or guidance. Steve can answer your specific questions on a wide range of financial topics such as:

- * Reasons to start a 403(b) or IRA savings account and how to enroll
- * Wisconsin Retirement System basics (Bring your WRS statement)
- * Retirement Savings strategies
- * Pre-tax vs. Roth, 403(b) vs. IRA
- * Investment/Account Fees
- * Budgeting
- * Tips for purchasing personal insurance

Individual Retirement Planning Consultations: For those exploring retirement in the next few years, Steve is available to provide individual retirement planning meetings. These meetings will include a discussion about your WRS retirement benefits, social security benefits, retirement sick leave/post-retirement insurance payments and (for those eligible) Teacher Emeritus Retirement Plan (TERP) benefits. Call MTI (257-0491) to schedule a retirement planning meeting with Steve.

Sabbatical Leave Applications Due October 1 (*Note Extended Deadline*)

Under the terms of the Employee Handbook (Section 10, page 130), the Board of Education budgets \$45,000 for sabbatical leaves for members of MTI's "teacher" bargaining unit. Such is for the purpose of advanced study and/or research. Either a one-year leave at half pay or a one-semester leave at full pay may be granted. The recipient of a sabbatical leave must agree to return to the Madison District for at least two years of service following the sabbatical leave, or repay the compensation received for the leave. A teacher who receives a sabbatical leave will be permitted to return to the position s/he held at the time the leave was granted.

Applications for the second semester of the 2016-17 school year are due at MTI headquarters by **October 1**. Applications for the 2017-18 school year or the first semester are due **February 1, 2017**. An application and the MTI/MMSD agreed-upon policy can be obtained by visiting MTI's webpage: www.madisonteachers.org.

MTI Membership Corner

The following meetings, seminars, and workshops are available to MTI members *only*:

EA-MTI (Educational Assistants) Board & Building Rep Meeting, Wednesday, September 21, 4:15 p.m., MTI.

USO-MTI (Substitute Teachers) General Membership Meeting and Employee Handbook Update, Thursday, September 22, 4:15 p.m., MTI Headquarters.

MTI National Board Certification Workshop for Teachers. Learn about the benefits of National Board Certification and the supports available for you to achieve it. Wednesday, September 28, 4:30 p.m. (e-mail invite sent to all MTI teacher members).

SEE-MTI (Clerical and Technical Employees) General Membership Meeting and Employee Handbook Update, Wednesday, September 28, 4:30 p.m., Labor Temple.

MTI/WEA Member Financial Planning Seminar: 7 Mistakes Members Make with their Money, Thursday, September 29, 4:30 p.m. (e-mail invite sent to all MTI members).

EA-MTI (Educational Assistants) General Membership Meeting and Employee Handbook Update, Wednesday, October 19, 4:15 p.m., MTI Headquarters.

MTI/WEA Member Benefits New Professionals Night. Information on Employee Handbook highlights, how to read your paycheck, benefits and salary schedule overview, 403(b) and Wisconsin Retirement System info. Thursday, October 27, 4:00 p.m. (invitation to be e-mailed to MTI members in their first five years with the MMSD).

Calendar of Events

- Monday, September 19, 5:00 p.m., Doyle Room 103
BOE Operations Work Group
- Tuesday, September 20, 4:15 p.m., SCFL
MTI Faculty Representative Council
- Wednesday, September 21, 4:15 p.m., MTI
EA-MTI Board & Building Reps
- Thursday, September 22, 4:15 p.m., MTI
USO-MTI General Membership
- Monday, September 26, 6:00 p.m., Doyle McDaniels
BOE Regular Meeting
- Wednesday, September 28, 4:30 p.m., SCFL
SEE-MTI General Membership

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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

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