



Solidarity!

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Work Commences on Salary and Benefits Committees

During the 2015-16 school year, District consultants produced a **Compensation Study**, which recommended the District consider a number of changes to its compensation and benefits plans. As part of last summer's collaborative Employee Handbook discussions, it was agreed to create two committees to further study these issues and report back to the Employee Handbook Oversight Group (comprised of both employer and employee group representatives) with their recommendations for possible modifications. After soliciting interested members, MTI has now appointed the MTI participants to these committees.

Salary sub-group. This group will explore issues related to administrator and teacher salaries, including those issues identified in the Compensation Study. This work has commenced. **MTI appointees to this committee include:** Leigh Ellingson (Shorewood/Grade 4), Pamela Ferrill (Chavez/Grade 5), Valerie Hammer (Whitehorse/Grade 7), Michael Harris (Memorial/English), Cynthia Moore (Doyle/Positive Behavior), Jaime Schmied (Midvale/Kindergarten), Ben Senson (Memorial/Physics), Susan Stern (Shorewood/BRT), President Andy Waity (Crestwood/Grade 4), and Executive Director Doug Keillor.

Benefits sub-group. This group will explore benefits issues including: benefit sustainability issues; new hire eligibility (wait periods); active employee eligibility (minimum hours worked, premium contribution for part-time employees, etc.); terminated employee (coverage ending); and retiree continuation (eligibility, retiree insurance account calculation, etc.). This work will commence shortly. **MTI appointees to this committee include:** Cindy Barbera (Hamilton/Math), Sherry Barnsley (East/Admin. Clerk), Joe Bins (Jefferson/Math/Science), Andrea Fairweather (Lindbergh/Speech/Language), Leasure Flemming (Emerson/SEA), John Howe (West/English), Kelli Lawler (Memorial/SEA), and Executive Director Doug Keillor.

Standing Up for Public Schools: A Message from the NEA and AFT on Betsy DeVos Nomination for Secretary of Education

"Public education is the foundation of our 21st-century democracy. Our public schools are where our students come to be educated in the fullest sense of that word, including as citizens of this great country. We strive every day to make every public school a place where we prepare the nation's young people to contribute to our society, economy and citizenry. We expect our elected leaders and policymakers, regardless of party affiliation, to value and support this American vision for a strong and inclusive public education system that ensures that all students can succeed, regardless of their ZIP code.

With the recent nomination of Betsy DeVos as U.S. secretary of education, the nation is entering dangerous, uncharted territory. For the first time, our secretary of education could be someone whose sole "qualification" for the job is the two decades she has spent attempting to dismantle the American public school system...'

DeVos has used her extraordinary wealth to undermine our public schools and, in so doing, has harmed our students. She and her family have spent millions to promote failed private school vouchers and unaccountable for-profit charter schools while working to destabilize and defund public education. This is a dangerous direction that will do nothing to help our most vulnerable students and will exacerbate glaring opportunity gaps.

We call on DeVos and political leaders at every level to commit to the American vision of public education for all—one that welcomes and includes students of all backgrounds, identities, origins and abilities. Our leaders must understand that our students and communities need schools that answer to them and their elected representatives. This compact is undermined when billionaires, corporations, hedge fund managers and others seek to substitute their will for that of educators and the people and communities who rely on our public schools. Ninety percent of American children attend public schools. They deserve leaders who are committed to building up our students with supportive policies that ensure equal opportunity rather than continuing discriminatory policies that abandon the students who need us most.

We hold these values because all children, regardless of family circumstances or where they live, have the right to an education that helps them reach their full potential and does not depend on living in advantaged circumstances, getting accepted by a private school or being selected in a charter school lottery.

The record is clear: Betsy DeVos is an anti-public education activist. A true leader for all students must reject the ideological demands that isolate, outsource and abandon, and instead commit to this American vision for public education."

Teacher Retirement and TERP Deadline February 15

In order for one to be eligible for the *MTI-negotiated Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP)*, he/she must be a **full-time teacher, at least 55 years old, with a combined age (as of August 30 in one's retirement year) and years of service in the District totaling at least 75.** (For example, a teacher who is 57 and has eighteen (18) years of service to the MMSD would be eligible: $57 + 18 = 75$.) Teachers who are younger than age 55 are eligible if they have worked for the MMSD at least 30 years. Up to ten (10) *part-time teachers* may participate in TERP each year *provided* they have worked full-time within the last ten (10) years and meet the eligibility criteria described above.

Retirement notifications, including completed TERP agreements, are due in the District's Department of Human Resources no later than **February 15**. Appointments can be made to complete the TERP agreement and discuss insurance options at retirement by calling the District's Benefits Manager, **Rachelle Hady**, at 663-1795.

MTI was successful in discussions for the 2017-18 MMSD Employee Handbook in gaining the continuance of TERP. **Thus, MTI members can be assured that TERP runs through the 2017-18 school year and not feel pressured into retirement before they are ready.**

WEA Member Benefits Consultant **Steve Pike** is available to provide guidance and/or to provide estimated benefits for TERP, insurance continuation, application of one's Retirement Insurance Account, WRS, and Social Security. Call MTI Headquarters (257-0491) to schedule an appointment.

Foundation for the Future Grant Applications Now Open!

Are you dreaming of an idea to enhance your school or improve learning for students but aren't sure how to fund it? The Foundation for Madison's Public Schools (FMPS) and the William T. Evjue Foundation want to help you turn your idea into a reality by providing up to \$25,000 in funding.

Foundation for the Future grants are available to all District staff and are awarded to promising programs in hopes that they will remain sustainable for years to come and be replicated at other schools. The 2017-2018 *Foundation for the Future Grants* has three categories: Collaborative, Staff, and Encore. Collaborative grants will range from \$10,000-\$25,000 each and ideally involve an entire school, multiple schools, multiple departments/grade levels within a school, or community partners. Staff grants will not exceed \$10,000 and do not need to demonstrate collaboration with other schools, departments, grades, or community partners. Encore grants will not exceed \$12,000 and will replicate successful grants, projects or initiatives from a different school.

Foundation for the Future grants allow educators to implement creative programs they feel are in their students' best interest, giving them the tools they need for success. Applications are available now on the Foundation's website <http://www.fmps.org/grants/>. Applications are due by January 17, and while the grant application isn't extremely rigorous, you shouldn't delay. You can also find more information on the Foundation's website, including the scoring guide used by the committee to evaluate grants, and a list of past grants FMPS has funded. If you have any questions, please contact FMPS Executive Director Melinda Heinritz at 608-232-7820 or mheinritz@fmps.org.

MTI Membership Corner

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

MTI/WEA Member Benefits Individual MTI Member Financial Consultations in December. See MTI's website: www.madisonteachers.org to sign up for a free 30-minute financial consultation. Consultations are held at MTI headquarters.

MTI/WEA Member Benefits Student Loan Forgiveness/Financial Planning on December 15, 4:30-5:30 p.m. MTI members are invited to learn about the federal loan forgiveness programs that are available to teachers and public employees, find out how to start the application process, and get tips on what is needed to ensure that your application is ready for submission. See MTI's website: www.madisonteachers.org to sign up.

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

District clerical/technical employees, educational assistants and security assistants represented by MTI receive paid holidays on December 24, 25, 31 and January 1. Because these days all occur on weekends, the 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.

Calendar of Events

- Tuesday, December 13, 4:15 p.m., MTI Board of Directors
- Monday, December 19, 6:00 p.m., Doyle Board of Education

❄ **Dec. 22—Jan. 3 Winter Break** ❄

- Tuesday, January 10, 4:15 p.m., MTI Board of Directors
- Thursday, January 12, 4:15 p.m., MTI Constitution Committee

January 16, Martin Luther King Jr. Day

- Tuesday, January 17, 4:15 p.m., SCFL MTI Faculty Representative Council
- Wednesday, January 18, 4:15 p.m., MTI EA-MTI Building Representatives

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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

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