



Solidarity!

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Living Wage Campaign Standing Up for Educational Assistants

Thank you to all of the MTI members who showed up at last Monday's Board of Education meeting to support the EA Living Wage Campaign. Nurse Assistant Marilyn Fruth (Leopold) and Special Education Assistant Celia Guzman Tea (Nuestro Mundo) delivered eloquent speeches to the Board on the work that EAs, SEAs, NAs, clerical EAs, BEAs, parent liaisons, and sub SEAs accomplish every day in serving the neediest students in the District, as well as outlining the urgent need for the Board to examine the wages and hours of members of this unit. Approximately 50 supporters - EAs, teachers, and other MTI supporters - cheered them on. As the Board begins its discussions on the 2017-18 school year budget, EA-MTI wants the Board to prioritize a raise in the hourly wage for EAs, as well as a path to more work hours for EAs. The Board and MMSD Administration need to address these issues now so that EAs can have sustaining employment and the District can retain this important group of its workforce. MTI has requested a meeting with MMSD Human Resources staff and EA-MTI representatives to move this issue forward. Members are encouraged to continue to attend BOE meetings, including Operations Work Group meetings, to monitor progress on this issue.

Teacher Retirement and TERP Deadline February 15

In order for one to be eligible for the Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP), a teacher must be full-time and 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**. 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 to MTI members for TERP, insurance continuation, application of one's Retirement Insurance Account, WRS, and Social Security. Call MTI Headquarters (257-0491) to schedule an appointment.

Temporary Reduction of Contract with Right to Return to Full-Time

Addendum A, Section 3.09 of the Employee Handbook provides that full-time teachers who wish to work part-time may request to do so for a period of one (1) year, and shall have the right to full-time regular contracts at the end of such period. Requests for part-time contracts must be made in writing to the Department of Human Resources on or before **March 1** of the preceding school year.

To be eligible to apply for contract reduction under this Section, a teacher must have completed five (5) years of service with the District as a teacher by the time the contract reduction will become effective.

Union Dues Are Tax Deductible Contact MTI for Dues Info

If you file a form 1040 and itemize your deductions on Schedule A, your local, state, and national dues may be tax deductible. MTI members who would like to receive documentation of union dues payments for 2016 can call the MTI office (608-257-0491) or email MTI Membership Coordinator Jen Nichols (nicholsj@madisonteachers.org). Please remember to give us your name and B number. Calculating individual union dues payments is particularly complicated for the 2016 calendar year since dues were deducted from payroll for half the year, before Act 10 forced MTI to transition to collecting dues via electronic funds transfer and the variability associated with the new system. Dues amounts paid by an individual can vary based on bargaining unit, percent of contract/work hours, leave status, and the timing and regularity of their electronic dues transfers. Therefore, members will need to contact MTI directly should they need to obtain the amount of dues they paid for the 2016 calendar year. MTI is working on processes to automate this calculation in future years.

Also, Congress has extended the \$250 Educator Tax Credit for educators who purchased classroom supplies and instructional materials during calendar year 2016. <https://www.neamb.com/finance/dont-miss-these-educator-tax-deductions.htm>



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. Any member with questions regarding or seeking assistance with such issues, should contact MTI Assistant Director Eve Degen (degene@madisonteachers.org) at MTI.

FMPS – Our Mission, Our Focus

February 1st kicked off the 2017 Employee Giving Campaign between MMSD and the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools (FMPS). In 2016, 302 employees participated, donating over \$38,000! Join this important MMSD partner in growing these numbers and help build even more resources to support our schools and build a thriving school district. Employees are encouraged to give to their passion, whether it's arts, technology, libraries, health, or their school's endowment. With over 160 funds, FMPS has options for everyone. FMPS is committed to supporting only MMSD schools, and has recently strengthened their relationship with MMSD staff, teachers, and students. For more information on the MMSD Employee Giving Campaign, visit fmps.org or contact Valerie Chesnik at vchesnik@fmps.org or 237-7721.

Nursing Assistant Course

Interested in learning how to become a nursing assistant in the MMSD? Enroll online at Madison College <https://madisoncollege.edu/register>. The course meets on Tuesdays and Thursday, March 21 to May 4, from 6-8:00 p.m., at the Madison Truax Campus. Cost is \$239. The instructor is Rachel Gallagher, LaFollette School Nurse/Nurse Practitioner.

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org

MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org

MTI Membership Corner

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

MTI & WEA Member Benefits: More Opportunities for Financial Services for MTI Members

MTI and WEA Member Benefits have scheduled more opportunities to enhance the financial well-being of MTI members. See MTI's website (www.madisonteachers.org) to sign-up for these seminars or financial consultations:

March 15 - Saving for Your Future: Why Saving Early and Often is Important

Most Wisconsin public school employees can expect their retirement income to come from three sources: WRS (the Wisconsin Retirement System pension), Social Security, and personal savings. Even though your pension benefit provides an excellent head start, today's employees need to consider personal savings to fill their retirement savings gap. Whether you are just beginning your career or are nearing the end of it, there is something for you. Join us for this crash course and get a better idea of how your pension and personal savings work to fill your retirement savings gap.

30-Minute Free Financial Consultations

WEA Member Benefits Consultant **Steve Pike** is available to provide individual MTI member financial guidance. See MTI's website: www.madisonteachers.org to sign up for a free 30-minute financial consultation. Consultations are held at MTI headquarters.

MTI Members: National Board Certification Support Workshops Continuing

MTI members currently working on National Board Certification are invited to attend monthly NBC Support Workshops provided at no cost by MTI and WEAC Region 6. Sessions are currently scheduled February 8, March 8, April 12, and May 10. Please contact MTI if you are interested in attending or would like additional information at 608-257-0491 or at mti@madisonteachers.org.

Calendar of Events

- Monday, February 6, 4:00 p.m., Doyle
Joint MTI/MMSD Compensation Study Group
- Monday, February 6, Doyle Room 103
BOE Instruction Work Group (5:00 p.m.)
BOE Special Meeting (5:45 p.m.)
- Wednesday, February 8, 4:30 p.m., MTI
SEE-MTI Board of Directors
- Monday, February 6, 5:00 p.m., Doyle Room 103
BOE Operations Work Group
- Tuesday, February 14, 4:30 p.m., MTI
MTI Board of Directors
- Wednesday, February 15, 4:00 p.m., Doyle
Joint MTI/MMSD Benefits Sub-Committee

Tuesday, February 21, Primary Election - **VOTE**