



2017 Employee Handbook Update #3

November, 2017

Representatives from MTI and the MMSD continue to meet as part of the annual **Employee Handbook Review/Revision** process outlined in Section 18 of the Handbook. Various work groups have been designated, comprised of MMSD and MTI appointed representatives, with a goal of advancing recommended revisions for consideration by the joint Handbook Review Committee later this month. The consensus recommendations of the Handbook Review Committee will then be shared with the Superintendent to forward to the Board of Education for consideration.

Teacher Compensation Work Group

The MTI-MMSD **Teacher Compensation** work group met on **October 24** and **November 7** to discuss potential modifications to the teacher salary schedule. Those considerations include: potential modifications to the number of tracks on the salary schedule, possibly collapsing the current eight track schedule to fewer tracks, while still maintaining a premium for Masters degrees; adjusting the salary curve to accelerate advancement, in order to provide teachers “professional salaries” earlier in their career; adding salary incentives for hard-to-staff bilingual and cross-categorical teaching positions to attract and retain certified staff; exploring incentives for other “high needs” areas or schools; potential modifications to incentive professional development; and identifying opportunities and compensation incentives for career ladder opportunities such as teacher leadership positions or administrator development. All of these considerations would involve increased investment by the District in teacher compensation.

District HR staff will be sharing an update on the progress of these discussions, and sharing an example of such a modified salary schedule with the **BOE Operations Work Group on Monday, November 13, at 5:00 pm, in Room 103 of the Doyle Administration building**. MTI representatives will be providing a similar update to all MTI Faculty Representatives at the **November 28 MTI Faculty Representative Council meeting (4:30 pm at MTI Headquarters)**. MTI members are invited to attend either of these meetings to learn more about the status of these discussions.

The MTI-MMSD Teacher Compensation Work Group will continue to meet over the next few months to further this work in hope of reaching consensus recommendations for salary schedule changes effective for the 2018-19 school year. MTI members will continue to receive updates as this work progresses, as well as information on additional opportunities to learn more and offer input.

EA/SEA Salary Schedule Work Group

The MTI-MMSD **EASEA Salary Schedule** work group met on **October 4** to explore improvements to the EA/SEA salary schedule made necessary due to the achievement of a \$15 per hour entry wage. Those discussions included a consideration for modifying the EA/SEA wage schedule to provide one pay rate for both EA and SEA work hours (currently paid at two separate rates). This is seen as a major improvement and would provide a significant pay bump particularly for EA hours. This school year, a number of SEAs witnessed some of their hours being reclassified to “Regular EA” hours at a lower pay rate even with no substantive change in assignment. Changing to one uniform pay rate for all EA/SEA hours would help address those concerns. The work group is also looking at modifications to the EA/SEA wage schedule in order to provide for annual pay increases for all steps on the EA/SEA wage schedules (beyond the base wage increase) as a result of the compression caused by the \$15 starting wage. The MMSD is

recommending that any wage improvements become effective with the 2018-19 school year and MTI is advocating that wage increases be effective in the current school year, as soon as possible. Additional meetings of his work group are being scheduled.

Substitute Teacher Work Group

The MTI-MMSD **Substitute Teacher** work group met on **September 25** to discuss ways to attract, retain, and reward substitute teachers. Included in their recommendations will be a significant increase in the long-term substitute pay rate and improvements in the calculation method to determine health insurance eligibility. There was also an agreement to provide substitute specific professional development during the school year on teacher All-Staff Days and a working agreement to continue meeting with USO-MTI leadership around issues impacting substitute teachers. This group will continue to explore other tangible ways to address the substitute teacher shortage.

Teacher Day Work Group

The MTI-MMSD **Teacher Work Day** work group met on **August 22** with the MTI appointees suggesting revisions to define sufficient **planning time**, especially for middle and high school teachers with no explicit planning time referenced in the Handbook. The MTI appointees also suggested revisions to the **staff only day** schedules to limit PD on such days and provide time for the professional planning and preparation needs of educators. The MTI appointees are also advocating to ensure that **School Based Leadership Teams (SBLTs)** are provided the legitimate voice that the Employee Handbook states they are supposed to have in designing the structure and content of staff only days. Numerous SBLT participants report that they are provided little input into such activities with the principal and/or Central Office mandating activities on such days. Additional meetings of his work group are being scheduled.

School Calendar Work Group

The MTI-MMSD **School Calendar** work group met last spring and the MTI appointees proposed a suggested calendar for 2018-19 which included a recommended return to a ten (10) day winter break. This Work Group was unable to continue to meet during the summer due to the unavailability of essential District staff. The work group is now working to schedule additional meetings in order to finalize their calendar recommendations. Included in calendar discussions are the placement of parent teacher conferences, the length of break periods, the number of staff only days, and the last day of school. The school calendar is restricted by the 192-day contract year, the timing of graduation and summer school, and the legislative requirement that school commence after September 1. This work group is scheduled to meet again on **December 12**.

Special Education Work Group

The MTI-MMSD **Special Education** work group met to discuss planning time needs, as well as compensation for Section 504 plans. The District has suggested increasing the compensation for chairing IEPs from \$75 (currently) to \$100, while decreasing compensation for chairing 504 plans from \$75 (currently) to \$25. The MTI appointees are advocating for no reduction in 504 pay but increasing compensation for chairing IEPs due to the extensive work involved. MTI appointee are also advocating for the planning time needs of CC teachers to fulfill their IEP responsibilities. The planning time issues may be referred to the Teacher Work Day group for inclusion in their discussions about planning time.

Benefits Work Group

The **Benefits** work group met during the 2017-18 school year and recommended various changes for consideration by the Handbook Review Committee including, among other things:

1. The timing of benefit eligibility change (when coverage starts and ends) to have eligibility commence sooner for new hires; be extended by a month for 9 and 10-month ESEA-MTI represented retiring employees; and end a month earlier for employees who voluntarily resign.
2. Provide a voluntary short-term disability insurance plan for ESEA-MTI represented employees and other non-teaching staff (teachers have access to the sick leave bank which serves as a short-term disability plan). The plan would be 100% employee paid (i.e. the employer would pay none of the premium).
3. Create consistency of benefit offerings between employee groups, if possible (e.g. paid snow days for all staff).

Next Steps

The work groups described above will continue to meet to fine-tune their recommended changes. The recommendations of the various work groups will then be forwarded to the MTI-MMSD Employee Handbook Review Committee for consideration and recommendation. Revisions recommended by the Review Committee will then be forwarded to the Superintendent to advance to the Board of Education. The Board of Education has final authority over the recommended changes to the Employee Handbook.

All MTI members will continue to be provided updates as these discussions continue.