



Solidarity!

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Making Your Voice Heard on Public Policy: MTI-Voters Interviews on January 16 and 23

Board of Education seats 3, 4, and 5, currently held by Dean Loumos, James Howard and TJ Mertz, are up for election this year. **Mertz** (Seat 5) is running for re-election and is being challenged by **Ananda Mirilli** and **Amos Roe**. Board members Loumos and Howard are not seeking reelection. Seat 3 candidates are **Cris Carusi** and **Kaleem Caire**. Seat 4 candidates are **Laila Borokhim**, **David Blaska**, **Ali Muldrow** and **Albert Bryan**.

Earlier this month, MTI-Voters developed and distributed questionnaires to all candidates to collect their views on a variety of issues important to MTI members. Completed questionnaires for MTI members to review will be available soon on MTI's website. On **January 16**, MTI-Voters Committee will conduct interviews of all BOE candidates. On **January 23**, interviews for Madison Mayoral candidates and Wisconsin Supreme Court candidates will be held. Following the interviews, MTI-Voters will decide which candidates to recommend for endorsement. Under MTI Bylaws, MTI-Voters Committee recommendations are then forwarded for a vote by all members of MTI who contribute to MTI-Voters, before endorsements are made.

Given the number of candidates, a primary election will be held for Board of Education and Mayor on **February 19**, with the two leading vote-getters advancing to the **April 2** general election. All MTI members are encouraged to learn more about the candidates, attend candidate forums, and work to get out the vote for these crucial positions.

Who is MTI-Voters?

MTI-Voters is the political action committee of MTI that seeks to identify those candidates most likely to advance policies supported by the members of MTI, policies that support MMSD staff and students, and advance the quality of public education in the District. MTI-Voters is a representative body of MTI members, comprised of the Presidents of each MTI bargaining unit, the MTI Treasurer, and nine (9) others elected by MTI's Faculty Representative Council. This member-comprised committee guides MTI's political endorsement process and advances recommended endorsements to the thousands of MTI members who contribute to MTI Voters. In this manner, your voice joins the voice of many as we decide who to collectively support.

Behavior Education Plan Revisions and Resources Being Considered by BOE

In January and February, the Board of Education will be considering changes and revisions to the Behavior Education Plan (BEP), as well as additional resources needed to support the Plan. During the first semester of the school year, District Administration collected feedback on the BEP from staff, parents, and students. Over **1,600** staff responded with survey feedback and over **240** staff attended one of six (6) feedback sessions held throughout the District. When asked to prioritize among potential resources to assist with BEP implementation, staff identified "**mental health supports**" and "**additional supports for high needs students**" as the top two priorities. Family feedback produced similar requests for "**additional staff**."

An ad hoc committee of the BOE is currently considering a number of resource recommendations, including: the expansion of Behavioral Health in school sites by adding four schools (currently eight elementary or middle schools provide this support); piloting a full-time Feeder Pattern Social Worker to focus on neighborhoods and families; additional capacity in alternative settings; and expanded staff training on universal practices, mindsets, race and disproportionality. **Is that enough? What more is needed?** The MTI-MMSD Safety/Behavior Committee has met regularly to review and discuss these recommendations and is scheduled to meet again in early February.

MTI members are encouraged to learn more about the proposed revisions via the BEP section of the MMSD Student Services website. MTI has sent an e-mail blast to all members with more info and continued opportunities to share your ideas and concerns.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Events and Organizing Opportunities

In 2001, MTI became one of the first Unions in Wisconsin to negotiate a holiday to honor the birth and life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. All Madison schools will be closed and all MTI-represented employees will receive a paid holiday on **Monday, January 21**. Madison will host multiple events to recognize, honor, and renew the struggle for racial equality and economic justice that was Dr. King's life. MTI encourages members to participate in these community-building opportunities.

- **Friday, January 18**, 4:30-7:00 p.m.: **MLK Free Community Dinner**, Gordon Commons, 770 W. Dayton Street in downtown Madison. Dinner served buffet style from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. There is NO COST to attend. Info at King Coalition Facebook page.
- **Sunday, January 20**, 7:30-10:00 a.m.: **35th Annual Urban League Outstanding Young Person Breakfast**, Edgewood High School. Middle and high school students are nominated by schools from across Dane County, based on their academic performance, community service, and extra-curricular participation. Tickets are \$10 and available on line at www.ulgm.org/mlkevents.
- **Monday, January 21**, 5:00 p.m.: **34rd annual Madison & Dane County King Holiday Observance**, Overture Center in downtown Madison. Freedom songs in the Overture rotunda at 5:00 pm. Program begins at 6:00 pm. NO COST to attend. More info available on King Coalition Facebook page.

Professional Support Series January 23

MTI and WEA Benefits are co-hosting a series of evenings to support educators. *These nights are intended to support you as a professional with finances, employee systems, and protections or rights. The events are open to all members and non-members. Join us on January 23, at 4:30 p.m., at MTI for "Make Smart Financial Moves."* More than ever, Wisconsin public school employees need to be aware of common financial pitfalls and how to avoid them, as well as solutions and resources that can help one become financially secure. WEA Member Benefits puts a new twist on financial education with the **Don't Be Jack™** interactive board game. Teams compete while they learn about the advantages or consequences of certain financial actions. SIGN UP at: <https://goo.gl/xVkt9v>.

Important February Deadlines

- **Salary Advancement Credit for passage over a salary barrier or for salary track advancement, effective at the beginning of the second semester,** are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 1.**
- **Sabbatical Leave applications** for either the first semester of the 2017-18 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 office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 15.**

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 return to a full-time regular contract 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 and Taxes

Union dues are not tax deductible on 2018 tax returns given tax reforms enacted last spring by Congress. Per the IRS: "***The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act suspends all miscellaneous itemized deductions that are subject to the 2 percent of adjusted gross income floor. This change affects un-reimbursed employee expenses such as uniforms, union dues and the deduction for business-related meals, entertainment and travel.***"



Winter Wellness Tips



We understand seasonal blues. Here's a tip to stay happy, healthy, and energized: **Go Tech-Free**—Constant cell phone buzzes, notifications, and e-mail alerts keep us in a perpetual fight-or-flight mode due to bursts of adrenaline. Not only is this exhausting, but, it contributes to mounting stress levels. Enjoy spending time with your family and friends by staying present in the moment.

MTI Membership Opportunities

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

MTI & WEA Member Benefits: Financial Services for MTI Members

MTI and WEA Member Benefits will be providing opportunities to enhance the financial well-being of MTI members. Check the MTI website (www.madisonteachers.org) to sign-up for seminars. Invitations will also be sent via e-mail to MTI members only.

In addition, **Steve Pike** (retired teacher and current WEA Member Benefits Consultant) is available for a **free 60-minute financial consultation**. This is ideal if you are just getting started, have specific questions, or would like a quick check-in. It's a convenient way to meet with someone face-to-face to get some general help or guidance. Consultations are held at MTI. Sign-up is available on the MTI website (www.madisonteachers.org).

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MTI National Board Certification Training Workshops for 2018-19. MTI members pursuing National Board Certification are invited to participate in monthly NBC support workshops. The next session is **February 13**, at 5:30 p.m., at MTI.

MTI members in need of assistance: See your MTI Faculty Representative or contact MTI staff (608-257-0491 or mti@madisonteachers.org) should you have a question or need assistance with **any work-related matter**.

Calendar of Events

MTI/MMSD Joint Safety Committee
January 14, 4:30 p.m., Doyle

MTI Faculty Representative Council
January 15, 4:30 p.m., MTI

MTI-VOTERS Political Action Committee
January 16, 4:30 p.m., MTI

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 21—Schools Closed

MTI Voters Political Action Committee
January 23, 4:30 p.m., MTI

Board of Education—Regular Meeting
January 28, 6:00 p.m., Doyle

Save the Date! February 4-8, 2019
Black Lives Matter at School
Week of Action

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org

MTI's e-mail - MTI@madisonteachers.org