



# Solidarity!

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## MTI Faculty Representative Council Weighs In on Superintendent Search

The membership of MTI forms the backbone of our District. We are the people who work directly with students and families. As our motto says, “*We Teach the Children.*” MTI members give their all for every student in our District each and every day.

In order to do our work we need strong leadership at all levels of District administration. The resignation of the Superintendent earlier this month has provided the MMSD community with an opportunity to reflect honestly about where we are as a District and where we want to be in the future. At Tuesday’s MTI Faculty Rep Council meeting elected MTI leaders engaged in discussions to identify what our membership would like to see in our next (and Interim) Superintendent. From the discussions, several elements emerged:

- A Superintendent (and leadership in general) needs to be present in the schools on a regular basis.

- We need to advance the work around racial equity and maintain high expectations for everyone who works and learns in our schools.
- Staff needs to feel respected and supported.
- There needs to be a commitment to shared leadership and meaningful collaboration with staff.
- There needs to be transparency in decision making.
- There needs to be fewer initiatives and top-down mandates.

MTI Faculty Reps also expressed the need that the selection process for both the Interim and the next Superintendent be as inclusive and transparent as possible. MTI will continue to advocate for a process that allows for the maximum amount of staff, student, and community voice to be heard so that our elected Board of Education has the information they need to make the best decision for our next Superintendent.

## District Has Yet to Finalize Health Insurance Renewals

Two weeks ago, all District employees received a letter from the MMSD Human Resources Department advising employees of the changes in dental and health insurance premiums effective July 1, 2019. ***What the letter neglected to share was that the employee health insurance premium amounts communicated in the letter are not finalized and are subject to increase on July 1, likely for those employees with POS plans.***

This past winter, MTI staff worked with MMSD Human Resources staff, Benefits Consultants, and the representatives from the two (2) health insurers (Dean and GHC) to explore potential plan design modifications to minimize health insurance premium increases. MTI members received regular reports on these discussions throughout the winter and spring. The MTI/MMSD committee invested many hours exploring various potential changes, with the goal of maintaining high-quality, low-cost employee benefits, while minimizing cost increases to the District. After many weeks of work, a recommendation was advanced to the Board of Education which would modify the plans to: **1) increase the co-pay for ER**

**visits, and 2) increase the employee premium contribution for the more expensive POS plans.** These two changes would reduce health insurance premium increases to the level budgeted by the District.

It was our expectation that the BOE would approve these recommended changes in March, allowing the MMSD Benefits Department sufficient time for a comprehensive communications plan to share the benefit changes with employees and provide employees the opportunity to make any needed changes in their individual health plan selections, given the modifications. We have now learned that the BOE has yet to finalize the budget as it relates to health insurance, leaving the status of the July 1 employee health insurance premium amounts uncertain. MTI has contacted members of the BOE requesting that they resolve this issue ASAP so that employees are timely informed of any changes to the plans/premiums. The MMSD Benefits staff have also assured us that the Benefits Department will engage in a comprehensive communications plan with all affected employees once the health insurance plans are finalized.

## Renew Your License and Complete Background Checks by June 30

Teachers with a Lifetime License will be required to complete a background check every five years. According to DPI, “Educators who have a Lifetime license and have not completed a background check with DPI on or after 01/01/2015 will be required to complete a background check with DPI before June 30, 2019.” DPI was supposed to send an e-mail to any educator who is required to perform this background check. Visit [madisonteachers.org/licensing-and-evaluation/](http://madisonteachers.org/licensing-and-evaluation/) for more information.

## Packing and Moving - Reminder!

For many years, MTI's representation assisted teachers in receiving additional compensation when they had to pack, move, and unpack their classrooms, due to construction or other physical necessity in their schools. However, because the District became increasingly intransigent when it came to fairly compensating teachers for doing this work, MTI negotiated specific terms which are now part of the Employee Handbook.

Under Addendum A (Section 15.04) of the Handbook, teachers are NOT REQUIRED to pack/move, and/or unpack, teaching materials, either during the school year or during a school recess period due to [major] cleaning (defined as cleaning not regularly associated with annual and/or routine classroom cleaning), construction projects, repairs, electrical upgrades, etc.; due to their classroom being moved at management's request; OR when the District deems it necessary to utilize the teacher's classroom for classes or other activities during a school recess period. **The District will arrange for the teachers' materials to be moved to his/her newly assigned location.** If materials are relocated during a period when school is in recess, they will be returned by the District when school resumes.

Teachers may, *at their option*, use contract time to complete packing and/or unpacking, related to routine classroom cleaning. *Teachers who are asked by their principal to pack, and/or unpack, teaching materials as set forth in paragraph 2 above, are to complete a form available from the principal to be submitted to and approved by the District Director of Human Resources (or his/her designee) prior to commencing said packing or unpacking.* The District will, upon receipt of such form and verification of said work falling within the parameters of paragraph 2, *inform the teacher that he/she will not be required to perform the work.*

Other than to accommodate employees under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Wisconsin Fair Employment Act (WFEA) where their disability prohibits them from packing, unpacking and moving their materials, *teachers who request to move from one classroom to another in the same school may be required move their own teaching materials.*

## Important Reminder! Teacher Contract Deadline June 17

Signed contracts of all returning teachers must be received in the District's HR office no later than **June 17** (given that June 15 is a Saturday). **Failure to return a signed contract by June 17 results in the District accepting such as one's resignation.**

## MTI Stands Up Against Gun Violence Wear Orange—June 7

The MTI Board of Directors approved participation in [National Gun Violence Awareness Day](#) happening on Friday, June 7, 2019. MTI members will receive an e-mail this week with further information.

Orange has become the defining color of the gun violence prevention movement — and on June 7 we'll Wear Orange to draw our nation's attention to gun violence.

- **Save June 7** on your calendar as a **day to WEAR ORANGE.**
- **Purchase a shirt** (*we have extras from 2018 for sale*).
- **Wear your orange gear and represent our Union** as we raise awareness against gun violence.

## MTI Membership Opportunities

The following meetings, seminars, and workshops are available to all MTI, ESEA & USO members (*only*).

### MTI & WEA Member Benefits: Financial Services for all MTI Members

MTI and WEA Member Benefits are providing opportunities to enhance the financial well-being of all MTI members. Check the MTI website ([www.madisonteachers.org](http://www.madisonteachers.org)) to sign-up for seminars.

#### Save the Date— June 25

Understanding WRS: Your State Pension Plan

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](http://www.madisonteachers.org)).

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MTI and WEAC Region 6 are again partnering to provide information on **National Board Certification**. Training Workshops for 2019-20 will be scheduled soon and an e-mail with a signup link will be sent to all MTI teacher unit members.

Another opportunity is **WEAC's Jump Start training, July 29-31**. *Jump Start* is an intensive seminar geared for teachers pursuing National Board Certification who intend to submit components in the 2019-20 school year. This professional development opportunity has been designed by NEA members who are Nationally Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs). **Union members** who are just beginning their National Board journey, can register by July 1 by going to: [tinyurl.com/NBCJumpStart](http://tinyurl.com/NBCJumpStart).

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

## Calendar of Events

**Base-Wage Bargaining Proposal Exchange**  
May 28, 4:30 p.m., MTI

**MTI-Retired Board of Directors**  
May 29, 9:00 a.m., MTI

**MTI Diversity & Equity Committee**  
May 29, 4:30 p.m., MTI

**MTI/MMSD Joint Safety Committee**  
June 3, 4:30 p.m., MTI

**Base-Wage Discussion/Bargaining**  
June 5, 4:30 p.m., MTI

**Semester Ends—June 12**

## Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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MTI's web page - [www.madisonteachers.org](http://www.madisonteachers.org)  
MTI's e-mail - [mti@madisonteachers.org](mailto:mti@madisonteachers.org)