



Solidarity!

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Cost-of-Living Base-wage Bargaining

Our mobilization to secure a cost-of-living base-wage increase for all employees continues. Over two hundred (200) MTI members and supporters attended a Cost-of-Living Rally outside the Doyle Administration building on August 26. Many more have contacted BOE members in support of a 2.44% cost-of-living increase. These mobilizing efforts have succeeded in prompting the Board of Education to schedule a meeting for **Monday, September 16** (closed session) to review the status of base-wage negotiations and determine whether to provide additional authorization to their bargaining team. This is a positive development, but no guarantee that the BOE will modify its position. **Therefore, between now and September 16, we are continuing to encourage all MTI members and community supporters to contact BOE members in support of a 2.44% cost-of-living pay increase.** A bargaining session is being scheduled for the week of **September 23** in hopes of reaching agreement on a cost-of-living increase. Stay tuned for additional bargaining updates, including Action Alerts, as bargaining continues.

Nominations for MTI (Teacher) Elected Positions

MTI Teacher Members: Do you have ideas on how to improve your profession or better advocate for your students? Consider applying your ideas, energy, and efforts as an elected leader of MTI. **Positions are currently available** on the MTI Board of Directors, Finance Committee, Political Action Committee, and Cabinet on Personnel. Nominations for MTI leadership positions are due by **September 17** and can be called in to MTI Headquarters (257-0491) or made from the floor at the September Faculty Representative Council meeting by an MTI Faculty Representative. Pursuant to MTI Bylaws, the elections will be held at the October MTI Faculty Rep Council meeting.



Join Our Movement

When you join your colleagues as an MTI member, you are making a decision to **stand together in solidarity on important issues that impact your profession, our schools, and our students.** MTI provides you with a voice in the workplace, with the School Board, and at the State Capitol. Click on the "JOIN" icon/link on the MTI webpage (www.madisonteachers.org) for step-by-step directions.

MTI-MMSD Commence Annual Review of Employee Handbook

Prior to 2011, public sector unions in Wisconsin negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreements (aka "Contracts") with public employers that specified the wages, hours, and working conditions for employees represented by the union. That all changed with the passage of Governor Walker's Act 10 in 2011 which, among other things, prohibited public employers in Wisconsin from bargaining any issues with their employee unions other than base-wage increases.

Given the loss of bargaining rights under Act 10, MTI worked with the MMSD Board of Education and Administration to develop a collaborative process to develop the **Employee Handbook** to replace the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) prohibited by Act 10. This process was first employed in the summer of 2015 and used the CBAs as a foundation for Handbook discussions, recognizing that the Contracts represented decades of mutual agreements forged through negotiation and compromise. Using this collaborative approach to the development of the Employee Handbook, the employee and employer representatives reached consensus on recommendations to continue the vast majority of the provisions previously negotiated in the CBAs, including critical issues such as the objective salary schedules, just cause protections, and a grievance procedure to enforce the Handbook. They also recommended a commitment to collaboratively review the Handbook annually, which became Section 18 of the Handbook. The Board of Education approved these recommendations which have become MMSD policy.

This month, MTI and the MMSD will commence the annual review of the Employee Handbook with a number of MTI-MMSD work groups addressing issues related to: **Teacher Planning Time and High School Scheduling; Shared Leadership; ESEA issues, Substitute Teacher issues; and Special Education issues.** It is our goal to complete the Employee Handbook Review work by the end of November so that the BOE can consider any recommended changes as part of the budget development process. Updates on the Employee Handbook Review process will be shared with all members as the discussions get underway.

Religious Holidays/Observances

MTI encourages District employees not to schedule school events on the evening before or day of religious holidays and/or observances. Similarly, teachers are requested not to schedule major exams or field trips on such days, inasmuch as some students may not be able to attend school on those days. Under the Employee Handbook (Section 8, page 80), the District will allow absence from work for the purpose of observing religious holidays. The employee may elect to utilize any paid leave time available (sick leave, vacation, floating holidays, or accumulated compensatory time). A request for absence must be made in writing to the Director of Human Resources at least ten (10) work days prior to the requested absence, except for religious holidays that are celebrated between the first day of school and September 15, when seven (7) work days' notice is required.

Teachers and Involuntary Transfer

Should the District determine to reduce staff at a given school by involuntarily transferring a teacher due to a "substantial change in the school's enrollment or substantial program change," they may do so within the first 25 days of school under the Employee Handbook (Section 3, page 104). The Handbook provides that such transfer "shall be the least senior teacher in the grade level (unit, grade or grade combination, e.g., 1-2) and/or department or subject (whichever is appropriate) from which the transfer must be made." The Handbook also provides that "any teacher so transferred shall be provided five (5) school days' notice of the transfer unless the teacher waives the notice or a portion thereof in writing, and shall be afforded at least two (2) school days in the school to which he/she is transferred to prepare lesson plans prior to assuming the new assignment."

Sabbatical Leave—Deadline October 1

Under the terms of the Employee Handbook (Section 10, page 130), the Board of Education budgets \$45,000 for **sabbatical leaves** for members of MTI's teacher bargaining unit. Such is for the purpose of advanced study and/or research. **Either a one-year leave at half pay or a one-semester leave at full pay may be granted.** Applications for the second semester of the 2019-20 school year are due at MTI headquarters by October 1, 2019. Applications for the 2020-21 school year or the first semester are due February 1, 2020. An application and the MTI/MMSD agreed-upon policy can be obtained by visiting MTI's webpage: (www.madisonteachers.org).

Student Loans and the Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program—October 1

For many educators, student loans are a major part of the financial picture long after graduation. MTI is partnering with WEA Member Benefits to offer a series of **free** events supporting educators and staff. In this session, we uncover things an educator needs to know about student loans, student debt, the federal student loan forgiveness program, and more. Go to the MTI website (www.madisonteachers.org) to sign-up. An invitation was sent via email to MTI members only.

Keep MTI Updated on Changes

Please call, write, or e-mail MTI if you have a change in name, home address, home email address, telephone number, work location, certification, percent of contract, or hours of work. Having this information allows MTI to serve you better.

MTI Membership Opportunities

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

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

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

- **Save the date:** Student Loan Forgiveness—October 1

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 Headquarters.

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MTI National Board Certification Information Session for Teachers. Learn about the benefits of National Board Certification and the supports available for you to achieve it. September 17, 5-6:00 p.m., at MTI. E-mail invite sent to MTI teacher members.

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 Special Education Sub-Committee
September 9, 4:15 p.m., MTI

MTI Board of Directors
September 10, 4:30 p.m., MTI

ESEA Appreciation Event
September 11, 4:30 p.m., MTI

MTI Faculty Representative Council
September 17, 4:30 p.m., MTI

National Board Certification Info Session
September 17, 5-6 p.m., MTI

ESEA-MTI Building Representatives
September 18, 4:15 p.m., MTI

MTI Equity & Diversity Committee
September 25, 4:30 p.m., MTI

USO-MTI General Membership
September 26, 4:15 p.m., MTI

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

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