



Solidarity!

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MMSD 2020-21 Budget Discussions Continuing

This month will see MMSD administration and the Board of Education continue work on developing the 2020-21 Budget. The 2020-21 school year will be the first MMSD Budget in the past five years not to be supported by the \$5 million in annual financial resources provided by the previous operating referendum. The 2020-21 Budget is further complicated by the fact that the BOE has yet to make a decision on two referenda questions being considered for the November ballot: one would invest significant financial resources into much needed facilities upgrades and the second would provide much needed operating revenue. District administration is currently preparing two budgets depending on the outcome of the Operating Referendum and is considering major changes in employee health insurance benefits (*see below*), as well as staff reductions to meet their budget forecasts. Board of Education elections in April will determine which three candidates will join our Board of Education and help guide these decisions. All members should look for additional information on these considerations as budget discussions proceed.

MTI Reviewing and Gathering Employee Feedback on Major Health Insurance Changes Being Considered by MMSD

Given the insufficient school revenue situation should an Operating Referendum fail to pass next November (*and assuming the BOE concludes to seek a referendum*), District administration and the BOE are preparing a 2020-21 Budget with **no increase** budgeted for employee benefits. Current health insurance renewal rates (*based on medical utilization*) would increase the cost of these benefits by approximately \$4.6 million without modifications. Therefore, District administration is considering the following potential changes:

- Closing the active employee group health insurance plans to future retirees and forcing those retirees (*with the higher medical utilization associated with age*) onto a relatively new and untested health plan offered by the State Department of Employee Trust Funds to retired employees.
- Changing the available employee health insurance plans through the District from GHC and Dean to Quartz (*formerly Unity*) and Dean.
- Doubling the monthly employee premium contribution for MMSD employees.
- Introducing deductibles into the health plans.

MTI has been gathering employee feedback on these considerations from the MTI Bargaining/Handbook Committee, as well as the MTI Faculty Representative Council, to share with the District. The BOE plans to discuss the potential changes at their March 9 meeting of the BOE Operations Work Group, with the goal of finalizing health plans by the end of the month.

All MTI members received an e-mail blast with additional information on these considerations and steps that MTI is taking to advocate for employee interests in these considerations.

Save the Date! **MTI General Membership Meeting - March 25**

MTI has scheduled a **General Membership Meeting** on **Wednesday, March 25**, from **5-7:00 p.m.** (with a *pre-meeting social with food starting at 4:15 p.m.*). The meeting will take place at the **Madison Labor Temple** (1602 S. Park Street). **ALL** members of **MTI's Teacher, ESEA, and USO** bargaining units are invited to attend.

The tentative agenda for the meeting is to:

- Celebrate our successes
- Seek feedback from members
- Plan for the future

Save the date and look for more information in the coming weeks.

Join MTI-CENTRS Saturdays for Racial Justice Series—March 7

MTI-CENTRS is partnering with NEA's Human and Civil Rights Department to offer a series of racial justice-focused sessions. The next session, *Understanding White Privilege and White Fragility*, is **March 7**, from 8:30-3:30 p.m. Breakfast and lunch are provided. Sessions are led by national trainers and are **free to members**. Professional advancement credit is available. MTI Members attending 3 or more qualify for a stipend. MTI-CENTRS is an NEA GPS-funded grant. Questions? Contact Kerry Motoviloff at: kmotoviloff@madisonteachers.org.
Signup at: <http://www.madisonteachers.org/mti-centrs/>.

Future topics include: March 21: *Facilitating Critical Conversations*; April 18: *Social Justice Teaching 101* (at the Goodman Center); and May 16: *Racial Equity Tools and Activism*.

ESEA-MTI Membership Meeting March 18; Election of Officers

Members of MTI's Educational Support Employees Association bargaining unit (ESEA-MTI) will meet on **Wednesday, March 18**, commencing at 4:15 p.m., at MTI. There are many issues of importance to discuss, including nominations for positions on the ESEA-MTI Board of Directors (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and six At-Large positions). Members of ESEA may make nominations by contacting Assistant Director Eve Degen via 608-257-0491 or degene@madisonteachers.org. Nominations will also be taken from the floor at the March 18 meeting. If all the positions are uncontested, i.e., only one person is nominated for a position, the election will occur at the General Membership meeting, whereby said nominees will be voted in by acclamation.

MTI Faculty/ESEA Building Representatives Advocating for and with Members

One of the primary reasons for joining a union is the representation and collective power that comes from being part of a larger group. We truly are stronger together. MTI Faculty/Building Reps help members advocate for what they need to be the best educators possible. This can happen at the individual level, or as part of a larger organizing effort. There are a number of ways that Reps are involved in advocating for members. Reps provide information about the rights that educators have in the MMSD Employee Handbook. They are involved in regular meetings with administrators where they engage in proactive problem-solving discussions. They also help bring issues to the attention of MTI staff and other elected leaders so that we can improve Employee Handbook policies. The work of members, Reps, and MTI leadership together has allowed us to retain a strong voice in decision-making despite the limitations imposed on public sector unions in Wisconsin. Advocacy and collaborative work take a lot of time, patience, and skill. If you think you would be interested in learning more about how you can get involved in this work, contact one of the Reps at your school or MTI President Andy Waity (awaity@madisonteachers.org).

MTI Cares' Bowl-A-thon

Sunday, April 19, 2020
12:00 noon—3:00 p.m.
Village Lanes in Monona
(208 Owen Road)
Sign up on the MTI website



MTI Membership Opportunities

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

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 and non-members*. Check the MTI website (www.madisonteachers.org) to sign-up for seminars.

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In addition, *for members only*, **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 Training Workshops for Teachers. MTI members pursuing National Board Certification are invited to participate in monthly NBC support workshops. The next session is **March 11**, 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 Cabinet on Personnel

March 2, 4:30 p.m., MTI

MTI Cares

March 3, 4:30 p.m., MTI

MTI Bargaining/Handbook Committee

March 5, 4:30 p.m., MTI

Solidarity for Social Justice Saturday

March 7, 8:30 a.m., MTI

MTI Special Education Committee

March 9, 4:00 p.m., MTI

MTI Board of Directors

March 10, 4:30 p.m., MTI

National Board Certification Training

March 11, 5:30 p.m., MTI

Spring Break March 30 - April 3

Our Union Makes Us Strong!

Volume 54, #25, March 2, 2020

MTI's web page - www.madisonteachers.org

MTI's email - MTI@madisonteachers.org