MTI Friday Update

Throughout the school year, MTI provides a weekly Friday Update e-mail to MTI member leaders. Given the ongoing pandemic and school closures, MTI will be extending this weekly update to all MTI members in order to share timely information during this time of crisis. This weekly update will include summaries of daily e-mail blasts that MTI members will receive throughout the week and provide additional, timely information and updates.
A Message from MTI President Andy Waity

It's been four weeks since MMSD schools/worksites closed to students and most staff. During this time we've experienced rapidly changing conditions and expectations as we've adjusted to working together while apart.
Each week has brought a new set of challenges and tested our collective strength. This past week saw MMSD's choice for the next superintendent rescind his acceptance of the job and the citizens of Wisconsin forced to choose between their health and their right to vote. Through all of that upheaval, MTI members continued to reach out to students, learn new technology, and adapt to new ways of working. Your passion for the work you do and the community we serve shows each and every day.

We know that this work is difficult and the current conditions put additional pressures on all of us. We rely on each other and we rely on the support and advocacy of MTI. Times of struggle remind us how important collective voice and action are. Each and every member adds to our strength as a whole.

There are many unanswered questions about our current work and what the future will bring. One thing you can always count on are your MTI colleagues and what we can accomplish in Solidarity. We will stay united through these challenges and emerge stronger together.

We are all MTI! Solidarity!
Tell Congress to Reject the Latest Voucher Scheme from Betsy DeVos

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos is using the coronavirus crisis to revive her failed push to privatize education. This time, she’s
What We Know Now

- All MMSD schools are closed through at least April 24. Governor Evers has closed schools for the duration of the pandemic, i.e., until further notice.
- MTI has gained MMSD assurance that all regular MMSD staff, i.e., other than daily substitutes, will continue to be compensated while schools are closed through the duration of the pandemic (see MMSD compensation info here).
- MTI leadership has weekly check-ins with MMSD leadership to discuss virtual learning plans and employee feedback.
- The District is planning on commencing virtual/web-based learning on April 13 and has provided staff some PD and overview of work expectations. View the Virtual Learning FAQ we have created for members.
- The District has modified their directives to employees and is no longer requiring employees to “secure childcare” while they work remotely.
- The District has communicated leave policies to employees who are unable to fulfill the new expectations for working remotely due to medical and/or childcare issues related to the pandemic.
- The federal government has enacted legislation to provide some defined paid leave time for employees impacted by the pandemic.
MTI has waived USO-MTI dues for substitute teachers, sub SEAs, and sub clericals for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year given their unpaid status.

- MTI is offering Solidarity Fund loans of up to $1,000 for MTI members in need of financial assistance and has provided over $29,000 in loans to thirty-one (31) members in need over the past three weeks.
- MTI has donated $50,000 to the United Way to help fund community support during the pandemic and we will be linking interested and available members to volunteer opportunities available during the pandemic.
- Our state and national affiliates (WEAC and NEA) have been in constant communication with Governor Evers, and state and national elected leaders and executive orders and legislation have been enacted to address aspects of the pandemic.
- We have become more adept at communicating by Zoom and other virtual platforms than we had ever hoped.
- All of us need to take care of ourselves, our family, and our community and follow the recommendations of public health officials relative to hand washing, social distancing, etc.

WHAT WE ARE STILL ADVOCATING FOR

What We Are Still Advocating For

- Pay for substitute teachers, sub SEAs, and substitute clericals during school closures. Since the District has not agreed to pay these employees, MTI encourages members who suffer unpaid status to apply for unemployment benefits (more information here).
Meaningful MTI teacher voice in the evolving plans related to virtual/web-based learning.

- Our belief that the District’s primary focus during the pandemic should be in supporting the health (physical, emotional, and mental) and well-being of all students, staff and families.
- Flexibility in District leave policies during the pandemic to allow staff to care for themselves and their families during this public health crisis.
- Through our state and national affiliates (WEAC and NEA), we will continue to advocate for additional resources from our state and federal government to provide support for all students, families, workers, and employers during the pandemic. Read the NEA one-pager highlighting the impact of the the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
- Compassion, empathy, flexibility, grace, understanding, and Solidarity as we collectively rise to this challenge.

Gutierrez Recinds Acceptance of the Superintendent Position

News broke early this week that the choice for MMSD's next superintendent, Dr. Gutierrez, rescinded his acceptance of the position. President Waity immediately contacted Board of Education President Reyes to establish communication with the BOE around next steps. The MTI Board then virtually discussed and drafted a statement with the following positions:

- A high-quality permanent superintendent needs to be found as quickly as possible
- Clarity around an interim superintendent needs to happen immediately
The two other finalists from the previous search should not be offered the position.

- A new search should be conducted with a focus on candidates with local connections, who know Madison and who believe in the staff who work so hard for all of our students.

Read today's Statement to the BOE

WSJ Article: Matthew Gutierrez backs out of Madison School District superintendent job
TYPES OF SELF-CARE

PHYSICAL
- Sleep
- Stretching
- Walking
- Physical release
- Healthy food
- Yoga
- Rest

EMOTIONAL
- Stress management
- Emotional maturity
- Forgiveness
- Compassion
- Kindness

SOCIAL
- Boundaries
- Support systems
- Positive social media
- Communication
- Time together
- Ask for help

SPIRITUAL
- Time alone
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Connection
- Nature
- Journaling
- Sacred space

PERSONAL
- Hobbies
- Knowing yourself
- Personal identity
- Honoring your true self

SPACE
- Safety
- Healthy living environment
- Security and stability
- Organized space

FINANCIAL
- Saving
- Budgeting
- Money management
- Splurging
- Paying bills

WORK
- Time management
- Work boundaries
- Positive workplace
- More learning
- Break time
Student loan debt and the federal CARES Act

On March 27, the $2-trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law. The bill is a good start and, while not perfect, does address many needs of our students, educators, and schools. It is intended to help stabilize workers, families, and the economy during the COVID-19 public health crisis, and is the third relief package Congress has passed during the coronavirus pandemic. NEA is also advocating for additional stimulus funds in a fourth package.

Our statewide partner, WEAC has a recorded webinar about how the CARES Act will impact your student loan debt. Learn more about temporary relief for federal student loan borrowers and review frequently asked questions online.
MTI's mission statement is: “Madison Teachers, Inc. is a member-led organization which advocates for its members and students in order to advance quality public education for all students.” This means that MTI leadership and staff are constantly gathering feedback and ideas from members as we develop positions and take action around a wide range of issues. The MTI calendar is always full of meetings and significant work has been done to develop member leaders in schools and worksites. The current situation has challenged us to adapt and develop new ways to connect with members.

- MTI staff has moved offsite and are working remotely.
- President Waity has reached out to elected Faculty and Building Reps and collected feedback from them.
- Members are sharing concerns with MTI through the mti@madisonteachers.org address.
- We are providing regular updates including distributing the Friday Update to all members.
- We are utilizing Zoom to conduct meetings of different groups including the Faculty Rep Council.
- We will continue to develop additional ways to communicate with members over the coming weeks.

**Nominate ESEA-MTI Board of Directors**

According to the ESEA-MTI Bylaws, the terms of office for positions on the ESEA-MTI Board expire on April 30. Nominations are being solicited for individuals interested in serving as an ESEA-MTI Officer. Any member of ESEA-MTI is eligible to run for and hold office. Terms are for one year. To make a nomination, please email MTI Assistant Director Eve Degen at degene@madisonteachers.org by April
Before submitting a nominee, one should verify with the individual that they are willing to be nominated for the position.

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, the ESEA-MTI general membership meeting on March 18 wherein nominations were to occur was not held as scheduled. Therefore, nominations for the ESEA Board of Directors were not taken or finalized. In addition, according to the ESEA Bylaws, if all of the positions are uncontested (i.e. only one person is nominated for a position), said nominees will be voted in by acclamation. Therefore, we will make a motion and ask that the ESEA-MTI Building Representatives vote in the incumbents by acclamation.

The current ESEA-MTI Board is as follows:

Judy Ferwerda, President
Anne Hernandez, Vice President
Nancee Killoran, Secretary
Michelle Erschen, At-Large
Marilyn Fruth, At-Large
Diane Wadzinski, At-Large
Vacant, At-Large
Vacant, At-Large
Vacant, At-Large

Teacher Internal Transfers Posted on Fridays

Teacher unit positions available for internal transfer will be posted every Friday through the end of June 2020. All transfer postings open on Friday, and close the following Wednesday. Directions for how to
Questions can be directed to Shauna Foss, HR Analyst at srfoss@madison.k12.wi.us.

May 1: Ready, Set, Go Compensation Deadline

Pursuant to the Employee Handbook, elementary teachers who completed Ready, Set, Go (RSG) conferences, and whose request for compensatory time cannot be accommodated due to the unavailability of a substitute teacher, may, **upon written notice to their principal by May 1**, choose among the following options:

1. Request to be compensated for RSG conferences, travel time, and up to 15 minutes per conference for any reasonable administrative time associated with each conference; or
2. Have said day(s) added to the teacher’s Personal Sick Leave Account (PSLA) or, if the teacher has the maximum amount in that account, the day(s) may be added to the teacher’s Retirement Insurance Account (RIA) [any such days accumulated to one’s RIA from RSG services are not subject to the PSLA or RIA maximum]; or
3. Carry over one (1) paid RSG leave day into the following school year; or
Non-Renewal of Contract

The Employee Handbook, Section 8.01 sets forth the procedures that principals are required to use when management notifies a teacher that he/she/ze is being considered for non-renewal of contract. The District is obligated to advise a teacher before May 1, if they are considering non-renewal. Under Wisconsin state statutes, such a notice must be delivered to the teacher on or before May 15.

It is extremely important for any member receiving such a notice to immediately contact MTI. MTI professional staff should be present at any and all meetings between the teacher and any administrator regarding the issue of non-renewal, given that the meeting may indeed affect the teacher's continued employment status. The teacher has the legal right to MTI representation and does not have to begin or continue a meeting without representation. See the reverse side of your MTI membership card.

For probationary teachers, a request for a hearing before the Board of Education must be submitted within five (5) days of the teacher's receipt of the notice that the Board of Education is considering non-renewal of the teacher's contract. For non-probationary staff, a request for arbitration must be made within fifteen (15) days of a non-renewal notice.
Teacher Contracts Due June 15

As of now, teacher contracts for the 2020-21 school year will be sent to teachers around the week of May 4. Signed contracts of all returning teachers must be received in Human Resources no later than June 15. MTI strongly recommends that teachers return their signed contracts AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to the District’s office of Human Resources, in person, to assure that it is received on time. Take a copy with you, ask that it be stamped “received,” and keep it for your personal records. Failure to return a signed contract by June 15 results in the District accepting such as one’s resignation.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: According to Human Resource staff, If schools remain closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic you will not be able to drop your contract off at Human Resources, as the building is closed. U.S. mail also would not be a good choice for returning contracts, given that the District does not have staff onsite to go through the mail, and would not have a way to confirm whether contracts are received. If the closure extends past April 24, the
District will provide directions to have people sign and either scan or take a photo of their contract and email it as an attachment. A separate District email address will be set up so that contracts don't get lost in a regular email inboxes.

In addition, the contracts will not include the base-wage salary increase yet to be negotiated for the 2020-21 school year.
50 Strategies to Manage Your Anxiety

- Engage in something pleasurable
- Engage in some exercise
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink
- Challenge your thoughts
- Journal your worries
- Work on your problem-solving skills
- Take a deep breath and count backwards
- Practice some deep breathing
- Understand when you start catastrophizing
- Practice some self-care
- Take a break from technology
- Accept that you have anxiety
- Talk to someone about your anxiety
- Focus on the present moment
- Limit the amount of caffeine you have
- Have a bath
- Download an app
- Explore solutions to overcome your worries
- Make sure you are eating a balanced diet
- Try singing
- Learn some progressive muscle relaxation
- Set aside some time to worry
- Practice some mindfulness
- Try engaging in ratio breathing
- Listen to relaxing music
- Identify thinking errors
- Ask yourself: what's the worst that can happen
- Reduce your stress levels
- Manage your time effectively
Where to Find Additional Information

MTI COVID-19 FAQ
MTI Virtual Learning FAQ
MMSD COVID-19 Updates
WEAC Recorded Webinar on CARES Act & Your Student Loans

Copyright © 2020, All rights reserved.
This is a communication with members of MTI per Wisconsin Statute 11.29

Our mailing address is:
33 Nob Hill Road, Madison, WI 53713

Facebook