



ESEA-MTI Handbook Review Items: Living Wage, Part 2

Two years ago, MTI advocated for a \$15 per hour minimum living wage for all MMSD employees. Last year, we advocated for improvements to the EA/SEA pay schedule. While those improvements helped increase hourly wages, annual incomes remain insufficient to attract and retain employees engaged in some of the most challenging and important work with some of our students with the most significant needs. Addressing annual income is critical in addressing the recruitment and retention issues associated with these positions.

Therefore, MTI is seeking:

- Modifications to the Employee Handbook to provide all MMSD hourly employees with **paid time off for all MMSD staff when schools are closed due to inclement weather** or other reasons so that hourly employees do not experience unexpected pay docks on these days. The MMSD already budgets these costs into the regular work year so we see this as a budget neutral item.
- Modifications to the Employee Handbook to provide **paid time off for all MMSD hourly staff when schools are closed over winter break, spring break** and other days during the school year so that hourly employees do not experience reductions in pay during these periods. MTI experiences a spike in Solidarity Fund hardship loans following these break periods as employees deal with pay-docks due to these break periods. Many other hourly MMSD employees receive vacation pay during these periods and salaried employees have monthly checks equalized throughout the year.
- **Increased summer employment opportunities** for all hourly staff in need of year-round income. Many employees report a reduction in available summer work which they relied upon to provide sufficient annual earnings.

ESEA and other MMSD hourly employees need annual incomes that provide them sufficient funds to engage in the important work they perform for the District. Many ESEA employees need to work second (and sometimes third) jobs to make ends meet. Low annual incomes for demanding work creates the condition in which the District is challenged to recruit and retain highly qualified employees in these areas. Additionally, the greatest percentage of employees of color in the MMSD work in these lower paid areas. Improving the sub-standard annual income associated with these positions is an equity issue.