
Less Paper But More Information, Sooner

We are transitioning to more e-mail and Web communications - saving paper & postage costs.

Saving your union dues money isn't the main reason for the change. Communicating more information, targeting your needs and interests, and **reaching you much faster** are essential to your union's effectiveness.

Calendar Example

If you had signed up to receive Dispatch via e-mail, you would have received it on July 21.

Sign Up Today

To receive Dispatch via e-mail, go to mtea.org and click on the "Newsletters" link. Subscribing is quick and easy.

Member Options Continue

As your union's communications evolve, we will continue to accommodate members without Internet access - but in less costly ways.

For example, in the past we printed and mailed a Laborfest sign-up form to over 11,000 members (including retirees) with a return envelope.

Today's Dispatch invites you to sign up for Laborfest online. But if you can't (or prefer not to), please call us at 259-1990.

First Paycheck

With the traditional school year starting on August 31, the first paycheck for substitute teachers will be **September 18**.

Vacancy Pay - July 24

If you were assigned to a teacher vacancy (or vacancies) during the second semester, you should be paid the difference between the regular substitute teacher daily pay rate and your teacher salary schedule daily rate. MPS has processed the payments for the July 24 paycheck.

We strongly recommend that you examine your vacancy payment **now** and request a review if you have any question about its accuracy. There is a 30 workday deadline for filing a grievance if your contract rights are violated.

Vacancy Pay Review Request at mtea.org

If you believe your payment is not correct, please provide us with the details needed to review your assignments and teacher salary rate. In the past, we have printed a form for investigating vacancy pay concerns in Dispatch, most recently in the June 16 edition.

By the end of the day this Friday, July 24, the form be available to complete online at mtea.org (Contracts).

School Calendars for 2009-10

The school board is implementing three calendars - traditional school year, year-round, and IB high schools - without concluding negotiations with your union. For details on each calendar, please go to mtea.org.

◆ Teachers in **traditional** year schools start on Monday, **August 31**, the organization day, and students start on Tuesday, **September 1**.

◆ Teachers in a **year-round** schools start with an organization day on Friday, **July 31**, and students start on Monday, **August 4**.

◆ Two IB high schools, **King and Reagan**, will start on organization day, Friday, **August 14**. Students start on Monday, **August 17**.

In Memoriam - Sal Gonzalez

On June 20, 2009, Sal Gonzalez passed away at his home. His incredibly heroic battle - over 22 months of raging pancreatic cancer - ended quietly.

Sal served on your union's staff full-time since 1994. He was a rock with a compassionate heart. Sal listened and understood the needs of each member he helped. He advocated for all union members with dignity, professionalism, and a calming strength.

From two tours of duty in Vietnam (awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star), to surviving nearly two years with Stage 4 cancer, Sal showed us how to live - with courage and purpose.

Soft-spoken and thoughtful, Sal Gonzalez will be deeply missed.

MTEA Staff Vacancy

There is a vacant assistant executive director position on your union's full-time professional staff. Political action, lobbying, and organizing are three major areas of responsibility for this position.

The job description, hiring requirements, and selection criteria are posted at mtea.org. The closing date for applications is **August 21**.

Political Action Rebate

During 2009-10, the MTEA membership dues amount of \$15.67 will be deducted from 20 biweekly paychecks. This amount includes a 23¢ contribution to the MTEA's Political Action Fund - a total of \$4.60 for next school year.

This amount is separated from your dues payment. It is used for local political action purposes - primarily to support candidates for the MPS School Board.

A member who does not want to contribute to political action may request a rebate. The MTEA Constitution states: "Each year a signed, written request must be received at the MTEA Office by October 1."

Note on Fair Share

If you have not joined the MTEA, a fair share amount will automatically be deducted from each paycheck in which you work 1.5 days or more during that pay period.

The fair share amount will **not** include the 23¢ contribution for political action purposes. You do not need to request a refund because political action monies will not be deducted from your paychecks.

PHA & Voluntary Programs = Good Health and \$\$\$ (Tax Free)

"GoodHealth" is our shorthand name for the MPS Learn Good Health, Live Good Health program that began on July 1, 2007. GoodHealth is a comprehensive wellness and health education program, which helps members and their families maintain good health, prevent serious illnesses, and manage chronic diseases.

Your union negotiators initiated this joint program as a long-term way to maintain the health care MTEA members (including retirees) need.

Exceptional Initial Success

The first 18 months of the GoodHealth program exceeded expectations. Here are a few of the numbers:

- ◆MPS saved nearly \$1 million, despite substantial start-up costs.
- ◆6,300 MTEA members shared in these savings - \$74.55 each tax free - by completing the personal health assessment (PHA).
- ◆Nearly 1,000 MTEA members received \$200 tax free, by completing the PHA and voluntary programs.
- ◆Despite a 9.6% increase in the national medical inflation rate, the MPS Aetna plan premium increased just 5.5% for 2009-10.

Avoiding a Penalty and Earning Incentives in 2009

If you and your spouse complete the PHA by December 15, 2009, you'll avoid the penalty for not completing the annual PHA - \$200 for 2008.

In addition, if you complete your choice of voluntary programs, you will earn \$250 **tax free** and a share in the district's savings, which could be a few hundred dollars or more.

Start Now to Complete Voluntary Programs

Many voluntary internet-based programs take six weeks to complete. To earn the financial incentives by completing three programs takes 18 weeks. There are only 19 weeks between August 1 and December 11. ***You cannot earn the \$250 incentive unless you start now!***

To access information on taking the PHA and the voluntary "Healthy Living" programs, go to mtea.org and click on the "Take the PHA" link.

Be sure to print and retain your confirmation number if you and your spouse take the PHA online. If you send the paper version, be certain to retain the results mailed to your home.

Join the Fun on Labor Day

The Milwaukee County Labor Council's Laborfest is an opportunity to show our union pride and solidarity, as we celebrate the day with family and friends. Labor Day is late this year, September 7.

The day kicks off with a parade of union members from downtown to the lakefront. The parade leaves Zeidler Union Square Park at 11:00 a.m. and ends at the Summerfest grounds, the site of Laborfest.

MTEA members who join our union's group for the parade receive an MTEA T-shirt and food/beverage coupons for Laborfest. To join the parade, please sign up at mtea.org (Events) by **August 21**. We'll contact you with the details on where and when to meet, parking, etc.