

E-Mail Updates on Contract Talks

The current teacher contract expires on June 30, 2009. Bargaining on a new two-year pact will start soon.

If you would like exclusive, online updates on bargaining, please register at mtea.org. (You do not need to sign up again if you already did so online or if you filled out the e-mail and demographic data section of the bargaining survey our union conducted in November.)

Targeted Communications

Our teacher team plans to provide updates on contract talks and targeted surveys on specific issues via e-mail.

Targeted Update Example -

If you are approaching age 55 (or older), you may have a keen interest in the status of bargaining on retiree benefits. We will send you updates on retirement issues, if we have your e-mail address and age data.

Targeted Survey Example -

Suppose our team needs to know how many minutes per week of individual prep time elementary classroom teachers receive. Only elementary teachers who have provided their e-mail and grade level data would receive a quick online survey.

Snow Day Means School Day on January 26 Banking Day, Unless*

The December 19 snow day will be made up on January 26 at MPS schools on the traditional calendar. January 26 (a Monday) will be a regular school day for students and staff - instead of a banking day.

◆For year-round schools, the make-up day will be May 8 - a Friday originally scheduled as a banking day.

◆For the three IB high schools, the make-up day will be January 30 - a Friday originally scheduled as a banking day.

MOU Sets Make-Up Days for 2008-09

To prevent confusion and scheduling problems for schools, negotiators for the MTEA and the School Board bargained a memorandum of understanding (MOU) last July. The MOU provides for making up the first snow day of 2008-09 as outlined above, to meet DPI requirements for student attendance days and minutes.

*Unless DPI Grants Joint Waiver Request

The MOU specifies MPS and MTEA will jointly request a waiver from DPI on the make-up obligation if the district closes schools due to inclement weather. We will keep you posted on the possibility of a waiver at mtea.org, and in [Sharpener](#), but keep in mind that DPI did not grant waivers to any districts last school year.

MTEA Leadership Election Steps Begin

January is the start of the election process for the MTEA Officer and Executive Board member positions which will be open for election in April. There are eight MTEA leadership positions open for election.

The four MTEA Officer positions - **President**, **Vice-President**, **Secretary**, and **Treasurer** - will be open for **two-year** terms.

Four positions on the MTEA Executive Board will be open for **six-year** terms, one representative at each of four levels:

◆**Kindergarten-primary** - representing regular education members from pre-school through grade 3.

◆**Intermediate** - representing regular education members in grades 4-6 in elementary schools.

◆**Middle school** - representing regular education members in middle schools and in grades 7 and 8 in K-8 schools.

◆**Senior high** - representing regular education members in grades 9-12.

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MTEA Election:

January 23 Deadline

If you are an active, teacher member and would like to become a candidate, you need to submit a written statement, designating the leadership position you are seeking by **Friday, January 23**. Your brief statement should be mailed to: Jennifer Jones-Miller, Chairperson, MTEA Nominating Committee; 5130 West Vliet Street; Milwaukee, WI 53208. You will become a candidate automatically when your declaration statement is received.

The Nominating Committee will review the statements to determine if it needs to recruit additional candidates. It is the Committee's duty, with the help of Building Representatives, to insure that there is at least one candidate for each position.

Next Steps

The Nominating Committee will report the names of all the declared candidates at the February meetings of the MTEA Executive Board and MTEA Building Representatives. Additional nominations will be taken from the floor at the March 18 BR meeting.

What If There's Another Snow Day?

Go to mtea.org to review the MOU on the schedule of make-up days.

School Interview Team Elections

Most MPS schools fill their teacher vacancies through the contractual interview process. Under this process, each school's interview team determines which applicants to interview and selects the candidates who best fit their school's needs. Interviews cannot take place unless a complete team is established.

This month, MTEA Building Representatives conduct an election to determine the teachers who will serve on interview teams to fill teacher vacancies **for next school year**. Principals send the complete list of the school's interview team members - parent(s), administrator, and teachers - online to the MPS Office of Certificated of Staffing by **February 1**.

Interview Team Composition

- ◆ The minimum membership of a team is an on-site administrator, a parent, and three teachers.
- ◆ By contract, teachers must comprise the majority of each team. For example, if a school decides to have two parents on a team (along with the administrator), four teachers would need to serve on the team so that teachers would comprise the majority.
- ◆ Schools have the option of establishing more than one team based on the number and nature of the vacancies.
- ◆ Alternates should be elected when team members are elected. They will be needed if absences occur when interviews take place.

Electing Teachers to the Team

- ◆ Teacher team members do not automatically remain on their school's team year after year. A new election is held in January, unless there is consensus among teachers to maintain the same team(s).
- ◆ By contract, only the BR conducts the election of teacher members.
- ◆ Suggestion: BRs may want to hold the election when teachers are available on the record/staff planning day, **January 23** in most schools.
- ◆ Teachers assigned to your school at least 50% of their time are eligible to vote for and serve on the interview team. (Interns are **not** eligible to vote or serve on a team - due to a potential conflict-of-interest.)
- ◆ Service on an interview team is voluntary and unpaid. Interviews must be conducted outside the school day.

Questions

You will find the answers to frequently-asked questions about interviews at mtea.org (Contract A to Z).

If you have additional questions, please call Don Ernest of the MTEA staff at 259-1990 or e-mail him at ernestd@mtea.weac.org.

Union Dues and Tax Deductions

We are working with our attorney to calculate the amount of union dues that may be claimed as a miscellaneous deduction for 2008. The IRS has strict rules on what portion of union dues is allowed for itemized deductions. We hope to complete the calculations by January 16. Look for updates at mtea.org and in [Sharpeners](#).