

## September 30 Deadline

◆ To enroll in a dependent care or health expenses flexible spending account (FSA) - or both - for 2010, go to "Employee Self Service" on the MPS portal home page.

◆ For insurance changes, please take your enrollment form to Room 124 at central office and obtain a time-stamped copy for proof of meeting the deadline. You may:

- Re-enroll if returning from leave
- Enroll for the first time
- Add dependents
- Switch plans

### Calling for a Substitute

To arrange for a substitute teacher, call one of the four phone numbers below. (North Avenue is the dividing line.)

#### Elementary

Southside - 238-6225

Northside - 238-6223

#### Secondary

Southside - 238-6226

Northside - 238-6224

### Date Book Updates

◆ Most teachers have received the 2009-10 MTEA Date Book. If your school has not, please ask the BR to contact Linda Scherlie at 256-6760.

◆ The school listed in the Date Book for MTEA Vice President Rozalia Harris is incorrect. Rozalia is now at Hi-Mount Elementary School, 875-2700.

## MPS Sends Firing Warning Letter to Over 300 Unlicensed Teachers

On September 21, MPS sent letters to over 300 teachers who do not hold a current DPI teaching license. The letter includes this warning:

**"FAILURE TO MAKE APPLICATION TO OBTAIN A CURRENT LICENSE IN YOUR AREA OF CERTIFICATION WILL RESULT IN A POSITION OR STATUS CHANGE UP TO TERMINATION AS A TEACHER EFFECTIVE: Monday, October 5, 2009."**

### Risk of Firing - Absolutely Serious!

The teachers who have received this letter should not assume they've already taken care of their license responsibilities or that they'll get a break because of their years of MPS experience. Possessing a proper, current license is the law. DPI is constantly monitoring MPS and demanding strict compliance. **MPS can and will fire unlicensed teachers** - regardless of how long they've taught.

### Protect Your Job. Take Three Steps Now.

If you have received a license warning letter, you should act immediately:

1. If you haven't already applied, send your license application to DPI today. Make a copy for your records and another copy for MPS.
2. Provide the MPS Human Resources Department with proof that you've completed the requirements and have applied for the DPI license you need. If at all possible, personally take your proof to Room 124 of the MPS central office.
3. Call the MPS staffing specialist named in the letter. Let the specialist know what steps you've taken to apply for your license and provide MPS with the required proof. Confirm there are no problems.

If you need advice on how to complete the required steps by the deadline, please call Don Ernest of the MTEA staff at 259-1990.

### A Reality Check for ALL Teachers

◆ All teachers are responsible for maintaining a current DPI license, appropriate for their assignment.

◆ DPI is strictly enforcing the state law and the standards of the No Child Left Behind Law - especially in MPS, a DIFI district. MPS will continue to take firm steps to achieve 100% licensure compliance.

◆ As a union of professionals, we have always insisted on a properly licensed teacher for every student.

◆ There are no loopholes! The contract complies with the law.

◆ Your union will vigorously advocate for any teacher who is being treated unfairly, but the teacher must fulfill his/her license responsibilities.



## Is National Board Certification for You?

If teaching is your career profession and children are your passion, you should consider earning National Board Certification. The process is demanding but very rewarding with many professional growth opportunities. In addition, MPS teachers are eligible for the "Take One!" program which offers mentor support and financial aid.

### Information Sessions

You can learn about the Take One! program and the benefits of National Board Certification at an after-school session on either Thursday, **October 8**, or Wednesday, **October 14**. Both sessions will take place at the MTEA Building, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Please register at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org) (Events) or call 259-1990.

### December 15 Deadline

To participate in Take One! or the full National Board Certification program, you must apply by December 15.

If you'd like more details (but can't attend a session), please e-mail Nicol Peters-Freeman at [petersnt@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:petersnt@milwaukee.k12.wi.us).

## Who's Your Evaluator?

By contract, you must receive written notice of the name of your administrative evaluator(s) within 30 days of the start of the school year. This administrator(s) is primarily responsible for your evaluation and will sign it. The notice, an MPS form letter, should be given to you by **September 30**.

## Less Pain, More Gain With a 403(b)

Investing for your future financial security can be difficult - especially if your take-home pay barely covers the bills. However, no matter how much you earn, investing even a small tax sheltered amount in a 403(b) plan each paycheck can, over time, pay big dividends in retirement.

### 403(b) Vendor Fair - October 3

MPS has arranged an opportunity to hear presentations and meet with representatives of the four district-approved 403(b) plan vendors on Saturday, **October 3**, at Vincent High School. You'll learn about the products and services each vendor offers.

The vendor presentations will take place from 10:30 a.m. until noon and will be repeated from 12:30 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. There will be a half hour to informally meet with the representatives starting at 10:00 a.m. and again at noon. Whether you come in the morning or afternoon, lunch will be provided from noon until 12:30 p.m.

### Educational Seminar - October 13 or 14

MPS has also arranged a session for employees to learn the basics: what 403(b) plans are, how they work, and why the plans are so beneficial. The "Creating a Foundation" seminar will also explain investment risks and strategies, asset allocation, etc. Vendor representatives will give "generic" presentations - without promoting their own products.

The 3-hour educational seminar will be held twice, starting at 4:30 p.m. at:

- ◆ Pulaski High School on Tuesday, **October 13**
- ◆ MPS central office on Wednesday, **October 14**

### Register Via E-Mail

Register by sending an e-mail to [MPS403b@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:MPS403b@milwaukee.k12.wi.us). You should enter "MPS 403(b)" in the subject line. For the October 3 vendor fair, enter "Yes" in the body of your e-mail. For the foundation seminar, enter "Yes" **plus** the date you plan to attend, October 13 or 14.

### What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

If you are already investing for retirement in a 403(b) plan or starting a plan, you should find out how much of your tax sheltered contributions go to annual fees, hidden fees, penalties, sales commissions, etc. Over time, even a 1% charge can cost you thousands of dollars.

We strongly recommend you investigate how the **WEA TSA Trust** compares with the other three vendors programs on costs - as well as investment returns, services, and other features.

## Transport Students in Your Car? Just Say No!

You should not transport students in your car because of the risks. If an accident occurs, the primary coverage will be the responsibility of your personal auto insurance carrier. The School Board's liability insurance provides strictly "excess" coverage. As such, the Board will **not** pay for any claims unless your auto insurance coverage limits are exhausted. The fact that you are on authorized school business - such as taking home students who

missed their bus - does **not** relieve you of any responsibility if an accident occurs.

As MPS/school budgets get tougher each year, administrators look for ways to save money. But teachers transporting students is always ill-advised, and we strongly warn against it. **An emergency? Call 911. Missed bus?** Have the administrator call the parent and then, perhaps, a cab.