
Legislative Contacts: Crucial and Timely

For the past few weeks, we have urged you to send a message to your state senator and Assembly representative: **Support** meaningful reform for MPS, not a divisive mayoral takeover. In addition to Sharpener articles, two flyers have stressed the urgency and value of sending a personal message to state lawmakers:

◆ The December 4 "Take A Stand" flyer details calls to your legislators.

◆ The December 9 flyer "Listen to Educators," explains how to write the postcards we sent with it.

Thank You!

If you have taken the time to call and/or write your legislators, we'd like to express our appreciation. Lawmakers listen when they hear from their constituents, especially when they receive a large number of personal messages.

It's Not Too Late...

If you haven't called or written to your legislators, please act now. There's every indication that state lawmakers will act on reforming MPS in early January, soon after a hearing is held in Milwaukee.

If you decide to write postcards, please see your BR for an MTEA return envelope. We'll deliver your cards - at no cost to you.

Now Is the Time

Your individual messages are very powerful. Please call and/or write as soon as you can. Make sure your voice is heard before state lawmakers return from their break.

Insurance Coverage for Adult Children: State Law Changes May Affect You

In mid-November, MPS sent all employees and retirees information on changes in state law that take effect on January 1, 2010. If you have an adult (age 19-26) child covered by your MPS group health and/or dental insurance plan, one of the changes **may** impact you.

If your adult child's situation fits criteria set by the IRS, you will pay deducted taxes on the "fair market value" of the coverage.

The law also changes the MBSD/MTEA contract provision which sets the eligibility criteria for covering adult children.

Submit Your Certification Form to MPS ASAP

MPS will treat insurance coverage for your adult child as taxable income and start deductions in January - unless you file the MPS "Adult Child Certification Form." MPS needs this form to determine if you are exempt from paying taxes on your child's coverage.

We recommend that you:

- ◆ Use the revised "(12/09 update)" form available on the MPS Web site.
- ◆ Bring it to the MPS central office (Room 124) and have a copy time-stamped for your records.

MPS Position on Amount of Taxable Income

The district's November 16, 2009 letter included a chart estimating **monthly** tax deductions, based on three different state/federal income tax rates. For example, suppose you have the Aetna plan and your tax rate is 29.15%. MPS will withhold roughly \$157 each biweekly paycheck based on its analysis of the "fair market value" of your adult child's health insurance coverage. (The MPS chart shows a \$314.16 monthly amount.)

MTEA's Actuarial Analysis: Only Half

Our union's actuary has determined that the law mandates that the amount subject to taxes is about half of the amount MPS plans to tax. For the example above, he estimates the deduction should be roughly \$78 per paycheck, half of the \$157 deduction MPS plans to make.

Taxable Amount Not Resolved

When this newsletter went to press, the issue of fair market value was in dispute. To resolve this issue, we may need to take appropriate dispute resolution steps - unfortunately a lengthy process.

Call If You Need Clarification

The changes in the law and the MPS implementation steps are complex. An individual analysis is necessary to determine if and how you may be affected. Please call Joan Heithoff of the MTEA staff at 259-1990 if the MPS materials do not answer your questions.

Snow Business News

No Students, No Teachers

If the district closes schools for students due to inclement weather, teachers do **not** report to work. When MPS strayed from this longstanding practice in 1995, your union filed a group grievance, which was resolved in arbitration.

Days Paid; Sick Leave Not Deducted

The arbitrator's decision stated: "Every time the Board closed the schools in the past because of inclement weather...teachers were not required to report to work and they were paid. Whether or not to close the schools because of inclement weather is clearly a Board decision, but once it decides to close them, the practice is clear and binding that teachers do not report to work and they are paid."

2009-10 Banking and Make-Up Days

The November 11 Sharpener reported the November 2 settlement with MPS resolving a prohibited practice complaint the MTEA filed when the district ordered all schools to follow a uniform banking day schedule.

The settlement modified a few banking day dates MPS had unilaterally set and established the succession for

converting banking days to student days if it becomes necessary to make-up hours of instruction due to snow days.

Banking Day Chart Notes

- ◆The December 4 banking day was changed to February 12 for both regular and year-round schools.
- ◆For regular calendar schools, March 26 is now the fourth banking day (not March 15).
- ◆For year-round schools, March 19 is now the fourth banking day (not March 15) and the fifth banking day is now May 14 (not May 7).

Make-Up Day Chart Notes

The third make-up day, if needed, will change the emergency make-up day to record day, and require students to attend on the day scheduled for records. June 16 is the emergency make-up day for traditional calendar schools, and June 22 for year-round schools.

IB High Schools

The banking days MPS set for King and Reagan were not changed. Their four-day make-day sequence is: Jan. 29, April 23, June 1, and March 15.

2009-10 Banking Days

<u>School Calendar</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Regular	Oct. 2	Jan. 25	Feb. 12	March 26	May 7
Year-Round	Oct. 2	Jan. 25	Feb. 12	March 19	May 14

Make-Up Day Sequence for 2009-10

<u>School Calendar</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Regular	Feb. 12	Jan. 25	June 16	May 7	March 26
Year-Round	Feb. 12	Jan. 25	June 22	May 14	March 19

If Your Car Is Vandalized...

The contract provides school board coverage for malicious damage to employee cars parked at school during school hours or while on school business. Motorcycles are also covered.

File MPS Claim Form

If your car is maliciously damaged, you should file a "Report of Auto Vandalism to Employee Auto" form, available in each school. MPS sent new forms to the schools in early November, to reflect the name and phone number of the new company MPS selected to handle claims.

Do not have the auto damage repaired until **after** Cannon Cochran Management Services, Inc., the MPS auto claims administrator, inspects the damage and authorizes repairs. If your car cannot be driven, call CCMSI immediately at **1-262-696-4636** to expedite a resolution.

Problems? Questions?

If your claim is denied or for reimbursement questions, call an MTEA staff member at 259-1990.