

## Why Get Involved?

You are the MTEA! Your active participation in your union can make a difference on issues that matter to you and your students.

There is an urgent need for us to work together for change that works. Your involvement is key to reaching a contract settlement, changing the state's school funding system, improving teaching and learning, meaningful professional development - and much more.

Please consider the multitude of ways you can get involved; start with the opportunities described on the right. It's time to stand up for each other and public education in Milwaukee.

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### Did You Know?

In addition to Sharpener in print, you have three electronic options for MTEA communications.

**E-Mail Newsletters** - Receiving Sharpener via e-mail gives you similar information, plus links to related details and depth at the MTEA website and other sites. To subscribe, go to **mtea.org (Newsletters)**.

**Facebook** - Interact with MTEA members, leaders, and staff on timely topics. Find us by searching **Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association**.

**Twitter** - Interested in following MTEA news releases, position statements, and other "in-the-public" issues? Follow us **@mteaunion**.

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## Getting Involved, Getting Started

There is a wide range of ways to get involved in your union. All of them connect you with other members in activities aimed at improving conditions for educators and the children and families we serve.

Please consider the opportunities outlined below. "First-timers" are especially welcome; the first step is signing up at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org).

### Join the Fun on Labor Day (September 6)

The Milwaukee Area Labor Council's Laborfest is a great way to show union pride and solidarity, as we celebrate with family and friends.

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

Members who join the MTEA group for the parade receive a T-shirt and food/beverage coupons for Laborfest. To join us, please sign up at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org) (Events) by **August 31** and be sure to give us your T-shirt size and home e-mail address. We will send you the details on where and when to meet.

## MTEA Committees

Many interests and issues of the MTEA's diverse membership (over 8,000 educators) are addressed in union committees, such as Human Relations, Collective Bargaining, Reading, Legislative and 21 more.

A complete list of MTEA committees is at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org) (Members) along with a brief description of each committee's purpose and a form to notify MTEA President Mike Langyel of your interests. A brochure on committees is also available by calling 259-1990.

For more details about committees that interest you, please call Mike or MTEA Vice President Rozalia Harris, at 259-1990. If you prefer, e-mail Mike at [langyelm@mtea.weac.org](mailto:langyelm@mtea.weac.org) or Rose at [rbreal34@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rbreal34@sbcglobal.net).

## Electing Public Education Advocates

Educators will have opportunities to engage in key state and local races this fall and spring.

In November, voters will elect a new governor, all 99 Assembly representatives and half of our state senators. Candidates for several Milwaukee seats in the Legislature face off in the primary election on September 14.

The election of the next governor and Legislature will determine the future of changing the state's school funding system which is desperately needed by MPS and other districts.

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## First Paycheck

Teachers on the traditional school calendar will receive a **four-day** paycheck September 3.

For school social workers and other teacher unit members who work 200 days, this first paycheck will be for nine days.

## Extra Pay

Teachers who participate in Comprehensive Literacy Plan professional development sessions the last week of August should be paid six hours at their individual rate on this September 17 paycheck. (This assumes MPS follows the usual timeline for processing extra pay, a two-week holdback.)

## Deduction Notes

◆ If you have a loan, savings club, or other deposits to an Educators Credit Union account, a deduction will be made on the September 3 paycheck (unless your net pay does not cover the amount).

◆ MTEA dues will **not** be taken on the first paycheck. Dues deductions will start on September 17, the first 9-day paycheck.

◆ TDA deductions will also start on September 17.

## Political Action Rebate

During 2010-11, the combined MTEA/WEAC/NEA membership dues amount of \$50.38 will be deducted from 20 biweekly paychecks. This deduction includes a \$0.47 contribution to the MTEA's Political Action Fund. This amount, a total of \$9.40 for next school year, is separated from your dues payment. It will be used for local political action - primarily to support candidates for the 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."

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Five of the Milwaukee School Board's nine members are up for election in April. They are: Michael Bonds, Terry Falk, Tim Petersons, Jeff Spence, and Bruce Thompson. The election will determine the majority of the Board responsible for policy decisions on contract bargaining, the budget for schools and the district, layoffs, and other local issues.

You have several options for engaging in political activities with other members. Sign up at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org) (Members).

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## Layoffs/Recalls: Dates & Numbers

**June 11** - MPS sent layoff notices to **482** teachers.

**June 30** - MPS rescinded **59** of the layoffs but sent layoff notices to **50** other teachers - essentially correcting errors earlier in the month.

**July 30** - MPS completed the process of assigning **570** teachers to vacant positions for 2010-11, by seniority within license areas. They were without assignments due to excessing, or serving on a day-to-day substituting basis during 2009-10, or returning from leave. (Those assigned were more senior than the teachers on layoff.)

**August 15** - MPS started recalling **100** elementary teachers to vacant positions **not** filled during the reassignment process. The previous MPS administration apparently laid off many more teachers than necessary.

## More Recalls Expected

On August 10, Congress approved a \$10 billion bill to prevent layoffs in U.S. schools. NEA estimates \$180 million for Wisconsin, which could save 3,000 teacher jobs.

Your union immediately offered to work with MPS to obtain federal funds as soon as possible. MTEA's goal: bring all teachers and EAs back to work as soon as the funds are available. To date, none of the recalls were due to the recently enacted jobs bill.

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## MTEA Leadership Positions Vacant

Three MTEA Executive Board members - Connie Baldewicz-O'Malley, Barbara Brown, and Jennifer Jones-Miller - have retired from MPS.

As a result, there are now three vacant representative positions on your union's Board: one special education and two middle school. These spots will be filled by appointment, until the next election in April of 2011.

If you would like to be considered for one of these key leadership positions (and are eligible as outlined below), please complete the online interest form at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org) or send a brief letter to MTEA President Mike Langyel at the MTEA Building, 5130 West Vliet Street. To be considered by a committee that will review the applications, your online form or letter must be received at the MTEA Building by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, **September 17**.

◆ Members in special education - at any grade level - are eligible for the special education position.

◆ Members in regular education who teach at the middle school level, including those teaching at grades 7-8 in K-8 schools, are eligible for the middle school positions.