

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

Date Book Updates

◆ Most EAs have received the 2009-10 MTEA Date Book. If your school has not, please ask the EA Chairperson to contact Libby Mitten at 256-6759.

◆ 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.

Classroom Supervision Assignments: What Schools Should Be Doing

The MBSD/MTEA Educational Assistant contract states:

"Educational assistants assigned to supervise an entire class due to the full day absence of a teacher shall receive an additional five dollars (\$5.00) per hour where the teacher absence extends beyond one day and no substitute is available. Effective with the start of the 2005-06 school year, each paraprofessional assistant assigned to supervise the class beyond the first day shall be paid an additional \$5 per hour. In no instance shall such assignment exceed three (3) consecutive days. Only paraprofessional assistants shall be assigned classroom supervision duties."

Assignments - Only If a Substitute Is Not Available

The contract limits assigning paraprofessionals to classroom supervision only when "no substitute is available." Here's a breakdown of what schools should be doing:

- ◆ By contract, your school should obtain a substitute teacher who is certified to teach the class whenever a teacher is absent.
- ◆ Schools may assign a paraprofessional assistant to supervise (not teach) a class due to a teacher's all-day absence only when a substitute teacher is not available.
- ◆ If such an assignment is necessary, paraprofessionals should be paid an extra \$5 an hour on the second and third day of the teacher's absence.
- ◆ Assigning paraprofessionals to supervise an absent teacher's class cannot extend beyond three consecutive days.

Contract Violations This Fall

Based on calls from our members, it's clear that some principals are **not** following the contract.

- ◆ Instead of obtaining a substitute, they are using assistants even when substitutes are available.
- ◆ Some principals believe they can sidestep the contract by assigning a different EA after the first day.

The contract requires the extra pay for each paraprofessional assigned after the first day of a teacher's absence - whether it's the same or different paraprofessionals supervising the class on the second and third day.

What You Need to Do

If the contract is being violated in your school, you should explain to your principal what needs to be done.

If the principal does not agree, please call Acquintis Chesir of the MTEA staff at 259-1990. Acquintis will review the facts with you and, if necessary, help you initiate a grievance.



Your Negotiated Paid Personal Days Off

The MBSD/MTEA Educational Assistant Contract provides for a paid personal day off for eligible assistants each school year. The provision is summarized below:

- ◆ If you have 10 to 19 school years of service within the educational assistant unit and satisfactory attendance, you are entitled to one personal day off with pay each school year.
- ◆ With 20 or more years of service and satisfactory attendance, you receive two paid personal days each school year.
- ◆ For the purpose of eligibility, satisfactory attendance means that you are not required to provide a doctor's excuse for every day you are absent.
- ◆ Personal days off can be taken for any reason, but the scheduling must be approved by your immediate supervisor in advance - unless an unexpected emergency arises. In such cases, you should notify your supervisor promptly.
- ◆ If you do not take your personal day or days off, you may choose to be paid for the day(s) at your normal daily rate on the last paycheck of the school year or have the day(s) added to your sick leave accumulation.

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. 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.