

Contract Negotiations to Start

Our union's educational assistant bargaining team will meet with the School Board's team on November 7. This session, to exchange and explain initial bargaining proposals, will be held in public.

Our team consists of five members. MEAA President Tommie Lee Glenn, Milwaukee Academy of Chinese Language; Joan Lance, a former MEAA President, Morgandale; Laura Vernon, MEAA Past President, Roosevelt Middle School; Lisa Johnson, Goodrich; and Ben Duke, Bay View High School.

The EA contract expired on December 31, 2006. Bargaining has been delayed in recent years - primarily over health insurance issues.

All of the benefits, salary rates, and rights of your contract remain in effect until a new agreement is reached. As in the past, our union will bargain for full retroactivity on salary raises.

Please Take the PHA, ASAP

We ask that you (and your spouse) complete the personal health assessment (PHA). Completing this confidential questionnaire is the essential first step toward participating in the joint labor/management wellness/health education program we call "GoodHealth."

Our Web site at mtea.org (Insurance Benefits>> Learn Good Health, Live Good Health) has a link to the GoodHealth Web site. Another route to the PHA is at mygoodhealth.carewiseonline.com. Either way, your user ID will be:

- Your first name (as it appears on your paycheck)
- Your date of birth
- The last four digits of your Social Security number

Why the PHA? Direct, Individual Benefits

The most important reason for completing a PHA is the information you'll receive about your own health and the voluntary programs available to you. The wide variety of personalized GoodHealth programs offer something for everyone - whether you're in perfect health or already dealing with a chronic illness (asthma, diabetes, etc.).

There are also two direct financial benefits - that will make a **\$400** difference to you each year. The \$400 annual amount is based on a \$200 penalty and a \$200 reward, described below.

\$200 Penalty. If you and your spouse do not complete the PHA by December 15, 2007, you will pay a \$200 premium contribution. There will be two \$100 deductions from your paychecks - the first on February 8, 2008; the second on March 7, 2008.

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Ask Not What Your Union Can Do for You

Today's Team-Mate asks you to take 15 minutes to take the GoodHealth personal health assessment (PHA), and ask your spouse to do so as well.

◆ Our bargaining team did its homework and found that the GoodHealth program is the best way to maintain affordable, high-quality health care benefits for our members, active and retired.

◆ Our negotiators worked with the MPS administration for a year and a half to develop a user-friendly comprehensive wellness/health education program.

◆ We've made certain that the protections for confidentiality are in place - in full compliance with the federal HIPAA law.

◆ GoodHealth is an excellent program that will benefit **all** members - health wise and in the pocketbook too.

Doing Your Part

It's now up to you. The success of GoodHealth starts with a very high level of participation in the PHA - 95% or better.



Education! Education!

In our busy lives, we don't find time to learn about maintaining and improving our personal health. With our job-related demands, for example, many educators would benefit from stress reduction.

"Info-Modules"

Recognizing the need for education, our union advocated for a series of informative modules each school year. By contract, these presentations may be made during the banking days.

The modules will also be available for viewing **at your request**.

Module #1

The first module for 2007-08, a CD explaining the entire GoodHealth program, is now available in all schools.

Accessing at Home

For access at home, go to <http://mslweb.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/Mediasite/viewer/>

Click on Human Resources and then scroll to the bottom of the page and click on View: Learn Good Health, Live Good Health - Introductory Session. Click on Max Slide when the presentation begins.

For the introductory period, you and your spouse will need to take the PHA twice. The first time by **December 15, 2007 and again between **January 1, 2008** and **December 15, 2008**.

After the initial period, you can earn your financial reward by taking the PHA (your spouse also) and completing a GoodHealth program option just once a year - from January 1 through December 15. For **2009**, the reward will increase to **\$250** per year.

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\$200 Reward. If you (and your spouse) complete the PHA by December 15, 2007** - and you complete one of the GoodHealth programs by December 15, **2008** - you'll receive a \$200 reward.

Your \$200 will be placed in a tax-free health reimbursement account (HRA). Your HRA will be available to pay for a wide range of medical expenses - deductibles, tooth implants, co-pays, over-the-counter drugs, etc.

Why the PHA? - Indirect, Collective Benefits

The research on wellness programs shows that participation in the PHA is essential to reducing the incidence of expensive illnesses (heart attacks, strokes, etc.). Our collective PHA response is the key to achieving substantial savings in medical costs.

Our union's negotiators believe each dollar saved in medical costs belongs in your wallet!

Shared Savings Ahead

In fact, the contract provision on the GoodHealth program includes a shared savings clause. It states: "Any annual net savings attributable to H&PM shall be shared equally between the district and eligible MTEA bargaining unit employees. Shared savings to eligible MTEA-represented employees shall be distributed to the employee's health reimbursement account by January 31 following the end of the fiscal year in which the shared savings were earned."

Our union's health insurance actuary does not expect net savings in the first few years of the program. The School Board is paying start-up costs, monetary incentives, the costs for the voluntary wellness/education options (registered nurse coaches, etc.) and PHA administration expenses. These expenses will offset the initial savings.

However, our actuary is confident of shared savings annually in the years ahead - **if** the PHA participation exceeds 95% and our members participate in the programs which support healthy lifestyles.

Voluntary Programs to Fit Your Needs

The spectrum of GoodHealth programs provides information and support based on your needs. For example, you may qualify for the assistance of a personal nurse advocate if you are currently living with, or are at risk for, a chronic condition such as asthma, diabetes, high cholesterol, low back pain, and other ailments.

An Ounce of Prevention

Many of us think of health care as treatment for an illness when we start suffering from it. GoodHealth offers individualized information to help **prevent** serious diseases and better manage conditions we already have. It is a **voluntary** education program, and we choose what will work best for us.

A Note for the Super Healthy

Some of our healthiest members question whether or not the GoodHealth program will offer them options for earning the \$200 reward each year. It does.

For instance, maintaining the exercise regimen you currently follow probably qualifies you for the \$200 incentive. Check out the "Get in Shape" option to see if you can earn a bonus for what you already do to maintain your good health.