

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.

Showing Solidarity (Without the Snow)

Last winter, educators and other public employees did not stand alone at the Capitol in Madison. In the **initial** battle over bargaining rights in Wisconsin, public and private unions at the local, state, and national levels were there - united and strong.

Union solidarity continued during the summer recall elections. Members from local unions in the Milwaukee Area Labor Council (MALC) joined educators and other public employees day after day, making phone calls and knocking on doors in State Senate District 8.

Let's Be There for Laborfest!

We have a great opportunity to continue demonstrating our solidarity with AFL-CIO locals especially through a fun-filled Labor Day celebration on **September 5**.

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. The free and very family-friendly festival takes place from noon until 5:00 p.m.

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 and be sure to enter your T-shirt size and home e-mail address. We'll e-mail you the details on when and where our members will assemble for the parade.

Act 10: Making the Transition

The vast majority of our state's teacher union members are starting to experience Act 10, Governor Walker's new bargaining law. For example, Greenfield teachers have been told they will work an extra six days this school year, with no additional pay; that significant changes will be made in their health and retirement benefits; and that teachers will no longer be allowed to communicate concerns at school meetings.

Teachers responded with a huge protest at the Greenfield School Board's August 22 meeting.

What Will Happen in MPS?

How will our district's administration and school board approach the elimination of all contracts and the end of collective bargaining? Our union's leaders plan to work with MPS officials - so that the changes will help, not harm, joint efforts to improve teaching and learning.

Two-Year Transition for Our Union

We have a two-step timetable for transitioning to the new reality:

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First Paycheck - September 16

EAs on the nine-day uniform pay schedule will receive their first check September 16.

If you are **not** on the nine-day schedule, the first paycheck will cover four days.

Attention Retirees!

Since the health insurance changes were implemented on April 1, 2011, many retirees have raised questions about how they are impacted.

On Thursday, September 8, Joan Heithoff will present a health insurance seminar specifically for retirees. It will be held at Serb Hall starting at 4:00 p.m. Please register at mtea.org (Events).

Political Action Rebate Reminder

During 2011-12, the combined MTEA/WEAC/NEA membership dues amount of \$24.38 will be deducted from 20 biweekly paychecks. This deduction includes a \$0.16 contribution to the MTEA's Political Action Fund. This amount is separated from your dues payment and used for local political action purposes - primarily to support candidates for the Milwaukee School Board.

Members may request a rebate if they do not wish to contribute to the MTEA's Political Action Fund. Based on the MTEA Constitution, to request an MTEA-PAC rebate of \$3.20 for 2011-12, your written request must be received at the MTEA Building by **October 1**.

Continued from front...

◆ Contracts for our educational assistant, substitute teacher, and accountant/bookkeeper members will **not** expire until after this school year ends - on June 30, **2012**.

◆ The teacher contract will continue for two more school years and **not** expire until June 30, **2013**.

During the transition period, our union will inform and involve all members in preparing for changes. In the meantime, be assured the contracts will continue to be vigorously enforced; you will receive the negotiated benefits and salary; your representation and other rights will be upheld.

No Contract Modifications

One of the provisions of Act 10 already applies to all four MTEA contracts with the school board. If we negotiate a contract modification, the entire contract will expire immediately.

We have followed the advice of our attorneys to avoid putting the contract rights and benefits of our members at risk. We will continue to take a cautious approach in today's volatile political environment.

Health Insurance Topics: Q & A

Do you have questions on this fall's annual September open enrollment for health insurance? Are you still dealing with a payment problem resulting from the switch in PPO administrator from Aetna to UHC last April? How will the health insurance premium deductions work and impact your take-home pay?

For these questions and more, please go to mtea.org to check out our Q & A's on timely health insurance topics.

September 30 Enrollment Deadline

Each fall, you receive lots of materials to review from our union and from MPS. By September 5, the district expects to complete its annual open enrollment mailing to all employees. It includes a booklet (43 pages last year) on health and dental insurances and another booklet (24 pages) on flexible spending accounts.

These materials contain important information. We urge you to use them to make informed decisions on:

Health and Dental Insurance - Open Enrollment

Carefully review your individual 2011 Open Enrollment Benefits Application Form. Be sure to submit it to MPS to add/subtract dependents, re-enroll if you have been on leave, switch to a different health or dental plan, or make other changes.

Flexible Spending Account (FSA) - Options

Reduce your income tax deductions and have more money to spend in 2012 with either (or both) FSA programs:

___ Enroll in the Health Care FSA

___ Enroll in the Dependent Care FSA
