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# Solidarity!

## What Does Your MTI Contract Do for You? *The Right to File a Grievance*

When a union member files a grievance it means that the member and his or her union believe the employer has failed to live up to its end of the **Collective Bargaining Agreement**. They are called “*agreements*” for a reason: the union and the employer have agreed that what has been agreed upon in negotiations is what both parties will live by, that it is best for the employee and the employer. A Collective Bargaining Agreement is a legally binding **Contract**.

Filing a grievance sets in motion a process for resolving the employee’s complaint. Once a grievance is filed, the union and the employer meet in a process set forth in the Collective Bargaining Agreement to discuss the reasons it was filed. When the issue cannot be resolved through discussions, the union may take the complaint to a neutral third party (an arbitrator) who will decide whether the Contract has been violated. Wisconsin law assures that union- represented employees cannot be retaliated against because of filing a grievance.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement is the **Constitution** of the workplace, and *only unionized employees, like members of MTI, are protected by a Collective Bargaining Agreement.*

### Instructional Rounds – Voluntary and Non-Evaluative

Recently MTI received information from members concerning significant misuse of the Instructional Rounds process. At one middle school, *the building principal assigned all teachers the task of performing Instructional Rounds relative to their colleagues*. The process was scheduled during teacher prep time. Teachers were assigned to collect data regarding their colleague’s teaching and then to discuss their observations with the principal, without the observed teacher being present. All teachers in the building were assigned without being given an option.

The District previously agreed with MTI that “Instructional Rounds” *are voluntary* and that *any data collected during the process will not be utilized to evaluate teachers*. Given this, *teachers may opt out, and can do so by informing their principal that they do not wish to participate; either in person, in writing or by e-mail*. If a teacher is willing to participate, nothing observed can be used in his or her evaluation. MTI cautions against making evaluative statements of a colleague, especially to an administrator.

If you have concerns about the way that Instructional Rounds are being implemented at your school, please contact MTI Assistant Director Jeff Knight ([knightj@madisonteachers.org](mailto:knightj@madisonteachers.org)).

### Important February Deadlines

**Salary Advancement Credit for passage over a salary barrier or for salary track advancement, effective with the beginning of the second semester, are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., February 1.**

**Sabbatical Leave applications** for either the first semester of the 2013-14 school year or for the entire school year are due in the MTI Office by 5:00 p.m., **February 1.**

**Teacher Retirement and Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program (TERP)** enrollment applications are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 15.**



As a show of **SOLIDARITY**, wear **MTI RED** every **MONDAY!**

**How Walker and the 2010 Elections Changed Wisconsin – A Lesson in Voter Apathy**

Governor Scott Walker and the 2010 tidal wave of GOP victories in Wisconsin were enabled by frustration with the economy, frustration with the political process and the apathy of Wisconsin Democratic voters. Just two years earlier, with the 2008 election of President Obama, Wisconsin voters turned out in historic numbers. In 2010, over 600,000 fewer voters came out for Tom Barrett than voted for Barack Obama (a 40% drop-off). By contrast, the drop-off among Republican voters was only 10% and resulted in Scott Walker, Ron Johnson and a long-term political problem. The 2010 election gave the GOP and Walker full control of Wisconsin’s government, *including the once-a-decade partisan redistricting process, and the results are now becoming disastrously clear.*

Not only does the GOP create significant turmoil with their union-busting, anti-public education, **divide and conquer strategies**, they have also drawn new legislative district boundaries that may well keep the State legislature in their hands for a long time. In fact, when President Obama and Congresswoman Baldwin won the state-wide election last month, 193,000 more votes were cast for Democratic candidates in the State Assembly, yet Republican candidates won over 60% of the available seats due to gerrymandered legislative districts. Much hard work went into the recall efforts that failed to unseat Governor Walker, but did wrest control of the Senate from the GOP. However, due to the newly drawn voting districts, majority control has returned to the GOP. Now, they are threatening another round of odious legislation aimed at restricting voting rights (Voter ID and eliminating same-day registration), eroding public education, de-regulating in favor of corporate interests, and other harmful measures.

Wisconsin has some **extremely important elections coming up in the Spring** including an opportunity to swing the balance of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, *which may eventually determine the fate of collective bargaining rights*, as well as the Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction, and three seats on the Madison Board of Education. It is absolutely critical that MTI members stay engaged in the political process through these off-year elections. We must focus our efforts on getting the fair-weather voters to the ballot box. Please stay informed and active this spring. Check the MTI website and e-mail for opportunities to help.

**Life Insurance: Beneficiaries Up-To-Date?**

*Whether one has life insurance via one of MTI’s Collective Bargaining Agreements, on a personal basis, or both, one must frequently be sure that their beneficiaries are up to date. The beneficiary is the person or persons you designate to receive your life insurance proceeds in the event of your death.*

Usually, one designates a number of beneficiaries and the proceeds from their life insurance are divided equally among those individuals. One can indicate otherwise and specify a different percentage or amount to specific individuals. For instance, if one names his/her spouse as beneficiary and he or she dies before the insured and the insured has not named a new beneficiary, his/her life insurance benefits are paid to the children. If one has no children, the benefits are paid to his/her parents. If one’s parents are deceased, the benefits go to siblings, and so on. **Remember that if your spouse is designated as your beneficiary and you get divorced, your ex-spouse will receive the payment unless you change your beneficiary.** These illustrations are presented to remind members of the need to keep their beneficiaries current.

Children under 18 can be beneficiaries, but some special rules apply. The proceeds will be paid only to a Court-appointed guardian of the child’s estate or to a trust that has been established in the child’s name. A guardian must be someone designated by the courts to oversee the child’s finances. The guardian is not the same as someone who has custody of the child. If there is no court-appointed guardian or trust, the proceeds may be held in an interest-bearing account until the child turns 18.



- **Monday, December 10, 4:30 p.m., MTI**  
MTI Board of Directors
- **Monday, December 10, Doyle (Rm 103), 6:00 p.m.**  
BOE Planning/Development Subcommittee  
BOE Operational Support Subcommittee (7:00 p.m.)
- **Monday, December 17, Doyle McDaniels Auditorium**  
BOE Special Open Meeting (5:00 p.m.)  
BOE Regular Meeting (6:00 p.m.)
- **December 24 - January 4 Winter Break**

***Our Union Makes Us Strong!***

MTI’s web page - [www.madisonteachers.org](http://www.madisonteachers.org)  
MTI’s email - [MTI@madisonteachers.org](mailto:MTI@madisonteachers.org)