

mtea advocate

Educators standing strong for our students, our profession, and public schools



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Nationwide walk-in for public schools Feb. 17

Parents, students, educators and supporters will walk in at dozens of public schools in Milwaukee and hundreds of schools across the country on Wednesday, February 17.

The nationwide walk-ins, inspired by Milwaukee's efforts last fall and earlier walk-ins held in St. Paul, are a call to our city, state and country to stand up for public schools, the only institution with the commitment, capacity and legal obligation to educate every child.

The walk-ins are also a powerful show of community opposition to proposed school takeovers such as the one passed in the Wisconsin state budget last summer, which is currently being implemented by County Executive Chris Abele and his chosen takeover commissioner, Demond Means.

Walk-ins will take place in the following cities: Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Camden (NJ), Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Green Bay, Houston, Kalamazoo (MI), Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Newark, Paterson (NJ), Pittsburgh, Racine, San Diego, Seattle, St. Paul...and more!

Join us on February 17 at a public school near you! Invite students, parents, neighbors and community members. Together we are stronger!

To sign up to host or attend a walk-in at your school, visit mtea.org or bit.ly/walkinschools.

Tentative agreement reached in teacher unit contract

Thanks to the hard work of our members and our teacher unit bargaining team, MPS has agreed in meet and confer sessions to fully fund the teacher unit salary schedule for 2015-16. Teachers, speech pathologists, guidance counselors and occupational therapists will receive their full step increase this year. We have also reached a tentative contract agreement that includes a 0.15% raise for all teacher unit members.



MTEA members outside school board meeting

Incentives for advanced degrees, National Board certification and hard-to-fill certifications are continuing. As a result of the agreement, teachers who received a distinguished performance evaluation in 2014-15 will receive a \$750 one-time increase. Going forward, teachers who receive two consecutive cycles of distinguished evaluations will receive a \$1,500 base-building wage increase. Teachers who received an unsatisfactory summative evaluation rating in 2014-15 will not receive a step increase this year, but they will receive the 0.15% increase. In addition, two labor management committees were established – one to look at teacher workload, and another to consider changing the retirement age.

Our bargaining team has also secured salary increases for physical therapists, school social workers, librarians, school nurses, and traveling music teachers. These increases are comparable to the increases received by other teacher unit members. More information has been provided to members of these groups via email, so that they can calculate their individual increases.

The MTEA Executive Board recommends ratification of this tentative agreement. Building leaders will hold 10-minute meetings to explain the agreement, and teacher unit members will vote on the tentative agreement from Thu., Jan. 14 through Fri., Jan. 22. The vote will be conducted via email – be sure your email address is up to date by calling 259-1990, or sending an email to scherliek@mtea.weac.org.

Deducting union dues on your income taxes

If you itemize deductions on your federal income tax return, you can deduct your union dues, minus the portion of your dues that go to the Political Action Committee, along with your other "miscellaneous deductions." Members who worked the full calendar year in 2015 may deduct:

Teachers: \$963

Educational assistants: \$284.80

Substitutes: \$240

Bookkeepers: \$480

If you worked less than a full year or have questions about what you can deduct, call Linda at 256-6760.

Take the MTEA student discipline survey

The MTEA Safety and Discipline Committee has designed a survey to help guide our focus for professional development and school safety/discipline. Often, student discipline and school safety issues revolve around specific events and don't incorporate proactive strategies or schoolwide plans for safety and discipline.

MTEA will use the results of our anonymous survey to support

effective change in specific schools based on the results.

Members received a link to the survey via email. Please encourage colleagues to participate, too!

The MTEA Safety and Discipline Committee, as always, is here to listen and assist with any kind of safety and discipline needs that members have in the workplace.

Photo IDs required in Feb. 16 primary election

Be sure to vote in the primary elections for local offices, including county executive, on Tue., Feb. 16 and in the general election/Wisconsin presidential primary on Tue., Apr. 5.

Photo ID is required at the polls.

Acceptable forms of photo ID include:

- Wisconsin driver's license
- Wisconsin state ID
- US passport book or card
- University/college/tech college ID with enrollment verification
- US uniformed services ID
- Certificate of naturalization
- Receipt for a Wisconsin driver's license or Wisconsin state ID.

Members can help increase voter

turnout throughout our city by making sure parents and voting-age students know what is needed to vote.

MTEA will hold an information session on Thu., Jan. 14 at 4:30pm on the Photo ID law and strategies for boosting voter turnout.

Important dates to remember:

Thu., Jan. 14: Photo ID info session at MTEA office, 5130 W. Vliet St.

Mon., Feb. 1 – Fri., Feb. 12: Early voting for City of Milwaukee (M-F, 8am-5pm).

Thu. Feb. 11: last day to request absentee ballots by mail (5pm).

Tue., Feb. 16: Primary election.

Tue., April 5: Final election (local races) and WI Presidential primary.

Stay connected

Do you currently receive email and e-newsletters from MTEA? If not, please update your contact info: Send an email to scherliek@mtea.weac.org, call 259-1990, or visit mtea.weac.org/resources/member-data-update.

If you are retiring or resigning this spring, please contact Linda Scherlie at the MTEA office, 256-6760, or email lscherli@mtea.weac.org. We want to help you stop your dues and sign up as a retiree member!

Upcoming events

All events held at MTEA unless noted. For more info and to register, visit mtea.weac.org/events.

Professional development at the Milwaukee Center for Teaching, Learning and Public Education.

To view and register for all courses, visit mtea.weac.org/mke-center.

Restorative practices workshop - Wed., Jan. 20 at 4:30pm.

Three credit book study orientation, Thu., Jan. 21 at 4:30pm.

Roundtable for new educators, Wed., Jan. 27 at 4:30pm.

Educator Effectiveness: PPG and SLO, Wed., Jan. 27 at 4:30pm.

City of Milwaukee early voting, Mon., Feb. 1 through Fri., Feb. 12.

Project Metro informational session, Tue., Feb. 2 at 4:30pm.

Voting Day, Tue., Feb. 5.

Citywide and nationwide walk-in, Wed., Feb. 17 at 7am (most schools). RSVP at bit.ly/walkinschools.

Citywide convening to stop public school takeovers, Sat., Feb. 20, 9am, location to be announced.

Vote now on candidate endorsements for spring elections in Milwaukee

MTEA members are encouraged to vote in our union's candidate endorsement process. MTEA members will receive their voting links via non-MPS email. The MTEA Political Action Committee recommends the following candidates to our membership:

- Chris Larson for County Executive
- Tony Zielinski for 14th district

common council

- Sequanna Taylor for 2nd district county supervisor
- Mike Glabere and Marcella Nicholson for 5th district county supervisor
- Martha DeLaRosa for 18th district county supervisor

mtea

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