



What every member should know about...

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Legislation impacts every school district and public institution of higher education, and the working conditions of every school and public employee, because the laws and regulations governing every member's terms and conditions of employment are passed by lawmakers and implemented by government agencies in Lansing and Washington, D.C.

The State Legislature decides:

- School Funding
- Standardized Testing
- Days and Hours of Instruction
- Teacher Certification Requirements
- Infrastructure Improvements
- Retiree Health Care Benefits
- Pension Benefits
- District Funding for Raises and Health Care
- District Funding for Professional Development

The people we elect to the State Legislature, State School Board of Education and the Governor's office make decisions that effect every aspect of our working life. The union can bargain the greatest contract ever, but if the Legislature doesn't send money to the district it doesn't matter. The best contract doesn't address retirement, retiree health care, or teacher certification and renewal.

YOU can have a voice in those decisions being made in Lansing, but only if YOU participate in the political process. WE need to elect people who support public education and understand the issues of school employees.

The MFT&SRP's legislative office assists Legislators in drafting and introducing legislation and lobbies for bills that improve state aid to schools and colleges, certification, tenure, occupation health and safety, education standards, health care, retirement, and other issues affecting our members.

Some of the accomplishments the MFT&SRP lobbying staff has made during recent years are:

- Declining Enrollment Funds
- Additional Funding for Detroit Public Schools Reform
- Delay Scheduled Single Business Tax Cut
- School Readiness Funding
- At-Risk Funding Increases

We have also been successful in fending off detrimental legislation such as:

- Failing Schools Proposals
- Education Flex - District State Law Waivers
- Charter School Expansion
- Privatization of Substitute Teachers
- Ban on Promotion of Ballot Issues in Public Schools
- Graded Premium for Retiree Health Care Benefits

- Reducing Qualifications for Substitute Teachers

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The MFT&SRP Legislative office strives to keep timely two-way communications open with all locals to better represent their needs and answer their questions. We start by educating our members about how the legislative process works and how and when to effectively contact their Legislators. We include our members in the legislative process through personal contact, letter writing campaigns, and testifying before legislative committees.

The Capitol Report is published each month in our Legislative Office in Lansing and mailed to all Staff, Administrative Board Members, Local Presidents, Retiree Units, Committee Members, and Miscellaneous members at their request. It is also posted on our website at: <http://mftsrp.org/capitol.html>. The Legislative Hotline page on our website also contains click and send letters that can be easily e-mailed to your Legislators.

The MFT&SRP annual Lobby Day, usually held in February or March, allows our members the opportunity to come to Lansing and meet with their state Legislators, as well as visit with other members and officers from across the state. Activities for the day have included lunch with legislators, panel discussions, and visits to the Capitol Building for committee meeting or legislative sessions.