



**MILWAUKEE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Office of the Superintendent  
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February 19, 2026

Ingrid Walker-Henry, President  
Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association  
5130 W. Vliet Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53208

RE: Initial Base Wage Proposal for Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement

Dear President Walker-Henry:

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute § 111.70(4)(cm), Milwaukee Public Schools ("MPS") hereby submits its initial proposal for base wage increases for employees in the MTEA bargaining unit for the period July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

### **SCOPE OF BARGAINING**

Consistent with 2011 Wisconsin Act 10 and Wisconsin Statute § 111.70(4)(mb), this proposal covers total base wages only. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) ceiling for these negotiations is 2.63%, which represents the maximum percentage increase in total base wages that may be agreed upon absent a referendum under Wisconsin Statutes §§ 66.0506 and 118.245.

This proposal does not address and MPS does not propose to bargain over any subjects prohibited under Wisconsin Statute § 111.70(4)(mb), including but not limited to: salary schedules, pay schedules, automatic pay progressions (step movement), supplemental compensation, premium pay, merit pay, performance pay, benefits, working conditions, or any other factor or condition of employment other than total base wages.

### **BARGAINING UNIT**

This proposal applies to all employees represented by the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association (MTEA) for purposes of collective bargaining under Wisconsin Statute § 111.70, including teachers and other certificated instructional staff.

Approximate number of employees: 6,500

### **PROPOSAL**

MPS proposes three alternative options for base wage increases for the contract period July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. All three options will increase base wages for all employees in the bargaining unit by 2.63% by January 1, 2027.

### **OPTION A: JANUARY IMPLEMENTATION**

This Option A results in a delayed increase to the base wage amount effective January 1, 2027.

Effective January 1, 2027:

- Base wage increase: 2.63%

### **OPTION B: PHASED BY EMPLOYEE CATEGORY**

Effective July 1, 2026:

- Hourly MTEA employees: 2.63% base wage increase

Effective January 1, 2027:

- Hourly MTEA employees: No additional increase (already received 2.63% on July 1)
- Salaried MTEA employees (including teachers): 2.63% base wage increase

Definition: “Hourly employees” are those paid on an hourly basis as designated in the District’s payroll system. “Salaried employees” are those paid on an annual salary basis.

### **OPTION C: SPLIT IMPLEMENTATION**

Effective July 1, 2026:

- Base wage increase: 1.50%
- Applied to total base wages for all employees in the MTEA bargaining unit

Effective January 1, 2027:

- Additional base wage increase: 1.13%

### **DURATION**

This proposal covers the period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 (one year).

### **FISCAL CONTEXT**

MPS provides the following fiscal context for informational purposes only. This information is not subject to negotiation and does not form part of this base wage proposal:

- MPS is addressing a \$46 million structural deficit between revenues and expenses
- Referendum revenue will sunset by fall 2028 with no additional new revenue thereafter
- State aid has not kept pace with inflation
- The phased implementation options address MPS’s fiscal constraints while ultimately providing the full 2.63% CPI increase to all employees

This fiscal information is provided for transparency but does not alter MPS’s legal obligation to bargain in good faith on base wages within the CPI cap.

### **GOOD FAITH BARGAINING**

MPS is committed to bargaining in good faith to reach agreement on total base wages. MPS presents these three options as its opening proposal and looks forward to hearing MTEA’s counterproposal and engaging in productive discussions.

MPS recognizes that MTEA may have a different perspective on the appropriate timing and implementation of base wage increases, and we are prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue on these options.

**MEET AND CONFER**

While this proposal is limited to base wages as required by Act 10, MPS remains committed to collaborative relationships with MTEA and our employees. After the conclusion of base wage negotiations, MPS invites MTEA to participate in voluntary meet-and-confer discussions on operational and policy matters of mutual interest, including but not limited to:

- Salary schedules and compensation systems
- Professional development opportunities
- Employee handbook provisions
- Working conditions and operational procedures
- Other matters as mutually agreed

These meet-and-confer discussions will be scheduled separately, properly noticed under the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, and will not result in a binding collective bargaining agreement. Rather, they will inform Board policy decisions on these matters.

**RESPONSE REQUESTED**

MPS requests that MTEA provide its written counterproposal as soon as practicable.

If you have any questions regarding this proposal or wish to discuss scheduling for bargaining sessions, please contact:

Domenico Maniscalco  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
Milwaukee Public Schools  
Phone: (414) 475-8343  
Email: maniscd@milwaukee.k12.wi.us

MPS looks forward to productive negotiations and to reaching agreement on a successor collective bargaining agreement that recognizes the professionalism of our educators while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Sincerely,



Dr. Brenda Cassellius  
Superintendent Milwaukee Public Schools

cc: Domenico Maniscalco, Chief Human Resources Officer, Milwaukee Public Schools  
Robert W. Sanders, Assistant City Attorney

## **ATTACHMENT A: LEGAL NOTICE**

This proposal is submitted pursuant to Wisconsin Statute § 111.70(4)(cm) and is subject to the limitations on collective bargaining imposed by 2011 Wisconsin Act 10.

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute § 111.70(4)(mb), MPS is prohibited from bargaining collectively with respect to any factor or condition of employment except total base wages. This prohibition includes but is not limited to:

- Overtime, premium pay, merit pay, performance pay
- Supplemental compensation
- Pay schedules and salary schedules
- Automatic pay progressions (step movement)
- Benefits (health insurance, pensions, etc.)
- Working conditions and workplace rules
- Staffing levels and class sizes
- Professional development requirements
- Evaluation procedures
- Any other condition of employment

The percentage increase in total base wages agreed upon through collective bargaining may not exceed the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index, which is currently 2.63% for agreements beginning July 1, 2026.

Any increase above the CPI ceiling would require approval by referendum pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes §§ 66.0506 and 118.245.

This proposal constitutes MPS's good faith effort to bargain over the sole mandatory subject of bargaining under current Wisconsin law.