

Dear MIEA Members,

I hope this email finds you well and that you were able to spend some time relaxing and rejuvenating during the past week.

Many of us have been working in person since the school year started even while our bargaining team was still trying to get the MISD safety mitigations in place. Others of us won't be in person for a couple of months if at all. No matter when you are asked to re-enter the schools, we know that this is just one more change and adjustment which adds to the stress of this unparalleled year. I hope we can all recognize and acknowledge what is the best possible scenario for us may not be ideal to someone else.

Every one of us has been affected by the pandemic in some way: maybe at work, in our personal lives or both. During times like we now find ourselves in, it is more important than ever that we stick together and support each other. Divisiveness will not make our voices stronger or lift us up; our jobs, students, work demands and working conditions are all unique and we all need to work together to create the best possible situation for our students and our fellow MISD staff. Our working conditions have never been the same across our membership, and they will not be now during this pandemic. Thinking otherwise will not help us move forward. It is at times like this that all of us need to work together to ensure that our bargained Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), and the safety mitigations we all need are in place and are followed every day.

That means filling out attestations daily and following the guidelines from the CDC for Schools providing in-person instruction. See below for some highlights with links embedded.

[Essential Elements of Safe K-12 School In-person Instruction](#)

Mitigation strategies to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in schools regardless of the level of community transmission, all schools should use and layer mitigation strategies. Five key mitigation strategies are essential to safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to mitigate COVID-19 transmission in schools:

- Universal and correct use of masks
- Physical distancing
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the health department

According to the CDC, schools should prioritize two mitigation strategies:

1. ***Universal and correct use of masks should be required*** at all levels of community transmission. Require consistent and correct use of face masks, by all students, teachers, and staff to prevent SARS-CoV-2 ***transmission through respiratory droplets***.
2. ***Physical distancing (at least 6 feet) should be maximized to the greatest extent possible***. To ensure physical distancing, schools should establish policies and implement structural interventions to promote physical distance of at least 6 feet between people. ***Cohorting*** or podding is recommended to minimize exposure across the school environment.
3. All mitigation strategies provide some level of protection, but layered strategies implemented concurrently provide the greatest level of protection. ***CDC's K-12 Schools COVID-19 Mitigation Toolkit***

Our MIEA bargaining team has been working hard on behalf of all of us to mitigate the safety risks and the working condition impacts of this pandemic and the MISD plans, but we know that we will not be able to meet every member's needs or wants this year no matter how hard we try or how many hours we put into our bargaining. Please know that regardless of whether your request is ultimately met, we are listening to every member who contacts us. Bargaining does not guarantee us what each person wants, but it does give a voice at the table and the ability to bring our needs and concerns to our employer. In addition to reaching out to your MIEA leadership, talk to your administrators; they are at the bargaining table and need to know what you are concerned about as well. Neither MISD, nor your MIEA bargainers, can hear you if you are not reaching out to us with your questions, concerns, solutions, etc. If you feel that your voice is not being heard, please reach out to your building reps, bargaining team members or me. Together we are stronger!

Seniority Ranking (Classified & Certificated)

On another topic, I also want to bring to all members' attention that it is the time of year when all classified and certificated staff need to check the seniority ranking lists that the district sends out every year. This year, it is especially important as there are potential financial adverse effects of this pandemic to the district, and MISD is discussing possible staffing reductions or program cuts for next school year. Please be aware that all experience has been calculated through the 2019-20 contract year only and only staff with current Continuing or Provisional contracts will be listed.

Certificated:

- Now: Verify that you have been correctly placed on the attached lists.
- By March 1st: Contact Human Resources if you wish to be removed from any list to which you have been assigned and/or you dispute the ranking shown.
- By April 15: A finalized list will be made available. (*Contact Kathleen Long (206) 236-3318 if you have questions*).

Classified: As a requirement of the Classified Collective Bargaining Agreement, experience ranking lists, by category, have been developed for your review. Pursuant to the bargained agreement, **experience will not begin to accrue until the employee's fourth year of regular service** and then all previous regular service will be applied to the employee, retroactively. If an employee's experience is not listed on the sheets provided it may be due to this reason (less than

four total years of regular service in that category). [Also, please be aware that the total years of experience is calculated through the end of the last school year \(2019-20\).](#)

- Contact Human Resources **prior to March 22** if you have questions regarding your experience and/or ranking.

[Optional Hours \(Classified only\)](#)

Classified employees are entitled to 24 optional hours and 26 tech. hours in recognition of the time and effort that you have, will, and are putting into working remotely and in the hybrid model you will be given 3 tech. hours. You will need to submit the proper forms. I attached a training opportunity to this email and also here is a link to some from NEA (<https://www.nea.org/espconference>). Contact HR if you have questions about the optional hours or tech. training hours.

[MAPL Hours \(Certs only\)](#)

In recognition of the time and effort that you have, will, and are putting into working remotely and in this hybrid model, you will now receive 15 MAPL hours as long as you fill out the form. (assuming you are 1.0 FTE). If you already completed the full 15 prior to 2/3/21, you will be granted 7.5 hours more if you fill out the form). If you completed some, but not all of your MAPL hours, you will be given the balance of what is left up to 15 total MAPL hours. You must report dates/times outside the workday for MAPL (such as summer, winter, mid-winter or spring break dates or times after 4pm only).

I hope this information is helpful to you and that you had a restful winter break! Please reach out if you have questions or information to share with our bargaining team.

[Resources:](#)

Main Covid-19 MOU:

- <https://www.mercerislandschools.org/cms/lib/WA01001855/Centricity/Domain/1579/2020%20Covid19%20Bargain%20MOU%202020.9.3.pdf>

Other MOUs:

- <https://www.mercerislandschools.org/Domain/1579>

Stay well and informed.

Sincerely,
Sally

Sally Loeser

President, Mercer Island Education Association

sally.loeser@washingtonea.org

206-550-6853

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