

## DFT To Vote Via Internet

DFT members will make history when they vote by Internet or telephone in the March delegate election. The membership approved a bylaw change at the Dec. 8 membership meeting to allow electronic voting.

The DFT Election Committee sought the change for the March election of delegates to the AFT Michigan convention in April and the AFT national convention in July. Both conventions will be held in Detroit.

The Election Committee initiated the change to allow members to vote from their homes, personal computers or telephones. In recent years, DFT elections have been costly due to paper ballots, postage, and the need for runoff elections. In some cases it cost the DFT in excess of \$60,000 to vote for six officers, eleven board members and three trustees.

In addition, results in the past had been contested, though later were proven accurate. Electronic voting, however, addresses complaints about the old procedures.

If a building rep failed to sign the “roster” or turn in ballots on time, those vote didn’t count. This will no longer happen.

Some people accidentally voted twice by voting straight ticket and for individuals – voiding their vote. This will no longer be possible. People who were not members cast ballots that they thought would be counted. Now non-members will not get a PIN number and will not be able to vote. If an error is suspected, they will have a chance to correct it before the election.

In some schools building reps who were candidates for office were handling ballots. This will no longer be possible.

“This should go very smoothly,” Election Committee chair Mary Helen D’Angelo said at the Jan. 19 membership meeting. “It is a more secure way to vote. The results should come back faster and it’s a lot cheaper.”

Members will get instructions in the mail on how to vote via Internet or phone. Members also will get a PIN number in the mail. They will need both a PIN number and their DPS ID number in order to vote. To vote, a member needs to be “in good standing,” meaning dues paid to date as of Jan. 30, 2012. If you have any questions about your membership status, call dues clerk Barbara Downey at 313-875-3500 ext. 772.

The Election Committee selected the American Arbitration Association to conduct the election. Representatives from AAA will be at the Feb. 9 membership meeting to answer questions about electronic voting.

## Academic Engagement Soars at A.L. Holmes

A.L. Holmes School, just north of downtown Detroit, sits in a prairie of vacant lots and wood-frame houses in stages of disrepair. Its students reflect this forgotten neighborhood.

“The kids here have huge deficits,” says Holmes math coach Delores Alexander. “Our scores are low, low, low.” The school is a “priority school,” which means it is on the list of the lowest achieving in the district. It also is a SIG school — a grant that allows it to lengthen instruction time and intensify activities for the students.

After several stints with programs that were not a good fit, the staff is excited about its newest program, called blended learning. It effectively “blends” a classroom teacher, a virtual teacher, online instruction and classroom instruction.

Since September the staff has seen something extraordinary — the level of student engagement in learning has skyrocketed. Holmes is the only school in the state using such a program and it seems promising.

“If you read the research,” Alexander says, “you need the combination. The scores in all virtual or all classroom instruction tend to be lower than a combination of both.”

Holmes students in third- through eighth-grade use netbooks, headphones, a smart-board and their teacher for online instruction of math and literacy. Students at differing levels of ability can fall back to the aid of the teacher, or keep going with two virtual teachers — one in California and one in Washington.

A \$2.9 million grant over the next three years supports the program conceived by Matchbook Learning. The curriculum is provided through Connection Academy. A core of six Holmes teachers and principal Leenet Campbell-Williams clocked many hours writing the grant and implementing the first phases of the program.

“It’s presented as being less work but it’s



**Math coach Delores Alexander with A. L. Holmes students.**

more work to get it started,” Alexander said. “If you asked the staff in September or October, they probably would have said it’s more trouble than it’s worth.” And still there’s a lot of work because of the daily data collected. But one can see the benefit of that teamwork and the ability to have instant feedback on the benchmark exams, thanks to a test scanner.

“It’s going to make a difference,” said Campbell-Williams. “What’s important to us is to see our kids succeed.”

Alexander, a 19-year Detroit teacher, is excited about the program and the school.

“Our roof leaks, our basement floods, the plaster is falling off the walls,” she said. “But we probably have the most innovative program in the district.”

## Members in 2009 Layoff Dispute Get Paid

Success! The DFT finally received checks for members who were improperly laid off in June of 2009. The checks came in at Christmas. Members have been filing into the DFT office over the last few weeks to pick up the checks, some quite sizable.

“It was nice to play Santa Claus a couple of days after Christmas,” said DFT President Keith Johnson, who opened the DFT office on Dec. 28 to release the checks.

“Our members were very appreciative,” Johnson said. “I’m very appreciative of their patience.” In one case, a member had no transportation to pick up the check. Johnson said, “No problem. I’m going to bring it to you.”

In February 2010, in lieu of going to arbitration, the Detroit Public Schools agreed to pay members who were laid off in June of 2009 without the required 60 days notice and were not back at the start of the 2009-10 school year. The district paid about 100 members in July 2010 and is now paying another 200.

**At right: DFT President Keith Johnson presents a check to 18-year Detroit teacher Jill Amons.**



## COPE \$100 Campaign Taking Off

Cha-ching!

COPE’s \$100 campaign – to raise money to support policies and people who support teachers – got a cash boost at the Jan. 19 membership meeting. In addition to sales of Coney dogs to benefit COPE, members pulled out their C-notes and their checkbooks to donate.

“I’m putting my money where my mouth is,” said DFT President Keith Johnson as he waved his check and called COPE chairperson Ivy Bailey up to the podium. That spurred several members to bring out their checkbooks.

In all, the COPE fund collected more than \$900 in a span of ten minutes. Mumford High School collected \$330.

COPE – the DFT’s political action committee — is asking every DFT member to contribute \$100 to the fund by June 2012. The request comes on the heels of a disastrous year in Lansing and Detroit. The year saw the dismantling of teacher rights and the promise by Republican legislators to strip away more rights in the coming year.

After banking abuses ruined the economy, state legislators continue to punish teachers and public employees for those policies. COPE intends to put the money behind candidates

who support the hard work and sacrifice teachers are making in one of America’s hardest hit urban landscapes.



**COPE chair Ivy Bailey accepts a check from LaShawn Sims, finishing her \$100 contribution.**



# Updates . . .

## Retirements Announced

Detroit teacher Beatriz Zuniga has announced her retirement. If you have retired in the last six months and would like it announced, please call the editor at 313-875-6776.

## Catherine Blackwell Turns 92

The birthday party at the Catherine Blackwell Institute on Dec. 8 was so extraordinary, it even unsettled the 92-year-old honoree. Catherine Blackwell turned 92 at her namesake Detroit school amid African dancers, cheerleaders, birthday card readings and a video tribute.



**Catherine Blackwell with teacher Cathy Wilkins.**

and attended Northwestern High School, Howard University and Wayne State University. She was a performing arts teacher for more than 40 years. Blackwell also is an Africa enthusiast and has visited the continent more than 60 times. She has one of the largest collections of African American art in the United States.

When the school played Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely," Blackwell was speechless. Instead, she wiped away tears.

WDIV-TV evening news anchor Carmen Harlan, a Blackwell graduate, gave a keynote address.

"I wouldn't miss this for anything," Harlan said. "She was one of my favorite teachers."

Blackwell was born in Detroit

# Can I Expect to Get My 3% Back?

By Mark O'Keefe  
DFT Executive Vice President

Many members have heard that state workers are getting back the 3 percent that has been withheld from their paychecks. Unfortunately, that's not us. However, we still expect to win our case.

Effective July 1, 2010, the state began deducting 3 percent from our paychecks for a Health Care Trust. The 3 percent was deducted to fund our health care benefits in retirement.

State workers as well as teachers were subjected to this new paycheck deduction. Both groups sued and the state workers have already won their suit and been refunded their payments. Their suit hinged on the fact that state workers' pay is set by the Civil Service Commission per the state constitution.

Since this doesn't apply to school employees, our lawsuit is separate and still in appeals court. Our suit is based on the fact that they are charging us for health care benefits during retirement that are not guaranteed when we get there. In essence, they're charging us for something we may not get later.

We won our lawsuit at the trial court level. The district has appealed and whoever loses is likely to appeal to the Michigan Supreme Court. In the meantime, because of the lawsuit, the state is holding our 3 percent deductions in an escrow account.

If we win, we expect all deductions to be refunded, like the state, along with any interest earned. The big question is: if we win, what happens next? State lawmakers have indicated they might do something similar to the state employees when they won their suit.

That is, the mandatory 3 percent deduction is gone. But it is replaced by a voluntary 4 percent deduction if a state worker wants to be eligible for state health care benefits in retirement. If she opts out, she will not receive health care benefits in retirement.

Without the 4 percent payments, there is no funding for the benefits, and that is not sustainable.

In summary, if we win, we expect to get the 3 percent back with interest and a new optional 4 percent to take its place.



**Mark O'Keefe**

## THE DETROIT teacher

The Detroit Teacher is the official publication of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers Local 231, AFL-CIO. Member of the Union Teacher Press Association, International Labor Press Association & Michigan Labor Press.

Editor — Margaret Weertz  
mweertz@dft231.com  
313-875-6776

The Detroit Federation of Teachers  
2875 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit, Michigan 48202  
(313) 875-3500

# Preserve Government of the People

Ron Seigel

**W**riter's Note: This is a condensation of an article, which appeared in the Dec. 27, 2011 issue of *The Detroit Legal News*. Perhaps it indicates that some of our legislators might do well to brush up on their old high school history and civics courses.

Nearly 175 years ago Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address called on Americans to assure that "government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Today government of the people and by the people is vanishing from many Michigan cities. Our state legislators are blatantly ignoring the principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence on which our nation was founded: that government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed.

In many cities the state has abruptly taken away power from officials democratically chosen by the residents and re-

placed their authority with emergency financial managers who were never voted into office and often do not live in the cities they rule.

This happens when cities fail to have a balanced budget. This year the Michigan State Legislature passed a law giving even more power to those financial managers.

One must add that since the administration of President George W. Bush, the federal government has been unable to balance its own budget. One wonders how the conservative Republicans and the Tea Party members would respond if the U.N. or Red China (whom we owe much of our debt) were to suggest appointing a financial manager over America and taking away authority from President Obama and House Speaker Boehner.

U.S. Congressman John Conyers, a ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, who represents large portions of Detroit, wrote a letter asking U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to examine whether the exercise of this power

by the state represents a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

He pointed out that Article 4 of the U.S. Constitution specifies that each state shall have a republican [representative] form of government.

Conyers also suggested the emergency manager system appears to violate the federal Voting Rights Act "which prohibits procedures that discriminate on the basis of color." However applied, the emergency manager system would certainly have its principle effect in eroding voting rights in areas with lower incomes.

It is time for people of all political persuasions and all political parties to oppose replacing elected officials with emergency managers. Call President Obama at the White House Comment Line at (202) 456-1111 and urge him and the Attorney General to challenge Michigan laws. Work to get a referendum on the most recent law and a constitutional amendment banning interference with government of the people, by the people, and for the people.



**THIS CHRISTMAS** — Allecia Gates, Cody's vocal music teacher and a Detroit teacher for 18 years, put on a spectacular winter concert titled "What Christmas Means To Me!" Students and parents enjoyed morning and evening concerts Dec. 21 where students performed impressive solos, duets and choreographed dances. Students Kelsey Smith, Christina Smith, Dezmond Nelson and Surgio Surgeon performed solos ranging from "Silent Night" to "This Christmas." In past years, Gates had an assistant to help with the concerts. But this year she performed a solo as concert coordinator and, as usual, did a brilliant job.

## Holiday Extravaganza at Greenfield Union



Each grade level performed with song and dance at Greenfield Union's Dec. 14 holiday concert. Preschool teacher Joyce Hendrix (pictured at left with principal Beverly Campbell, center, and associate teacher Thelma Starks) pulled together extraordinarily creative puppet costumes for their students.





**Duke Ellington art student Christopher Goines with art teacher Brunetta McMillian.**

## Arts, Beats and Eats at Duke Ellington

Duke Ellington hosted a holiday festival with something fun and cultural for everyone, including live music. Not to be missed in the corner of the gym was an outstanding collection of artwork created by Duke Ellington students from the first half of the year.

Art teacher Brunetta McMillian has been introducing students to major artists like Jacob Lawrence, different genres, and integrating art with other curricula.

The result: a beautiful and wide-ranging collection. Included in the display was an artistic study on bats, creating patterns based on math equations, and Jacob Lawrence cutouts with a “hat” theme. The hat pieces involved working on a grid and enlarging a small picture of a hat, recreating it, and adding a blouse or shirt to it.

McMillian’s 16 years with Detroit schools has inspired many students and artists. Several pieces from the latest collection will be entered in the annual Student Art Exhibit at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Christopher Goines, 14, is a budding artist. “I love it because I’m good at it,” he said. “I didn’t know how to paint last year.”

In her gentle way, McMillian gets the students to explore their creative instincts.

“I love to see when the light comes on.”

## DFT Calendar for Election of Delegates to:

**2012 AFT Convention Delegates**  
(20 plus Executive Board)

**2012 AFT Michigan Convention Delegates**  
(20 plus Executive Board)

**Jan. 19, 2012 (Thursday)**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Nominating procedures and schedule of appropriate dates are announced.

**Jan. 20, 2012 (Friday)**

(Announcement of elections posted on website and sent to schools.)

**OPEN NOMINATIONS:** Nominations and acceptances may be mailed to P.O. Box 02010, North End Station, Detroit, MI, 48202 OR hand delivered to the DFT office during office hours.

**Feb. 2, 2012 (Thursday)**

**CLOSE NOMINATIONS:** Nominations and acceptances must be at the P.O. Box by 4:00 p.m. or hand delivered by 5:00 p.m. to the DFT office.

**Feb. 6, 2012 (Monday)**

**UNOFFICIAL LIST** of candidates mailed to schools, home of nominees, and posted on the DFT website.

**Feb. 9, 2012 (Thursday)**

**DEADLINE** for filing grievances regarding nominations and acceptances. Grievances heard by Election Committee following the membership meeting.

**Feb. 13, 2012 (Monday)**

\*March 12, 2012 (if grievance)

**OFFICIAL LIST** of candidates sent to schools, candidates, AAA and posted on the DFT website.

**March 1, 2012 (Thursday)**

\*March 22, 2012 (if grievance)

**PIN NUMBERS** sent to eligible members.

**March 1, 2012 (Thursday)**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD** hears grievance(s) appeals, if any, from the Election Committee.

**March 8, 2012 (Thursday)**

**MEMBERSHIP** hears grievance(s), if any.

**March 12, 13 & 14, 2012 (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday)**

\*March 26-29, 2012 (If grievance)

**VOTING** by phone or internet.

**March 16, 2012 (Friday)**

\*March 30, 2012 (if grievance)

**RESULTS** posted on DFT website, and in the DFT office. Results also will be sent to schools.

**Candidate Eligibility: Jan. 30, 2011**

**Voter Eligibility: Jan. 20, 2012**

# THE DETROIT NEWSMAKERS

## Detroit Artist Olaymi Dabls Visits Spain

By Charlene Uresy

Detroiters know that Detroit is a great city leading the way with innovation and creativity for the world. This has been demonstrated through music and the auto industry (giving the world the middle class).

Art is another creative expression that is sweeping Detroit, putting the world on notice. Olaymi Dabls is a storyteller and the founder of the MBAD African Bead Museum in Detroit. He tells the history of African people through painting, sculpture and installation art. He is a leading figure in this Renaissance explosion in Detroit.

Dabls visited Spain School in December to talk about his work and the importance of knowing who you are. He projected pictures of African beads, symbolism, colors, and ancient African languages.

This was the first time most of the students had been exposed to this history — opening their eyes to what is foreign but also what is all about them. His lecture left them a curiosity to want to learn more.

Dabls has been featured in the Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, Hour magazine, B.L.A.C. magazine, the November 2011 issue of W magazine, and countless other publications. Seven documentary films have showcased his thoughts and work. And he is a recipient of the 2011 Kresge Artist Fellows Award.

Spain understood the significance of hosting a leading figure in the world of art and a prominent player in the movement to bring Detroit back to its prominence.

**Olaymi Dabls (back left) with students.**



**Spain teacher Benjamin Harris, Olaymi Dabls, teacher Vivian Johnson, teacher Warner Owens, and principal Ronald Alexander.**



## The Brain Games at Spain

By Charlene Uresy

Spain School has a new Academic Games coach — sixth-grade math teacher Rahjinah Johnson. Johnson has continued the tradition of success for Spain's Academic Games team. The team recently placed second in a competition with other Detroit, charter and suburban schools.

The team didn't skip a beat with the transition of leadership, meeting every week to have fun, and learn strategies, good sportsmanship and the importance of playing to win. The tournaments are once a month throughout



metro Detroit. Students must get there on their own, demonstrating the dedication they have for their team and Spain School.

The team members are having a great time with their new coach. It is evident as they walk the halls of Spain proudly. Principal Ronald Alexander and the staff are equally proud of the team.

Academic Games is a program designed to make learning fun for students, promote critical thinking, and learn mathematical strategies to create balanced equations.





Literacy coach Dorothy Robinson, Principal Jason Patton, Steven Gordon, Simone Fondren, Alisha Navarro, Iran Neely, Asia Anderson and English Language Arts teacher Jacqueline Blakely.

## Sampson Takes First Place in Debate

A team of five students from Sampson Academy won first place in a debate Dec. 17 at Eastern Michigan University. The middle school students beat out teams from two middle schools in Farmington Hills.

The students argued why it is reasonable to use animals in research. They were coached by ELA teacher Jacqueline Blakely and literacy coach Dorothy Robinson.

“Ms. Blakely was a great inspiration and motivation to the students,” Robinson said. Blakely and Robinson took the team to the Detroit Main Library to do research – the class’s first field trip.

The students’ research was the deciding factor, said Sampson principal Jason Patton. “They were the only team that stated their sources,” he said.

One student — Iran Neely — won two medals at the competition, a gold medal and “Best Speaker.” The other winning Sampson students are: Steven Gordon, Simone Fondren, Alisha Navarro, and Asia Anderson. Patton hopes this honor will motivate more schools in the district to reinstitute the debate program.

“The kids did a great job,” Patton said, “not only representing Sampson but the entire district.”

## Making Slime and Blubber at Clippert Academy

By Kathy Meloche

Clippert Academy hosted a Math and Science Night Dec. 6 sponsored by the Cranbrook Science Center. The event was a great success with



nearly 300 people attending. Students and their families were engaged in math and science activities at 11 stations.

The stations included activities in magnetism, tower and arch construction, simple machines, making slime and flubber, light energy, bugs (including live Madagascar cockroaches), animal identification based on skulls and pelts, catapults, fingerprint analysis, and a Van de Graff Generator.

At every station the students and parents had the opportunity to use hands-on manipulatives and many stations allowed them to create, test, and take home their creations. The students, parents, younger siblings, and staff had a wonderful time.

The Van de Graff generator and the slime proved to be the most popular stations. The students are already asking when the next Math and Science Night is going to occur — truly a testament to the night’s success.





Music therapist Richard Cross (center) receives a \$500 check from Cody Cagwin (left), licensed representative of The Cagwin Agency, with Turning Point principal Gary Taylor.

## Turning Point Library Gets Infusion of Books

By DeLisle Horton-Willis

Turning Point Academy/ Johnson McKinney Center — the eastside school for emotionally impaired students — received a \$500 book grant from the MEEMIC Foundation for the Future of Education. The foundation is the charitable arm of the MEEMIC Insurance Company for education employees. It has been giving back to schools since 1992. The school's music therapist, Richard Cross, sought the grant from the foundation.

The purpose of his request was to enrich the aging school library, which has an average book age of 15 years. The new books will enhance classroom instruction and create a variety of current and relevant reading material. In addition, the books are expected to influence extended reading and improve academic proficiency in core subjects.

The Turning Point staff was excited to accept the award and extends a heartfelt thank you to Cody Cagwin and Richard Cross for their efforts on behalf of the students.

## Breithaupt Inducts Students into National Technical Honor Society

By Rosaline Payne-Thompson

Breithaupt Career and Technical Center hosted the 17th annual Induction Ceremony of the National Technical Honor Society in its beautifully decorated atrium Nov. 30. The National Technical Honor Society was founded in 1984 to recognize outstanding students in the career and technical fields.

The community service organization is student directed. Inductees wore white robes with purple stoles, while the returning members wore purple robes with a silver stole.

The keynote speaker was Chef Walter Banks, a Breithaupt alumnus and graduate of Johnson & Wales University. Banks is manager of the Culinary Arts program at Romulus High School. His words of encouragement were inspirational and thought provoking.

Twenty-four qualified students (with a 3.5 G.P.A. or higher in a career/technical program) were inducted by five returning members and officers who have maintained their status for two years. Members will have community service projects and lead tours of the career tech center for elementary, middle and high school students. We look forward to a very productive and fun filled year.



Inductees Kristen Powell, Mariah Hill, Alexis Alston, NTHS Advisor Rosalind Payne-Thompson, and Maria Castro.

## Spain Gives, Gives and Gives

By Charlene Uresy

Lakia Wilson is Spain School's counselor for more than 700 students. She has another responsibility -- leader of Girl Scouts Troop 99128. The troop's Christmas service project was to collect food to make a Christmas basket for a needy family. Troop 99128 wanted to help more families so they enlisted help from the entire school. Second-grade teacher Rita Carter-Brown was the catalyst for collecting and organizing the food.

Troop 99128 drafted a list of food it believed was worthy for an entire day of Christmas Day eating. Their list was very specific, asking for breakfast cereal, sugar, canned milk, flour, peanut butter, cake mix, frosting,

Kool-aid, and food that was celebratory for the holiday. Food was collected for breakfast, lunch and dinner!

Spain came through with the spirit of giving. The baskets were embellished with turkeys donated by principal Ronald Alexander and retired language arts teacher Norbert Kidd. Literacy coach Tiffany Taylor-Tait donated books and stuffed animals.

Wilson and the teachers chose 16 families. When they arrived to pick up their boxes, they were overwhelmed with gratitude. The boxes were so heavy — too heavy to walk home for the families without cars -- that coach Andre Harlan volunteered to drive them home. One parent was overheard saying, "Thank God for the schools."



Spain families, students and teachers Lakia Wilson and Rita Carter-Brown (far right).



# Grants

## Math and Science

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is offering financial support through its Mathematics Education Trust to help elementary schools develop in-service education in math. The funds may be used for honoraria and expenses for consultants, substitutes, materials and conference and workshop registrations, but not travel or equipment. Grants up to \$4,000 are available for preK-5 teachers. NCTM membership must be current. Deadline: May 4, 2012. For info, visit [nctm@nctm.org](http://nctm@nctm.org).

## Teen Drivers

In response to the alarming statistics regarding teen mortality rates from car crashes, Toyota and Discovery Education are inviting educators of high school students to enter the Toyota Teen Driver Educator's Challenge. The challenge asks high school teachers to create an action plan to promote safe driving among teens. The grand prize is \$5,000 to a teacher to implement his or her action plan. Deadline: Feb. 16, 2012. For info, visit [ToyotaTeenDriver@discovery.com](mailto:ToyotaTeenDriver@discovery.com).

## Essay Contest

The Legacy Project invites entries into the Listen to a Life contest. The contest requires young people ages 8 to 18 to interview a person over 50 – a grandparent, nursing home resident, mentor or neighbor – and learn about their hopes and dreams, how they achieved their goals, overcame obstacles, and how dreams may have changed over time. The young interviewer then writes a 300-word essay. Prizes worth up to \$25,000 are available. Deadline: March 30, 2012. For info, visit [www.legacy.project.org](http://www.legacy.project.org).

## Character Building

Red Robin Foundation's U-ACT stands for Unbridled Acts – random acts of kindness. The program supports schools that exemplify kindness to others and show support in their community through Unbridled Acts. The goal of the program is to foster a sense of neighborliness inside and outside of school. K-8 schools may submit a request for grants ranging from \$150 to \$5,000. Deadline: March 31, 2012. For info, visit [foundation@redrobin.com](http://foundation@redrobin.com).

## Research Grants

The Mathematics Education Trust (MET) and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is administering a grant that provides financial support for a collaboration of teachers to increase understanding of math in the preK-8 classroom. The action research must take place between June 1-Aug. 31, 2012. Grant deadline is May 4, 2012. The maximum grant is \$3,000. For info, visit [nctm@nctm.org](http://nctm@nctm.org).

## Librarians

The Ezra Jack Keats Foundation offers mini-grants up to \$500 to support creative programs in public school libraries. Deadline: March 15, 2012. Apply online through [foundation@ezra-jack-keats.org](mailto:foundation@ezra-jack-keats.org).

## Math Teachers

The National Council of Mathematics Teachers (NCTM), through the Mathematics Education Trust, invites proposals from current math teachers in grades preK-6 who wish to enhance their professional development to submit proposals for a grant to further their education. Applicants must have been teaching math at least 50 percent of the time

for at least three years and must be NCTM members. Up to \$24,000 will be awarded. Deadline: May 4, 2012. For info, visit [nctm@nctm.org](mailto:nctm@nctm.org).

## AV Equipment

The Hall Research T-Squared Program was designed to give educational institutions the chance to receive audio visual equipment manufactured by Hall Research. The grant is named T-Squared for Teaching through Technology. Public k-12 schools may apply for the free A/V control equipment. The deadline is ongoing. For info, go to [www.hallresearch.com](http://www.hallresearch.com).

## Financial Literacy

The Comerica Charitable Foundation supports financial literacy programs for K-12 students, and supports scholarships for students with income needs going into business, finance and growth industries. Deadline: March 15, 2012. For info, visit [www.comerica.com](http://www.comerica.com).

## Athletics

The Easton Sports Development Foundation provides up to \$25,000 in grants intended to benefit archery and bow hunting. ESDF partners with the National Archery in School Program for grants to schools. Visit [www.nasparchery.com/activea.asp](http://www.nasparchery.com/activea.asp).

## Musical Instruments

The Fender Music Foundation gives grants consisting of lightly used musical instruments to people of any age who would not ordinarily have the chance to play music. For info, visit [www.fendermusicfoundation.org](http://www.fendermusicfoundation.org).

## Keeping that Toothy Grin at J. R. King

Some basics aren't so basic. That's why Vanessa Parnell asked dental hygienist Sharon Collum of Great Expression in Ferndale to give an oral hygiene demonstration to kindergartners at John R. King Academic and Performing Arts Academy. Parnell is a DFT executive board member and a co-leader of the district's Peer Assistance and Review program.

Great Expressions visited J. R. King Dec. 16 and the classrooms of kindergarten teachers Sharita Topps, Leatha Trowell and Cynthia Robinson. The students learned the appropriate number of teeth they should have, when they would lose their baby teeth, and what foods are good or bad for oral health.

"The kids were very eager to use their personal tooth brushes and tooth paste," Parnell said. Great Expressions donated brushes, toothpaste and floss sticks for each student. The teachers followed up with personalized brushing calendars with stickers for each day they brushed their teeth.

The kids played internet games and read short stories and poems relating to tooth care. Some students got to brush Mr. Tooth.

There's never too much to learn about keeping your teeth healthy for a lifetime.



J.R. King teacher Leatha Trowell, dental hygienist Sharon Collum, teacher Sharita Topps, Mr. Tooth Terrence Johnson, Vanessa Parnell, and teacher Cynthia Robinson with kindergartners.



## Marquette Sends Love to Afghanistan

Simple love goes a long way. Marquette elementary students sent heartfelt messages almost 7,000 miles from their school on the far east side of Detroit to the far side of Asia. Marquette teacher Pam Beaudoin approached Kroger, which agreed to donate the cards. The students wanted to thank the soldiers fighting in the Afghanistan war for their sacrifice on the front. Students in Sue Sherman's pre-K class (above) wrapped up their messages and hearts and mailed them Jan. 27 so they could be received by Valentine's Day.



Holidays at Breithaupt — The Breithaupt Career and Technical Center started a winning year for its culinary program, serving community luncheons since the fall. The DFT's Retirees Chapter held its annual holiday luncheon at the festively decorated center with more than 100 retired members attending. Pictured above are DFT Retirees Chapter officers: (front row) secretary Charlene Smith, DFT Executive Vice President Mark O'Keefe, and Richard Berlin, (back row) vice chair Dr. Arthur Divers, chair Jewel Gines, DFT President Keith Johnson, and programs chair Ricardo Thomas.



# A Surprising Visit to DIA

**G**ary Taylor gave no advance notice. As the bus arrived at the Turning Point Academy to take a dozen girls to visit the Detroit International Academy for Young Women, he hopped on.

“You’re coming Mr. Taylor?” they said. “With all of us girls?”

“Who said a man can’t come on the bus,” he replied. The girls at Turning Point, the eastside school for Emotionally Impaired students, were stunned and honored.

More surprises were to come. In a question and answer session with DIA student leaders, an ROTC student at the DIA praised the clean and calm school. A dozen Turning Point students witnessed the confident and articulate DIA seniors ready to launch into college.

“This is my hardest, most stressful year ever,” said DIA senior Destinee Roper. “I’m trying to be at the top of ROTC, student council and college tests.” Roper is taking AP literature, AP physics and other rigorous courses to win entrance to a solid college.

But occasionally, she said, there can be foolishness on the part of students. To that, a Turning Point student sang *her* school’s praises.

“Our kids are not rowdy,” said Martha Foster, a Turning Point junior. “It’s like a regular school.”

Deja Travis, a Turning Point freshman, said, “Turning Point is an EI school. That means emotionally impaired. Last year I came in December and I think I went on 20 field trips.”

All of this pride in Turning Point gave Taylor one of his career highs.

Taylor’s calmness was reflected in the student’s behavior. He said his school’s mission is to teach these vulnerable students how to cope and form their behavior in response to conflicts and crises.

“We’re a therapeutic environment,” he said. “Today was my teachable moment. That was special to me to hear those responses.”



Turning Point social worker Johnnie McCray, teacher Anita Alef, behavior specialist Kathy Hemingway, principal Gary Taylor, teacher aide Tiffany Jackson, DIA social worker Alicia Hickman, transition specialist DeLisle Horton-Willis.

## Calendar

All meetings will be held at 2875 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, unless otherwise noted. Dates and times are subject to change.

### FEBRUARY

- 2** Executive Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 9** General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 13** Special Education Chapter Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 14** School Social Workers Chapter, 4:00 p.m.
- 20-24** Schools Closed, Winter Break
- 21** Retirees Chapter Meeting, 11:30 a.m.

### MARCH

- 1** Executive Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 8** General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 13** School Social Workers Chapter Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- 19** Special Education Chapter Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 20** Retirees Chapter Meeting, 11:30 a.m.