



Superintendent Says: Teachers Dismissed Wrongfully

John Telford, interim DPS superintendent, and DFT President Keith Johnson at a DFT forum Sept. 25.

Dr. John Telford, interim DPS superintendent, heard concerns of DFT members at a forum Sept. 25 at the DFT. He said it was wrong for some teachers not to be recalled based on evaluation scores they had not seen or could not appeal.

“I’m still trying to figure out how in the world anyone can go into a teacher’s classroom who’s been teaching for 20 or 30 years,” he said, “and render an evaluation based on five or 10 minutes of observation.”

Telford was appointed by the Detroit Board of Education shortly after a judge ruled the board has authority over academics. Since then, Telford has been called by more than 100

wrongfully dismissed teachers, he said.

The 77-year-old former teacher and superintendent said he wants to work with teachers and community members to turn the district around.

He urged members to vote for the Collective Bargaining proposal and vote down the Emergency Manager law, which he referred to as “the Governor’s agenda for all urban areas.”

“I’ve been stymied and road blocked trying to get things done,” Telford told the members. But he is confident the Emergency Manager law will be voted down on Nov. 6. “Roberts is going to be working for me,” he said.

Why We Need Collective Bargaining Rights

Following are accounts of two Detroit teachers who were not recalled from layoff. A new state law forbids districts to recall teachers based only on seniority. At the same time, the state mandated yearly evaluations for teachers. Unfortunately, in Detroit the evaluations were done in a haphazard and rushed way. Standards were not spelled out in advance. Yet some teachers were not recalled based on those evaluations.

When the DFT negotiated language to jointly develop an evaluation system, the district repeatedly said, “We don’t want a gotcha evaluation system.” The evaluation system we ended up with was not jointly developed and was a “gotcha.” The dis-

PRINCIPALS ARE NOT DIETIES

PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO LAWSUIT VICTORY

I want to discuss two issues with you; the impending lawsuit against the Emergency Financial Manager over the layoff and recall of teachers, and the power our members are turning over to principals.

First the lawsuit. As president, I am acutely aware of the anxiety experienced by our members who have been unjustly laid off and recalled. They have watched helplessly as new teachers off the street and teachers with less seniority are placed in positions while they languish at home, relying on unemployment compensation and savings (if any) to make ends meet.

President's Report



**Keith
Johnson**

This, of course, is courtesy of the Republican-led legislature eliminating seniority as the determinant on layoff, recall and placement. This also is the result of DPS engaging in an evaluation and placement process that lacks cohesion, consistency and equity.

While I know that everyone wants the DFT to file the suit immediately, I remind you of a basic principal we all learned in college or earlier: **PROPER PREPARATION PREVENTS POOR PERFORMANCE!** We must be meticulous and thorough in our preparation of this lawsuit or **WE WILL LOSE.**

This lawsuit is not a slam dunk. While the evidence of ineptitude, inequity, and inconsistency is glaring, the burden of proof will be on the DFT to prove our case. To that end our attorneys are researching case law, examining the

statute that eliminated seniority rights, and reviewing the unjust treatment of members to build the best case and make sure we leave nothing to chance for the district to defend the indefensible.

We have filed an FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) demand so we know exactly who has been adversely affected.

This lawsuit will be a process, not an event. While our members deserve immediate relief, we are in for a fight and we only have one chance to win it. In the meantime the bills and family obligations continue and our people are struggling.

The events of the past year have rendered many members scared and submissive. Too many of them have bought into the notion that principals have their lives in their hands.

Let me remind you: if you give them dominion over your life then you weaken our strength as a union. Right now our relevance is being tested. Right now many of you believe our union has no power. If you believe that, **WE DON'T!**

You may be the subordinate of the principal but you **ARE NOT SUBSERVIENT!**

The principals are not gods. They



DFT President Keith Johnson with Detroit teacher Ivy Bailey at the Detroit Labor Day Parade.

are not plantation owners and you do not serve at their will and pleasure. They are **NOT** your masters. They are only your supervisors and you must not allow yourselves to be bullied or intimidated by them because you are afraid they will give you a poor evaluation.

Do your job. Do it well. And you will ultimately prevail. This doesn't mean we may not have to fight. But we can't fight for you if you are afraid to stand up and fight for yourself.

You are educated and professional men and women. Compel them to treat and respect you as such. And above all remember: **YOU ARE NEVER ALONE!**

THE DETROIT teacher

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Updates . . .

Holley Sabotchick Retires after 45 Years

After 45 years of serving the Detroit Federation of Teachers, Holley Sabotchick, assistant to the president, has retired. DFT President Keith Johnson gave a testimony to her at the Sept. 13 membership meeting.



Holley Sabotchick

“She started off here when she was 21,” Johnson said.

Sabotchick served as a dues clerk and in other roles before being chosen as assistant to the president for DFT presidents John Elliott, Janna Garrison, Virginia Cantrell and Keith Johnson. She was the go-to person at the union office, as well as the institutional memory, having vast knowledge of the constitution and bylaws, history and practice at the DFT.

“She used to say, ‘You guys complain about the computer system, we had to do everything by hand,’” said Samarrah Thomas, DFT receptionist. “She was an encyclopedia of information.”

“When I came to the DFT she taught me so much,” Johnson said. He recalled a time when Sabotchick told him to be more understanding and tolerant. She said people may not have the same level of nerve as he had to stand up for themselves in the face of administrators.

“She taught me a valuable lesson not just as long as I serve the DFT but as long as I live,” Johnson said.

To honor Sabotchick, her work, and the loyalty she gave the DFT, the union hall erupted in a standing ovation.

More Retirees

The following DFT members have announced their retirements: Karan Booth-Cartwright, Nadine Egnatios, Mary Hall-Rayford, Frank (Farouk) Samona. If you have retired in the last six months and would like it announced, please call the editor at 313-875-6776.

The DFT
is now on
Facebook!
Check us out at
www.facebook.com/DFT231.

Sick Days— A Catch 22

By Edna Reaves, DFT Executive Vice President

Our office has been inundated with calls since the start of the school year inquiring how attendance will be counted this year. The union is seeking answers too.

Last year, the district counted your attendance against you and did not inform you how absences would impact your overall rating score. Many of our members were scored effective on their teaching ability but were negatively impacted by their attendance.

DFT asked how was attendance calculated? Why weren't members told at the beginning of the year how their attendance would be factored in their score?

My sister asked me if it would have made a difference whether one knew or not. She asked, “If you knew your attendance would be impacted, wouldn't you still have been sick?”

I replied, “Sure I would. But if I had a terrible headache, maybe I would have gone to work anyway. I would have been in pain, but I would have forced myself to work full of medication instead of risk losing my job.” I told her that if I had a cold or sore throat, maybe I would have taken some cold medicine and gone to work, at the risk of prolonging my healing process or infecting my students or colleagues with a virus.



Edna Reaves

Just last week a member asked me how she should care for her ailing mother. She wanted to take off work to be with her mother during her last days. She was surprised when I told her she had to apply for the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

FMLA is for employees who are new parents or who need to care for family members with a serious health condition. According to FMLA, a member is entitled to up to 12 weeks within one calendar year to care for a child after childbirth or to care for a sick parent, child or spouse. Please note that “parent” does not include in-laws, but does provide for “loco parentis,” someone who was responsible for you as a child.

According to Roy Robert's edict, if you are out sick four consecutive days, you must apply for FMLA. Failure to apply for FMLA could result in an interruption of your pay. If you have a chronic illness that requires periodic absences you should apply for FMLA. FMLA absences might be unpaid but, by law, should not be counted against you.

Until the union can engage in legitimate negotiations with the district, I advise you to keep track of your job numbers from Subfinder and the purposes of your sick days. This may help identify whether bereavement, prenatal care, jury duty, approved absences, religious holidays and personal business days are counted negatively in your overall score.

According to the district: “Any employee who uses five or more days of unapproved or non-exempt sick leave in a school year will be determined to have used an excessive amount of sick leave.”

Many of our members used to come to work if they were feeling bad, trying to save their days for a serious illness. You are now in a Catch 22 because if you have to use your days, it's counted against you. And if you bank them, you lose them when you retire.

THE DETROIT teacher NEWSMAKERS



Keidan teacher Rochelle Massingill with Paws and a student.

An Open House to Remember

Six-year-old Addison was trailing Paws, until he reached out to hug her. Off she went, intrigued, but no way was she going to touch the six-foot Detroit Tigers mascot.

Finally Tabatha Purifoy, a parent of a student at Keidan Special Education Center, picked up Addison to bring her to his level.

“Paws is so fly,” she said. “She was scared and I don’t want to be scared of nothing.”

Paws rocked Keidan Sept. 18 for a parent and community back-to-school party. Each student got a bright orange Tigers T-shirt, face painting, treats and other activities. The event also aimed to welcome parents to the school.

Paws lost no time high-fiving, hugging and dancing with students. The students, completely mesmerized by the orange giant, enjoyed the day.



The Importance of

This new mural was painted last week by North Carolina at the intersection of E. Grand Boulevard and St. Antoine education organizations with ties to public schools. He painted of the Detroit Design Festival.

Detroit Teacher Finds Therapy Through Writing

Lionel Scott didn’t know what to do with the pain. A 14-year-old wife fostered ran away. And never returned. The only relief he found was writing. “It really hurt me,” the 18-year Detroit teacher said. “I didn’t feel any pain till I sat down and started writing.”

Out of that self-therapy came a book of poems and song lyrics titled “Cry.” Scott published the book this year and it is available through Amazon. The book aims to help men express emotion over loss.

“Most of my friends won’t cry,” he said. “They’ll fuss, they’ll get angry but they won’t release in that way.”

Scott thinks it’s important for men to open up to emotions. He has coached robotics, bridge building and the chess team at his school. He lives in the house and have fostered six children.

Scott went on to do a writing challenge over the Labor Day weekend. The challenge to write an entire novel in one weekend. After 40 hours of writing, Scott submitted it by the deadline.



of Art in Schools

olina artist Dustin Spagnola (www.dustinspagnola.com)
oine in the New Center. Spagnola volunteers in arts ed-
-painted this for Better Block Detroit under the umbrella

inds Writing

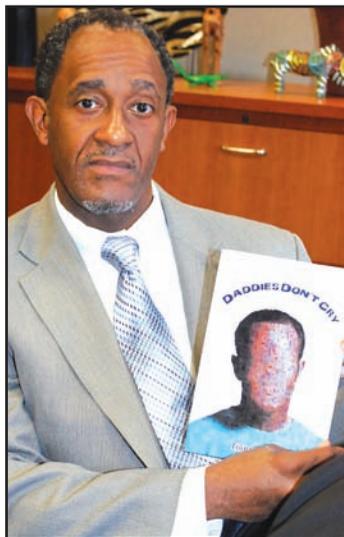
-year-old daughter he and his
ef he found was through writing.
didn't seem to get rid of the

g lyrics titled, "Daddies Don't
le through Amazon. Scott says

, they'll complain, they'll be

ions and to crying. Besides teaching middle school math,
s team. On top of all that, Scott and his wife enjoy children

t Day weekend. The "3-Day Novel Contest" is a Canadian
40 hours of writing a spy thriller love story in 52 pages,



Helping the DFT Community

The DFT held a Resource Fair Sept. 13 for displaced teachers. More than 100 showed and got support and answers from DFT staff and service agencies. DFT Executive Vice President Edna Reaves, above, addressed the group.



Materials for Teachers

Samarrah Thomas, above, DFT receptionist, generated more than 100 envelopes for building representatives, filled with DFT election materials and calendars. The DFT's three-member clerical staff, which includes Barbara Downey and Estella Burnette, is busy in the fall preparing the membership for the DFT officers election and other union materials.

Bright-eyed Teachers

By Mark O'Keefe
DFT Controller

We have heard over and over again that 100,000 students left DPS in the last 10 years. This information is repeatedly presented as an indictment of the school district and the city. But what about all the teachers who left the system? What does that tell us?

The mass exodus of students is secondary to the mass exodus of teachers. DPS lost over 100,000 students without having to lay off teachers until this fall. Teachers walked away from their jobs faster than parents took their students out of the schools.

If the state had not taken the extraordinary measure of opening a new district (EAA) to take over DPS schools (that the state was already running), DPS enrollment would be only a few thousand students lower than last year. Now

that the student population finally may be leveling off, the continued loss of experienced teachers may soon lead to a teacher shortage.

Teachers used to be reluctant to leave because they did not want to give up their seniority and they did not want to start over on the pay scale. Now that seniority is meaningless and step increases are frozen, there are no "golden handcuffs" to keep teachers from leaving.



Mark

Recent laws that deprived DPS teachers of income and rights have made a demoralized workforce even more discouraged. The stress of working additional hours with less prep time, while being constantly threatened with the loss of a job can only lead to more turnover. The politician who said "Now no good teacher will have to worry about losing her job" could not have been more wrong. Every good teacher in DPS is justifiably concerned about being laid-off or fired.

Nobody is being held accountable for the fact that students miss an average of 30 days per year, classrooms are overcrowded, many teachers do not have enough textbooks, and many teachers do not find out what grade and subject they are teaching until the day before school starts. But when all of this leads to low test scores, teachers are solely to blame and are summarily fired.

So-called reformers extol the virtues of the bright-eyed enthusiastic teachers who replace veterans. From a distance, this may look like a good thing. But if you look closer, you will realize that the bright eyes are brimming with tears.



Detroit Teacher Helps Build School in Malawi

Saudi Arabia. Turkey. Nicaragua. Mali. Name an exotic corner of the earth and Bill Bowles has probably been there.

Bowles, a media specialist at Western International School, traveled to Malawi in southern Africa this summer. The well-traveled teacher often takes students abroad to expose them to different cultures and experiences. This year he took seven Detroit high school students to the southern African nation to help build a local school.

They worked with Build On, which says it is not a charity but a movement to build schools in the developing world. So far the 20-year-old organization has built 453 schools in nine developing countries. Build On aims to break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy and low expectations through service and education.

"It was my third trek to build a school," said Bowles, a 20-year Detroit teacher. "For the students it was a transformative experience. You just hope it has a lasting effect."

Indeed. They joined two suburban Detroit students and six students from Philadelphia and traveled to the village of Swaswa, about two hours north of the capital, Lilongwe.

"We worked to build a two-room school house," Bowles said. "We lived with villagers, ate local food and spoke basic Chichewa and Chitumbuka, two local languages."

They completed the school in just two weeks, from late June to early July. Back in their classrooms, they have more to contemplate about the wealth of an education.



Nominations Open for DFT Election

Nominations for the 2012 Biennial Election of DFT Officers, Executive Board Members and Trustees may be mailed to Election Committee, PO Box 2785, North End Station, 60 E. Milwaukee, Detroit MI 48202. Must be in PO Box by 4 p.m. Oct. 11, 2012 or hand delivered to the Election Committee at the Oct. 11 Membership Meeting.

- **Oct. 11: MEMBERSHIP MEETING.** List of nominees posted and additional nominations will be accepted from the floor. **NOMINATIONS CLOSED** as last order of business.
- **Oct. 15:** Notice sent to those nominated with request for acceptance and statement for Special Election Edition of the DETROIT TEACHER.
- **Oct. 22:** Second notice to nominees who have not responded.
- **Oct. 29: DEADLINE FOR ACCEPTANCES AND STATEMENTS.** Must be in PO Box by 4 p.m. or hand delivered to the DFT office by 5 p.m.
- **Oct. 30:** List of eligible candidates sent to each candidate and to schools for posting. Notice sent to candidates who did not send a statement for the DETROIT TEACHER that no information will be printed.
- **Nov. 8: DEADLINE FOR FILING GRIEVANCES** on nominations and acceptances. Grievance(s) heard by Election Committee and Executive Board.
- **Nov. 15:** Grievance appeal(s) to membership.
- **Nov. 19: VOTING BEGINS.**

Grants . . .

Knowledge about Herbs

The Herb Society of America is giving grants to support projects promoting knowledge about herbs through education. The purpose is to promote education on herbs beyond garden activities. Grants up to \$5,000 are available. Deadline: Dec. 31, 2012. For info, visit director@herbsociety.org.

Tomorrow's Leaders

The Kinder Morgan Foundation provides opportunities for the youth of today to grow into leaders of tomorrow. In particular, it supports science, math and music students to become engineers, educators and musicians of tomorrow. Grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 are available. Deadline: ongoing. For info, visit www.kindermorgan.com/community.

Nutrition Education

Allen Foundation supports projects related to the connections between diet and health and nutritional projects in areas of education, training and research. Deadline: Dec. 31, 2012. For info, visit www.allenfoundation.org.

In2Books in Classroom

The International Reading Association offers the Erwin Zolt Curriculum Excellence Award to teachers who have created and implemented an exceptional curriculum design using In2Books and the Common Core. In2Books is an online program that matches e-mentoring with students, who read books, discuss in the classroom, and exchange online. Eligible applicants must be IRA members. Grants of \$2,500 are available. Deadline: Nov. 15, 2012. For info, visit www.reading.org.

Math and Science

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is offering a grant for teachers who use music to teach math in grades PreK-2. Through its Mathematics Education Trust, NCTM is offering a grant up to \$3,000 to educators currently teaching in those grades. Deadline: Nov. 9, 2012. For info, visit www.nctm.org.

STEM Awards

The National Science Teachers Association has partnered with PASCO Scientific to recognize excellence and innovation in science, technology, engineering and math teaching. The PASCO STEM Educator Awards will recognize five teachers each year from elementary, middle and high school for their excellence and innovation. Winners will receive \$1,000, up to \$1,500 to attend the NSTA conference, and a \$2,000 certificate to purchase PASCO products. Deadline: Nov. 30, 2012. For info, visit awards@nsta.org.

Mobilizing African-American Families 8th Annual Conference And Still They Rise!

For Teens ages 13-17
Saturday, Oct. 20, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
Workshops presented by youth and adults
Prizes and Activities
Continental breakfast and lunch provided.

Charles H. Wright Museum of
African American History
315 E. Warren Ave

Space is limited-Pre-registration required

Registration is Free!

For more call Kim Travis-Ewing @ 313-544-6689

ktravisewing@yahoo.com

AFT MICHIGAN ENDORSEMENTS

President							
Barack Obama*	DEM	21	Dian Slavens*	DEM	65	Bonnie Johnson	DEM
Vice President		22	Harold Haugh*	DEM	66	Richard Rajkovich	DEM
Joe Biden*	DEM	23	Tom Boritzki	DEM	67	Tom Cochran	DEM
United States Senator		24	Philip Kurczewski	DEM	68	Andy Schor	DEM
Debbie Stabenow*	DEM	25	Henry Yanez	DEM	69	Sam Singh	DEM
Representative In Congress		26	Jim Townsend*	DEM	70	Mike Huckleberry	DEM
District		27	Ellen Cogen Lipton*	DEM	71	Theresa Abed	DEM
1 Gary McDowell	DEM	28	Jon W. Switalski*	DEM	72	Scott Urbanowski	DEM
3 Steve Pestka	DEM	29	Tim Greimel*	DEM	73	G. Scott Schuiling	DEM
5 Daniel T. Kildee	DEM	30	Joseph Bogdan	DEM	74	Rob VerHeulen	REP
6 Mike O'Brien	DEM	31	Marilyn Lane*	DEM	75	Brandon Dillon*	DEM
8 Lance Enderle	DEM	32	Sheri Smith	DEM	76	Winnie Brinks	DEM
9 Sander Levin*	DEM	33	Ken Goike*	REP	77	Scott Barton	DEM
11 Syed Taj	DEM	34	Woodrow Stanley*	DEM	78	Jack Arbanas	DEM
11 Partial Term –David Curson	DEM	35	Rudy Hobbs*	DEM	79	Jim Hahn	DEM
12 John D. Dingell*	DEM	36	Robert Murphy	DEM	80	Stuart D Peet	DEM
13 John Conyers, Jr*	DEM	37	Vicki Barnett*	DEM	81	Patrick Phelan	DEM
14 Gary Peters*	DEM	38	Chuck Tindall	DEM	82	John Nugent	DEM
State Representative		39	Pam Jackson	DEM	83	Paul Muxlow*	REP
District		40	Dorian Coston	DEM	84	Terry L Brown	DEM
1 Brian Banks	DEM	41	Mary Kerwin	DEM	85	Paul Ray	DEM
2 Alberta Tinsley Talabi*	DEM	42	Shanda Willis	DEM	86	Brian Bosak	DEM
3 John Olumba*	DEM	43	Neil Billington	DEM	87	Mike Callton*	REP
4 Rose Mary C. Robinson	DEM	44	Tom Crawford	DEM	89	Don Bergman	DEM
5 Fred Durhal, Jr.*	DEM	45	Joanna VanRaaphorst	DEM	91	Collene Lamonte	DEM
6 Rashida Tlaib*	DEM	46	Daniel W Sargent	DEM	92	Marcia Hovey-Wright*	DEM
7 Thomas F Stallworth III*	DEM	47	Shawn Desai	DEM	93	Paul E Silva	DEM
8 David E. Nathan*	DEM	48	Pam Faris	DEM	94	Judith Lincoln	DEM
9 Harvey Santana*	DEM	49	Jim Ananich*	DEM	95	Stacy Erwin Oakes*	DEM
10 Phil Cavanagh*	DEM	50	Charles Smiley*	DEM	96	Charles M. Brunner*	DEM
11 David Knezek	DEM	51	Steve Losey	DEM	97	Chris Breznau	DEM
12 Douglas A. Geiss*	DEM	52	Gretchen Driskell	DEM	98	Joan Brausch	DEM
13 Andrew J. Kandrevas*	DEM	53	Jeff Irwin*	DEM	99	Adam Lawrence	DEM
14 Paul Clemente*	DEM	54	David Rutledge*	DEM	100	Ida DeHaas	DEM
15 George T. Darany*	DEM	55	Adam Zemke	DEM	101	Allen O'Shea	DEM
16 Robert L. Kosowski	DEM	56	Larry Crider	DEM	102	Brendan P. Maturen	DEM
17 Bill LaVoy	DEM	57	Jim Berryman	DEM	103	Lon Johnson	DEM
18 Sarah Roberts	DEM	58	Amaryllis Thomas	DEM	104	Betsy Coffia	DEM
20 Tim Roraback	DEM	59	Mike Moroz	DEM	105	William J. Wieske	DEM
		60	Sean McCann*	DEM	106	Kenneth C Hubbard	DEM
		61	Michael E Martin	DEM	107	Suzanne Shumway	DEM
		62	Kate Segal*	DEM	108	Sharon Gray	DEM
		63	Bill Farmer	DEM	109	John Kivela	DEM
		64	Barbara Shelton	DEM	110	Scott Dianda	DEM

* Incumbent

Position

Michigan Supreme Court (Partial-Term)

Michigan Supreme Court

Michigan Supreme Court

State Board of Education

State Board of Education

Michigan State University Board of Trustees

Michigan State University Board of Trustees

University of Michigan Board of Regents

University of Michigan Board of Regents

Wayne State University Board of Governors

Wayne State University Board of Governors

Name

Shelia Johnson DEM

Connie Marie Kelley DEM

Bridget Mary McCormack DEM

Michelle Fecteau DEM

Lupe Ramos-Montigny DEM

Joel Ferguson DEM

Brian Mosallam DEM

Mark Bernstein DEM

Shauna Ryder-Diggs DEM

Sandra Hughes-O'Brien DEM

Kim Trent DEM

Ballot Proposals:

Proposal 12-01 – Emergency Manager

Recommend a **NO** vote

Proposal 12-02 – Collective Bargaining

Recommend a **YES** vote

Proposal 12-03 – Clean Energy Proposal

Recommend a **YES** vote

Proposal 12-04 – Quality Home Health Care

Recommend a **YES** vote

Proposal 12-05 – Tax Proposal

Recommend a **NO** vote

Proposal 12-06 – Statewide Vote on Building Bridges

Recommend a **NO** vote

A complete list of endorsements is available on the AFT Michigan website – www.aftmichigan.org

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Collective Bargaining Rights

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, from Page 1

istrict waited until the year was over to establish criteria. Furthermore, the district could have requested a waiver from the state, as many other districts did, to continue to use seniority until it had a chance to develop a comprehensive evaluation system. It chose not to.

Dedicated and Veteran Teacher

Mary Ellen Matigian went to a job fair in 1999 at Wayne County RESA. A Detroit principal from a Blue Ribbon school hired her immediately. Matigian had 27 years of experience teaching in Catholic schools, a masters degree, and evidence of raising students' test scores.

But this year she was not recalled and believes her age is the issue. During 14 years in Detroit, Matigian was always at school 30 to 45 minutes early and stayed after an hour or two.

"She worked from dinner to 11 at night on her classroom," said her husband Mike. "She's never been written up or reprimanded."

Mike Matigian says he once had cataract surgery during MEAP testing and his wife chose to go to work.

"I had my brother take me and she felt terrible," he said. "But that shows you her dedication and I don't think she's an exception."

Now 65, Matigian sees an obvious parallel in age and the people who were not recalled. Mike Matigian said his wife discovered bladder cancer in July and recently had surgery.

"When they didn't call her back, that bothered her more than learning she had bladder cancer," he said.

Mike Matigian says the state of teaching in Detroit is sad. He made as much money as his wife without a college degree and had "nowhere near the responsibility she had."

When Matigian went back to get belongings from her classroom, she felt so bad for the teachers there and the pressure they had, she didn't want to tell them about her diagnosis.

Closed School, Retired Principal

By Kevin Gross

We were told that in order for teachers to be recalled, they needed a score of 70 or better on their evaluations. HR will not tell us our evaluation scores. I just happened to find mine when I was at HR trying to secure a classroom. It was an 80. Still, I am not recalled and I sit here unemployed while my family suffers for it.

I spoke with Greg Stokes in HR and asked, "Why, if teachers were supposed to have a score of 70 or better on their evaluations, and I have an 80, did I not get a classroom?" His answer: "When I find out who told you your score they will be dealt with!" This did not boost my confidence.

Second question: "But my score was an 80 and HR told me that I was very effective, so why did I not get an assignment?" I didn't get an assignment because none of the principals I interviewed with "personally requested me." I know principals who received new assignments and took their own staff from their previous school WITHOUT any interviews. This it not equitable. My school closed. My principal retired. So I was not fortunate to have a principal protect me like others.

Third question: "While I was trying to get an assignment, people were coming in off the street with a NEW contract. Why didn't DPS place those who had the requirements, like me, instead of a new hire?" Mr. Stokes said that "because of the governor and his NO seniority law, HR can hire anyone it wants." Which means that HR could have recalled a laid off teacher, they just didn't bother to see who might qualify for a classroom. This is hardly equitable for those who met the requirements set by HR.

I was informed last week that letters went out during the summer to teachers who would not be recalled. I sat this summer going to interview after interview, thinking that I would be called back because I got no letter or word from DPS. I am hearing about overfilled classrooms, yet DPS is NOT bringing in the qualified laid off teachers to fill vacancies. WHY?

In previous years I would be able to hire on as a full-time sub. DPS has subcontracted for subs this year. I can't even do that to wait for a teaching assignment.

DPS doesn't want you to know your evaluation score. They should have recalled teachers who met the requirements set by HR BEFORE they hired a new person. This is NOT seniority, it is qualifications and experience. I have 12 years of experience with DPS and 21 years of experience teaching! I feel I met their qualifications before a NEW HIRE was brought in. This is not equitable and not professional. I miss my classroom and students, and I miss working with DPS.

Blackwell Institute Gets Visit from Detroit Pistons Stars

A Detroit Pistons official asked students who was the best basketball player at Blackwell Institute for a free throw contest.

“Zeke,” the seventh- and eighth-graders shouted. Little did Ezekial Griffin know that he would be up against Pistons stars Rodney Stuckey and Andre Drummond, hiding behind a divider.

Indeed, the 13-year-old was good, sinking his first shot while Stuckey missed his.

The Pistons players visited Blackwell Sept. 20 to baptize a new computer lab the Pistons and PNC Bank funded for the east side school.

The students got to shoot hoops, talk with the professional athletes about the importance of a solid education, and take home free backpacks stuffed with supplies. Stuckey gave another student a \$100 bill for answering a college question.

Stuckey went wayward before learning to put school first and raise his grade point average.

“It took me a while to figure that out,” he said.

Students asked the stars what basketball does for them.

“When I have stress or something on my mind, it’s my getaway,” Stuckey said.

Apparently, it does the same for Zeke. He was not intimidated by the stars.

“I was just caught up in the moment,” he said. “I was happy.”



Detroit Pistons Andre Drummond and Rodney Stuckey with Blackwell student Ezekiel Griffin.

Calendar

All meetings will be held at 2875 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, unless otherwise noted. All Meetings start at 4:30 p.m. Dates and times are subject to change.

October

- 4 DFT Executive Board Meeting, 4:30
- 11 General Membership Meeting, 4:30
- 16 DFT Retirees Chapter Meeting, 11:30 a.m.

November

- 8 DFT Executive Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 12 Veteran’s Day, Half day of school
- 15 General Membership Meeting, 4:30
- 20 DFT Retirees Chapter Meeting, 11:30 a.m.
- 22-23 Schools Closed, Thanksgiving