

Mumford Protests “Theft” of New School

More than 200 students, parents and teachers took to the sidewalk outside Mumford High School April 2 to say, “No way.”

No way to taking Mumford’s new \$50 million school into the EAA district.

“We are opposing the taking over of Detroit taxpayers’ schools,” said teacher Bernadette Taliaferro. “We paid for these schools. Especially these new schools we paid for through the bond issue.” Taliaferro and her children graduated from Mumford.

Marquise Adams, 18, is a graduate of Mumford but came out to support her alma mater.

“I think it’s wrong because they built the school for these kids,” she said. “Now they’re taking it over. We worked hard to get a new school.”

Dr. John Covington, chancellor of the Educational Achievement Authority, did not appear prepared for questions April 2 at a special meeting at the school. He did not know which current teachers would continue to teach at Mumford. He did not know whether special edu-

cation students would continue to attend Mumford.

One senior said Covington was taking away all the stability she knew – the teachers who knew and cared about her.

“How do I know my teachers are coming back?” she said. “You’re taking everything I know away from me.”

Covington said Mumford diplomas weren’t worth the paper they were printed on. But a Mumford alumni, who got a 26 on his ACT, disputed that. He said the previous graduating class collected more than \$700,000 in scholarships.

Edna Reaves, DFT executive vice president and a former Mumford teacher, queried Covington but said he was short on answers.

“Some of the students asked questions he honestly could not answer,” Reaves said. “The bottom line is he has no plan. He could not answer any of these questions and therein lies the problem.”

Reaves and the other attendees said they would continue to fight until Mumford remains a DPS school.



Drive-by Observations Will Equal Lawsuits, Not Teacher Effectiveness

By Keith Johnson
Detroit Federation of Teachers President

For more than two years the DFT has tried to convince the district to honor the collective bargaining agreement and NEGOTIATE an evaluation tool and process that would provide an accurate mechanism for evaluating teaching performance and give support and direction to Detroit teachers.

In the 2009 negotiations, we anticipated sweeping reforms in teacher evaluation due to federal mandates under the direction of Arne Duncan. Our intent was to get

ahead of the curve and ensure that the evaluation process would be more than a “gotcha” system.

For two years our efforts fell on deaf ears until the state legislature, led by anti-union Republicans, passed bills designed to make it easier to fire teachers. One drive-by observation could not be used to fire you without due process and just cause. That protection was eliminated by the new tenure act.

With their backs against the wall and the clock ticking, DPS leaders are attempting to force an evaluation process that will allow for a drive-by observation, a snap-

shot, as testament to how effective a teacher performs in her classroom. What’s worse, they will attempt to incorporate these drive-bys into THIS YEAR’S report to the Michigan Department of Education, despite the fact that the majority of our members haven’t even been observed as of the printing of this article.

This will prove to be costly to DPS. First, the contract is clear that the evaluation tool and process MUST be jointly developed by the district AND union. The district’s labor chief doesn’t seem to believe that “jointly developed” means the

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DFT Well Represented at AFT Michigan Convention

All 20 of the DFT's elected delegates attended the AFT Michigan Convention on April 28 at the Marriott Renaissance Center. They were joined by the DFT officers and executive board, which are automatic delegates per our constitution and bylaws.



David Hecker
AFT Michigan President

The convention stressed the importance of having

Democrats take back the state house of representatives, electing Michigan Supreme Court justices that are labor friendly, and passing the "Protect Our Jobs" constitutional amendment.

The 20 delegates were: Ivy Bailey, Debra Washington, Cynthia Matthews, Vida Bonacci, Deborah Pruitt, Terrence Butler, Vanessa Rasheed, Yolanda Stewart, Marcus Walton, Thomas Wilson Jr., Miranda Washington, Wanda Lundy-Colquitt, Joyce Burrell, Dan Lake, Michael Weiszbrod, Renee West, Brenda Burack, Melaine Tillman, Joseph Quesnelle and Rebecca Szymaszek.

DFT Executive Board members at-

tending were President Keith Johnson, Executive Vice President Edna Reaves, Secretary Felecia Clark, Treasurer Kurtis Brown, Jan Curry, Mark Moroni, Steven Portnoy, Lisa Scott, William Gardner, Wendy Newberry, Michelle Puryear, LaShawn Sims, Vanessa Parnell and Michael Schenk. DFT staffers Mark O'Keefe and Patrick Falcusan also attended.

Elected from our local as AFT Michigan vice presidents were: Keith Johnson, Edna Reaves, Ivy Bailey, Wendy Newberry, LaShawn Sims, Steve Portnoy, Michael Schenk and Patrick Falcusan.

Drive-by Observations Will Equal Lawsuits

PRESIDENT, from Page 1

parties must agree. The district doesn't get to simply let the union know what it wants to do, then do it.

The proposed evaluation process allows for no growth or support. Nor does it allow for teaching performance to be seen in various contexts. A true evaluation takes a comprehensive look at teacher performance at various times of the school year, teaching different subjects, particularly in the case of elementary teachers who teach English, reading, writing, math, science and social studies.

Secondary teachers should be viewed with different classes at different hours and periods so the evaluator sees how the teacher and students interact in various contexts.

The evaluation should identify areas of improvement and the support and assistance to facilitate the improvement. The goal of evaluations should not be to get rid of struggling or novice teachers but to help them become effective teachers. That said, if a teacher is not effective and will not implement the steps to improve, the process should include a fair and comprehensive method to remove him or her from employment.

Two weeks ago I came to the office on a Sunday, randomly went through my phone log, and called 18 teachers who have called me during the course of the school year. I asked if they had been observed this

President's Report



Keith Johnson

school year, and if not, when was the last time they had been observed. NONE of them had been observed this school year. The last time they'd been observed ranged from seven years ago to NEVER!

Last week I did a walkthrough of several schools to see how things are going as we enter the final weeks of the year. At one school, the principal, who is one of our more effective leaders, was doing observations that day. I met with her at the end of my visit and asked about the results of her observations (this was about 11 a.m.).

She observed six teachers that morning and was pleased with what she saw. When I asked how long she spent in each classroom her response was about 15-20 minutes. What qualifies as a true assessment of the effectiveness of teachers? What if the observations were not satisfactory? Should such teachers be deemed ineffective after a 15-minute visit? I say no.

The district is accelerating the process of evaluating teachers by hiring retired

principals to do the evaluations. These "consultants" won't know the teachers, won't know the school climate and culture, and will be little more than gap-fillers for the district's own ineptitude in performing its due diligence as well as honoring the contract.

Attempting to do these drive-by observations and mask them as comprehensive evaluations over the next seven weeks will not stand up to legal scrutiny. Teachers not retained or recalled from layoff as a result of these drive-bys will file lawsuits against the district for imposing a process not jointly developed and one that may even be arbitrary and capricious.

The DFT is prepared to take the legal action necessary to make sure our members do not pay for the district's arrogance, stubbornness and irresponsibility.

THE DETROIT
teacher

(ISSN 0011-9695)

The Detroit Teacher is the official publication of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers Local 231, AFL-CIO.

The Detroit Teacher is published monthly, except for July and August, for \$4 per year by The Detroit Federation of Teachers, 2875 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48202. Periodical Postage Paid at Detroit, MI.

Updates . . .



**Wanda
Lundy-Colquitt**

DFT Vice President Named

Wanda Lundy-Colquitt was appointed DFT vice president on April 16. She fills the vacancy left by Edna Reaves when she became DFT executive vice president on March 12. Reaves replaced Mark O'Keefe, who filled the vacancy created when Vito Peraino left his post as DFT controller in December. An election will be held at the May 10 membership meeting to fill the DFT trustee post, vacated by Lundy-Colquitt.

Coins and Cans for COPE



Ivy Bailey

Ivy Bailey is only a few months into her job as COPE chair and she's on fire. At the DFT membership meetings, Bailey can be found in the kitchen, cooking up hotdogs and brats and putting the profits in the COPE fund.

At the April 19 meeting, she asked members to dump the change in their pockets and purses onto the round tables. She collected \$105.90 from the loose change. Members can donate their empty cans to the cause by dropping them off at the DFT hall. All of these funds will be used in November to elect candidates who support public school teachers.

Sophie McGloin Passes Away

Sophie McGloin, a 20-year vice president of the DFT, passed away April 24. She was 90. McGloin was an active DFT member and a former vice president of the Michigan Federation of Teachers. She served on the DFT's negotiating team and executive board. She was a building rep, political action chairperson, an executive board member of the AFL-CIO, and delegate to their Labor Council. McGloin was the recipient of the Martin Luther King Award & Education Fund.



**Sophie
McGloin**

She was preceded in death by her husband of more than 60 years, Eddie, a retired teacher and counselor.

Memorial contributions may be made to: Detroit Federation of Teachers Memorial Scholarship Fund, 2875 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48202.

What Every Member Needs to Do

By Edna Reaves
DFT Executive Vice President

It is not news that teachers and union members are being attacked by Lansing. In the last 18 months, dozens of laws have been passed by the legislature to attack the teaching profession.

Now is the time to join forces and send Lansing the message that we are not Al-Qaeda. We are not a threat to homeland security. We have rights as American citizens. How do we send that message?

At an April 21 Building Representative and Action Teams training, we gave members an opportunity to voice their opinions and discuss the direction the union needs to take on the multiple issues facing us. How do we go beyond the voting polls and stand strong through this storm? Our most pressing issues are:

- Loss of Seniority
- Layoff Notices
- Teacher Evaluations
- Ability to Collect Dues

We asked one question: What can we do to push back all these attacks on teachers and their unions? We need to collect enough signatures (at least 320,000) to place the collective bargaining constitutional amendment on the ballot and get it passed Nov. 6. Doing so will roll back most of the laws that were recently imposed on us by the state. These laws are inching us closer to a "Right to Work" state, where wages and the state's economic health will be worse.



Edna Reaves

AFT in Michigan was formed at a time when teachers got one year contracts, were not called back in favor of hiring friends or family, and the employer would not pay for extra assignments. The AFT had to undertake several historic cases for those teachers. Those conditions were unstable and stressful. Much like the conditions we're in today!

It is an act of self preservation to protect your job. But none of us can do it alone. The vote you cast in November will be one of the most important votes in the history of the teaching profession here in Michigan. As one of our members so simply put it, our union is like our insurance policies. It is better to have it and not need it, then to need it and not have it. Don't allow Lansing to deny you your protection. Complete your dues form and get involved in the fight for your job!

Without unions, we could be in the same boat as Brooke Harris, the Pontiac charter school teacher who was recently fired for teaching a social studies lesson on Trayvon Martin, the unarmed teen who was gunned down in Florida. Harris has no union to guarantee her due process.

These attacks impact all unionized workers in the state of Michigan. But in Detroit, we are ground zero. I'm asking you to do three things by the end of this month.

- Sign up to automatically deduct your dues.
- Sign and circulate the collective bargaining constitutional amendment petitions.
- If you haven't registered to vote, do it now.

Perpetuating the Achievement Gap

By Mark O'Keefe, DFT Controller

Education reformers are continually introducing new ideas to combat the persistent achievement gap between students from low-income families and those from families with high income. Incredibly, the latest ideas from Lansing seek to resolve the problem by increasing the disparity in funding.



Mark O'Keefe

We already have seen the futility of this approach. Under No Child Left Behind, schools were punished for low test scores. The premise seemed to be that if you punished teachers and schools for low student test scores, they would be forced to do a better job. This presupposes that all schools and students can achieve equal results in spite of decidedly unequal circumstances. If Michigan's education reformers truly believe that all results are predicated solely on teacher ability and effort, let's transfer the successful teachers from Bloomfield Hills and Grosse Pointe into Detroit and Highland Park.

Michigan law now requires that teacher evaluations include growth in student achievement as a significant component. Teachers who are rated ineffective in three out of five years will lose their certification. This will help schools with high test scores recruit the most qualified teachers, who will have less risk of losing their jobs in those districts.

There is increasing pressure to tie teacher pay to student performance. By raising the pay of teachers whose students have high scores, and lowering pay of their counterparts, we again tilt the playing field in favor of the "haves."

With the average metro Detroit teacher already earning about 20 percent more than Detroit teachers, who would choose to teach in Detroit? Schools in high-crime, high-poverty areas will have even more difficulty recruiting and retaining good teachers. Regardless of where you teach, you will have a significant financial incentive to avoid being responsible for the students who most need your help. If you have a child who is significantly behind grade level, the best thing you can do for your career is get that child transferred to another class, or better yet, another school.

In the race to compete globally, we frequently see Finland touted as the best example of educational success. Finland's test scores and graduation rates are coveted by the rest of the world. We are not willing, however, to do what they do to achieve those results.

Pasi Sahlberg of Finland cites three issues that must be addressed in the U.S. to replicate Finland's educational system: funding of schools, welfare of children, and education as a human right. In Finland, schools have equal funding, all children have access to health care and childcare, and education from pre-school to university is free (see Washington Post, April 17, 2012).

In Michigan, we are increasing the disparity in funding, kicking people off of welfare, and decreasing support for universities. When we do the opposite of what successful countries are doing, we should expect the opposite result.



From This Day Forward

By LaShawn Sims
DFT Executive Board Member

The past two years have undoubtedly been the most trying of my teaching career. There has been an assault launched against unions, particularly in the Midwest.

I am well aware that some members have been disappointed with the leadership of our union. What I cannot wrap my mind around, however, is the fact that union leadership is being blamed for attacks that initiated in Lansing.

The reality is this: we have not lost! Our predecessors fought for the right to collectively bargain. If we are to continue to have that right, we have to stand together now.

Union members in Ohio are enjoying victory now because they made a decision to unite. They donated their time and, more important, their money, \$23 million to combat the attacks against them. THEY UNITED. This is no time for in-house fighting. Call your state representatives and senators and circulate petitions to amend the constitution to protect collective bargaining.

We cannot continue to blame union leadership for what is clearly the impact of new laws developed by the Republican-led legislature. The only way we will not be defeated is to financially support candidates who are advocates for students and teachers.

Our president, Keith Johnson, asked each of us to commit to donating \$100 over the course of this school year to the political action fund. To date, we have about 4 percent of that. I am urging all members of this union to stand together and give \$100 to the COPE fund.

I propose that from this day forward we commit to looking beyond the DFT and DPS leadership in order to win what is unmistakably the fight of our lives and the fight for our very existence.



Spain Shines at Enrollment Fair

By Charlene Uresy

Spain School held nothing back during the recent district-wide Enrollment Fair March 31. Principal Ronald Alexander, administrators Erica Rolack and Tiffany Abbott, and over 28 teachers, support staff, and students showed the City of Detroit the great things happening at Spain School and in DPS!

The aroma of charcoal-grilled meats welcomed visitors to the school. Once inside they were entertained by Spain's Best. There were performances by the orchestra (with alumni students), drum line, cheerleaders, and dancers.

The chess teams demonstrated why they are on their way to compete in the national championships. The staff prominently displayed classroom work and demonstrated how technology is integrated with classroom instruction. All of this was a wonderful showcase of what Spain School offers.

And those who visited were impressed with what they saw.



Teacher Aveshah Williamson, parent Sherise Shorter, teacher Debra Blocker, teacher Andre Harlan, and parent Judith Walker at Spain's Enrollment Fair.

Grants

Special Olympics

Special Olympics Project UNIFY is accepting proposals for funding from students who engage in activities designed to build respect and inclusiveness. Applicants are students age 12 through 20 who are partnering with a Special Olympics organization. Funds of up to \$5,000 are available. Deadline: May 31, 2012. For info, visit www.specialolympics.org or oharrell@specialolympics.org.

Music Programs

The Mockingbird Foundation is committed to supporting projects that foster creativity in music. The foundation encourages applications associated with diverse or unusual musical styles, genres, forms or philosophies, but not music therapy. Grants range from \$100 to \$5,000 and are made on a one-time basis. Deadline: Aug. 1, 2012. For info, visit grants@mbird.org.

Theatre Grants

The Pioneer Drama Service provides support for middle and high

school theatrical productions through its Touching Lives Through Theatre Grants. PDS will provide a total of \$5,000 in grants for purchases to support performances at the high school level. Deadline: June 30, 2012. For info, visit www.touchinglivesthroughtheatregrants.com.

Giving Back

The Dale and Edna Walsh Foundation is interested in giving back to communities and its philanthropic giving supports improvements in education and other areas. The foundation is guided by Christian ideals of right and wrong, good and better, but is not limited to supporting only religious based organizations. Funds vary. Deadline: Sept. 1, 2012. For info, visit www.dewfoundation.org.

Literacy

The Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation supports causes through the sale of its stuffed animals. One area of the foundation's focus is children's literacy and education. It gives direct support through grants ranging from \$1,000 to

\$10,000. Deadline: Oct. 26, 2012. For info, visit www.buildabear.com.

Toys for Tots

The Marines' Toys for Tots Foundation has been providing new toys for economically disadvantaged children at the holidays for over 60 years. The Toys for Tots Literacy Program has been taking requests for books to benefit economically disadvantaged children throughout the year. The program provides new books and materials to less fortunate children. For info, visit www.toysfortots.org.

Math and Science

The Toshiba America Foundation provides funds to encourage innovative teaching in the areas of mathematics and science. Teachers who would like to try innovative programs to make math and science more engaging for their students should consider applying. The foundation takes proposal for funds up to \$5,000 on an ongoing basis for teachers grades 6-12. For info, visit www.toshiba.com.

THE DETROIT NEWSMAKERS

JR King Performs at Carnegie Hall

Carnegie Hall — the world's most prestigious stage — welcomed 22 Detroit choir students in March to sing and explore the Big Apple.

John R. King Academic & Performing Arts Academy's Angelic Chorale traveled to New York City on March 2-5 to perform at Carnegie Hall.

The Angelic Chorale was chosen by the WorldStrides Heritage Middle School Festival to perform as the featured choir to a packed house. The choir, directed by Annette Anderson and accompanied by Pamela Moore, learned what it takes to perform at Carnegie Hall: practice, practice, practice. While in New York, they practiced for three hours twice a day.

After practices, the students toured Harlem, Brooklyn and Manhattan. They visited the World Trade Center, the Statue of Liberty, Times Square, the Apollo Theater and Wall Street. They shopped and tasted the varied cuisines of New York. They also saw the Broadway show "Spider Man."



Anderson said they performed four songs to a "packed out audience with a rousing standing ovation that seemed to last forever."

This was an educational experience that will have a lasting effect on the J.R. King students.

"All the lights and the glitter was great," Anderson said. "Some students want to return to visit and some want to live there."

Anderson said the experience was awe-inspiring for her students. "It allowed them to have an experience outside of the four walls of the school," she said. "It broadened their horizons."



CAP DAY AT MARCUS GARVEY — The preschool through second grade teachers did a special unit on compare

and contrast March 28 and invited all of the students to wear a favorite cap. The students read "Caps for Sale" by Esphyr Slobodkina and compared Aunt Flossie's hats. Pictured above are Marcus Garvey teachers Sheila Jones, Wendy Newberry, Deborah Montgomery, Joi Anderson and Evelyn Holmes.

Schulze Poets Get Published

At Schulze Academy for Technology and the Arts, seventh- and eighth-graders in Lesley Cikra's class compose and dabble, consider and change words to improve their writing.

When Cikra taught them to write in the ancient Japanese style of poetry called Haiku, they went to work.

More than 75 students submitted their best work for a chance at publication in a national magazine. Cikra, a 19-year Detroit teacher, got the happy news that 22 Schulze students will be nationally published in the 2012 Young American Poetry Digest. The Digest, instituted in 1994, encourages students across the country to submit poetry pieces for a chance at publication. All submissions were reviewed by a panel of educators with a strict set of literary criteria.

Schulze's published poets are: Geona Boyd, Zareia Jackson, Kia Peters, Lelani Aldridge, India Johnson, Diamond Beckom, Kavon Hill, Meon Marshall, Destiny Heard, Dakari Cross, Terris Woodard, Jerreon Smith, Deionti Hawthorne, Jonae McLendon, Martinez Adams, Jayvion Smith, Dawon Bausly, Stephen Fitts, Earlantr Howard, Frank Eason, Dashawn Eddins and Corey Cook.



Schulze published poets with English teacher Lesley Cikra and principal Dr. Brenda Lyons.

"We're having a great year," Cikra said. "But we're greatly disheartened to find we're not going to have a middle school next year because we're so successful."

POEMS

Everything God made
wind, earth, trees, fire, water
also you and me

By Martinez Adams

White flakes from the sky
Icy grounds throughout the street
Coldness in the air

By Jayvion Smith

Shoot it and pass it
Crossover and fadeaway
The power I hold

By Corey Cook

Detroit Kids Get Real Health Advice

Jaywaun Johnson, a 14-year-old student at the Detroit School of Arts High School, went directly to the diabetes booth at the school's health fair April 2. His aunt recently got diagnosed with the disease.

"As soon as she got it I didn't know what to do or what to say," he said. "She felt normal but she knew she had to change."

Good things happen at these booths in school fairs, thanks to Dimitri Demetral, DSA's physical education teacher, who organized the second annual health fair. The booths inform kids on health issues ranging from sickle cell anemia to contraception. Kids get to talk to complete strangers about what's on their mind.

Enter Tiffany Wang, a graduate student at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, who manned the diabetes



DSA student Jaywaun Johnson and public health consultant Tiffany Wang.

booth. "Is your family being supportive," Wang asked. She counseled Jaywaun to take his aunt for a walk. She then taught him how to calculate his own body mass index.

"Exercise," she advised, "and don't drink things with sugar."

Homework Before Hoops

Aaron Smith had no other career goal than to be a member of the Detroit Pistons. Not particularly tall or of the extremely rare talent pool called the NBA, he had no plan B.

Thank goodness for his mother, who listened to his dream all the way until he graduated from the University of Michigan. Still, she told him, "School comes first."

Those were the three magic words in her household. It served Smith well.

Smith exited college, sent his resume to the Pistons, and waited for the phone to ring. You guessed it – nothing happened.

"I can shoot, I can dribble, I can dunk," he wrote the Pistons. "Give me a chance. I won't let you down."

The phone continued to NOT ring. Eventually, however, it did ring, only to say that Smith did not have the talent to be a Detroit Pistons basketball player. He did have the skill to work for the organization, however, and it needed to interview his past teachers and principals.

Smith visited Pulaski School March 28 to talk about his dreams, his diligence and his mother's three magic words. The visit is part of a "Homework Before Hoops" program sponsored by the Pistons. Linda Howard, Pulaski's literacy coach, brought Smith to the school to tell his story, underline the importance of a good education, and let him show off his championship ring.



Pulaski teachers Matthew Bruno, Renia Butler, Linda Howard and Ella Gillespie with Piston management Aaron Smith. Smith shows off his Detroit Piston championship ring.

"Call your teachers and principals today and ask what would they say about you," he said. "For me, thankfully, they said he always says please and thank you. He tries his best."

Focusing for a Day on Focus Hope

Top scholars from the Breithaupt Career and Technical Center helped Focus Hope April 3 package food for the needy. Roz Payne Thompson is the advisor for the National Technical Honor Society at Breithaupt. She took 13 of



De'Jah Cannon packs food for the needy.



Jazzmine Williams, Sharon Hunter, Conrado Zamora and Jo'Vonna Shack.

her students, who have GPAs of 3.5 to 4.0, to help.

The high-performing students went to the task like they do their school work – with gusto. A Focus Hope employee told them, "Slow down, slow down, you're working too fast."

Payne Thompson credits their strong work ethic to the skills they learned at the vocational school.

"This is a bunch of good kids," Payne Thompson said. "It's the skills we're

teaching them to be ready for the world of work. But they also wanted to come out and do something for the community."

"This is better than sitting in classrooms all day doing work," said Jo'Vonna Shack, 17. "This is fun."

Sharon Hunter, 17, said days in the field help you decide if it's the kind of work you want to do.

Besides, said De'Jah Cannon, 17, "Everybody needs some help."

Playing It Forward at Pasteur

At the end of a spectacular black history music program at Pasteur Elementary School on April 18, teacher Ceressie Smith soaked up the moment. She climbed to the stage and took the microphone.

"I played this clarinet through high school," Smith announced, holding an instrument case. "And my daughters played it after me. I'd like to give away my instrument to a student I don't know."

Smith watched a program where graduating students played violin since kindergarten and the school's violin teacher, Flo Paterni, announced she will retire after 36.6 years.

The school has had the good fortune of a cohesive staff and involved parents. The Pasteur concerts always bring a full house of parents. They know they'll get a fun and dynamic show.

"I want to pass the instrument to one of the students in the band," Smith said, picking a name out of a hat. Jordan Grant, a sixth-grade student, was called to the stage to receive the clarinet.

"I want to continue a tradition of passing on and giving back within the community," Smith said. Beaming, the school finished the spring show.



Jerry L. White students prepare a healthy parfait. Dae-junierra Rimmer prepares a parfait with teacher Gayle Owens in the background (below).

A Tasty Parfait without the Fat

Gayle Owens knows a few things after 25 years teaching in Detroit — how to reach her students and how to write a grant.

Owens is combining these skills to teach her students that good nutrition and exercise will help their well-being, thanks to a \$500 grant. The Youth Service America grant aims to promote healthy eating and exercising in schools.

But it's not that simple. Owens must come at it from many different angles to reach her cognitively impaired students at Jerry L. White Center.

In her classroom recently, her students learned to assemble a parfait snack with yogurt, granola and frozen berries. Despite no sugar added, the J.L. White students gave it a thumbs up.

Each of her five groups of students have painted T-shirts with varied fruits and vegetables. They will compose four different rap songs about healthy nutrition and exercise. They've finished one:

"String beans and broccoli
Are good for you
Eat your apples and your oranges too
Water, milk and juice
Keep you healthy you see
While wheat, rice and bread give you energy."

Then they'll write a musical and make a music video. Educational technician Jennifer Lee will help make an iVideo.

"It's going to be fun," Owens said, "because I love it."





Around the World in a Day



Every tile of Blackwell School of International Studies was covered by the world on April 25. Maps, flags, history lessons, customs, artifacts, ethnic dress, language and alphabets lined the halls and classrooms. Each year Blackwell, an international studies school, puts on "Around the World in a Day." The school invites speakers and hosts a grand luncheon with ethnic foods ranging from spring rolls to hummus and couscous.

This year, the event was a phenomenal success. More than 45 speakers visited to say how much ethnicity and culture enriches America. Willie DeChavez, resource room teacher and the primary organizer (at right), said Blackwell is the model for consideration to expand international studies to other schools in the district. Over the loud speaker at the end of the day, principal Patricia Hines didn't conceal her enthusiasm. "The staff did an awesome, awesome job."

Every Day is Black History Day

Black Americans who enriched the arts, sciences and industry of America were celebrated at a Black History program April 18 at Pasteur Elementary School.

"We know Black History Month is February," said Sheila Langford, who directed the program. "But really it's every day of the year."

The stunning program was subtitled "(His) Story, Your Story, Our Story." Students portrayed prominent Americans past and present ranging from Mary J. Blige to Langston Hughes and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Students in Richele Oliver's class dressed as professionals and announced their personal quests for the future.

Oliver told the audience she recently met with Judge Glenda Hatchett. They discussed what it takes for the current generation to become the greatest generation.

"Judge Hatchett said your dream becomes a reality when you have a plan."



Clark Aspires to Go Higher

When Willie Wood started a campaign for his students to plan for college, his program grew exponentially. The fourth-grade teacher at Clark Preparatory Academy asked prominent Americans to tape a video message to his students.

Dozens signed on, including U.S. Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow,



WDIV TV morning news anchor Rhonda Walker with Clark teacher Willie Wood.

State Superintendent Mike Flanagan, radio personality Tom Joyner, and presidents from prominent historically black colleges across the country.

Wood then made a special visit

to Rhonda Walker, WDIV morning anchor, to ask her to be a keynote speaker for a school wide event. After an "Aspire to go Higher" parade outside on April 4, Walker said she was awed by the event at Clark.

"Hands down, this is the most awesome school I've been to in my life," Walker said. She took in all the college banners and tri-folds of historically black colleges constructed by the students.

"I've never seen anything like this," she gushed.

Wood is serious about getting his students to plan for college. He took a group to tour Eastern Michigan University where they saw dorm rooms and the student center. He asked students to research and start determining a career choice. His guest speakers talked about their own journeys and difficulties.



"A lot of times you'll find people who are unhappy," Walker told the student body. "They never went to college. I've never met anyone who's unhappy about getting a college education.

"I've been out of college a few years

now and I've accomplished numerous awards and honors," she said. "None of that compares to the biggest accomplishment of my lifetime – graduating from college. It's the hardest thing I've done."

Clippert Wins at World In Motion Competition

Clippert Academy was invited to compete in the World in Motion Fuel Cell Car Competition on April 18. With only one week to prepare, the students worked every night after school to get ready for the competition.

On April 27 the team shined. Clippert won first, second, and third place in the accuracy competition. The team won third place in the endurance with weight competition. It also won third place in the speed competition.



The team was crowned the "Grand Champions." Clippert also received an award for its posters and for its sportsmanship. Some students came home with five medals around their necks.

"We are so very proud of our students at Clippert," said their teacher Kathryn Meloche. "They are truly champions."

The COPE \$100 Campaign

The COPE committee, the DFT's political action fund, is asking each member to commit to giving \$100 by June 30. This is a campaign to stop the attacks on teachers and support state legislators who appreciate the hard and thankless work Detroit teachers do every day. If you haven't yet donated, send your contribution to COPE c/o the DFT, 2875 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit MI, 48202.

Over \$450

Bailey, Ivy
Reaves, Edna

Over \$350

O'Keefe, Mark

Over \$200

Bonacci, Vida
Doniver, Lois
Stark, Paul

\$100 to \$150

Brown, Kurtis
Busek, Donald
Hawkins, Shirley
Johnson, Keith
Schenk, Michael

\$100

Arneau, Tracy
Arsenault, Kim
Beatty, Julie
Bell, Denise
Bourbonais, Christine
Burrell, Joyce
Crowley, Ann
Falcusan, Patrick
Hammell, Patricia
Hartwig, Karl
Hogg, Wanda
Johnson, Sherri
Kendred, Tirria
Luttenberger, Joseph
Mabarak, Mary
Martin, Kelvin
Newberry, Wendy
Parnell, Vanessa
Pelaiez-Rodriguez, Nubia
Pruitt, Deborah
Puryear, Michelle
Roberson, Anthony
Shriman, Pamela
Smith, Patricia
Templin-Wehrenberg, Susan
Thomas, Ricardo

Walker, Natalie
Weertz, Margaret
Weertz, Paul

\$50 to \$99

Aldridge, Vanessa
Ames-Powell, Nicole
Artt, Michelle
Bowen, Michele
Burack, Brenda
Clark, Felecia
Curd, Sandra
Danahue, Joann
D'Angelo, Mary
Holstein, Christopher
Horton-Willis, Delisle
Koslowsky, David
McMurtry, Keith
O'Neal, Gretchen
Oswell, Gary
Portnoy, Steven
Scott, LaTisha
Sims, LaShawn
Stoetzer, Danielle
Ventimiglia, Ellen
Wells, Nicoa
Wilkerson, Beverly
Wilson, Thomas

\$0 to \$49

Abood, Christine
Almeranti, Lisa
Amene, Rosemary
Armstrong, Lory
Barker, Robin
Bouler, Gwendolyn
Bowers, France
Bridges, Myra
Broughton, Michelle
Burk, Dorothy
Burk, Joy
Card, Lisa
Cato, Nicole
Clinkscale, Desiree
Dage, Martha
Darnell, Delores
Davis, Kelly
DelGreco, Nino
Diebel, Tracey
Dixon, Ramona
Doty, Patricia
Eppes, Vanessa
Flack, Cynthia
Gamble, Sybil
Gibson, Victor
Green, June

Green, Roosevelt
Haikio, Sylvia
Hoskins, Demetria
Hunt, Cheryl
Jenkins-Sigmon, Veda
Jeter-Grayer, Lorraine
Kimble, Lynnize
King, Yolanda
Klyce, Maudice
Knott, Michael
Krzyzanowski, Amy
Lafreniere, Sheila
Lake, Daniel
Lawrence, Louvera
Lee, Crystal
Martin, Terrence
Massengill, Rochelle
Matthews, Cynthia
McCall, David
McCoy, Marissa
McGhee, Marion
Metz, Patricia
Moore, Robert
Moroni, Mark
Oliver, Mershira
Olszewski, Susan
Partmon, Robin
Peart, Kristina
Pierce, Carol
Rosenbaum, Elizabeth
Sargent, Von Shelton
Scott, Lionel
Scott, Lisa
Seabron, Kathryn
Sharpe, Sybil
Shelton-Pierce, Indira
Simpson, Joyce
Smith, Charlie
Smith, Yolanda
Stanch, Virginia
Tekyi-Mensah, Joseph
Thurman, Diane
Tilman, Melaine
Toyeas, Nick
Tripp, Michelle
Trowell, Letha
Walton, Marcus
Washington, Miranda
Wasilewski, Jeffrey
Wells, Marcy
Wells, Nicoa
West, Renee
Western, Mary
Woods, Krystal
Woods, Lulu
Woodson, Marie

Learning the Value of Sleep

Sometimes the obvious answer to a problem is one you can't see.

Take Nancy Maxwell. Her 14-year-old daughter was tired, moody and having difficulty in school. She snored so loudly, Maxwell took her other child to the pediatrician to get ear plugs.

The doctor asked why he wasn't treating the snoring 14-year-old? Soon it became clear that the girl need her tonsils and adenoids removed. Since that outpatient operation, the girl slept better, grew two inches and almost miraculously improved her health and her studies.

The obvious escaped Maxwell. Today Maxwell tours schools in metro Detroit to extol the virtues of good sleep. She is executive director of Sweet Dreamzzz, Inc., a non-profit that teaches students and parents the importance of good sleep.

"A hyper child may actually be a tired child," says Ann Raftery, who led a Sweet Dreamzzz workshop April 25 at Gompers School. Oftentimes, behavior, social and academic problems stem from lack of sleep, especially in the current generation of kids.

"The first thing you should rule out is lack of sleep," Raftery says. The organization outlined several specifics about sleep.

- Children should go to bed by 8:30 p.m.
- Elementary children need between 10 and 12 hours of sleep.
- Bedrooms should be heated at a cool 65 F.
- Children should not have TVs in their rooms.
- Parents should cut TV and screen time two hours before bedtime.

More than 20 Gompers parents attended the workshop and found it enlightening.

"I learned something new today," said Maria Campbell. "I got a better understanding of why they need sleep."

When it comes to being good at school, perhaps a simple and obvious place to start is to get a good night's sleep.



Nancy Maxwell and Ann Raftery of Sweet Dreamzzz gave away sleeping tips and sleeping bags to parents at Gompers School.

Calendar

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

MAY

- 8** School Social Workers Chapter Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- 10** General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 14** Special Education Chapter Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 15** Retirees Chapter Meeting, 11:30 a.m.
- 28** Schools Closed, Memorial Day

JUNE

- 4** Special Education Chapter Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 5** School Social Workers Chapter Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- 7** General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- 14** Last day for students
- 15** Last day for teachers
- 19** Retirees Chapter Meeting, 11:30 a.m.

JULY

- 27-29** AFT Convention in Detroit