

## Update on DFT Lawsuit

The DFT's lawsuit against the district over unfair evaluations that led to our members being placed on layoff and, in some cases, told they were ineligible for a position, is progressing slowly.

The district is pursuing settlement discussions with the DFT and there have been some developments. But due to a confidentiality clause, the union is not at liberty to discuss the details.

"Due to the strength of our lawsuit and the results of the appeals hearing, many of our members are returning to work as vacancies are identified," said Edna Reaves, DFT executive vice president, "thanks to the teachers in the schools for revealing those vacancies and oversized classes."

James Britton, the Sachs Waldman attorney who filed the suit on behalf of the DFT, said evaluations are now mandated by state law. However, Michigan law requires evaluations to be rigorous, transparent and fair. In the case of Detroit Public Schools evaluations, he said, they were not.

Teachers who were evaluated in 2011 or 2012 had not received their scores. And the teachers did not know how their scores were translated. Some teachers never were evaluated and some were evaluated for as little as five minutes.

The union tried to warn the district that the first year of conducting the state-mandated evaluations should not be used to recall teachers.

"Had they listened to the union in the beginning, we would not be here," DFT President Keith Johnson said when the lawsuit was filed. "These teachers should not suffer because of the incompetence of the district."



**Cutline: Detroit teachers spoke out at a listening tour sponsored by the DFT.**

## DFT Conducts Listening Tour

The DFT conducted "reach out" meetings last week to listen to members' concerns. Through the meetings, held at different locations, DFT officials listened to members' issues and concerns.

DFT leaders are in discussions with the district to persuade it to negotiate a new contract. In advance of this, DFT officials want to know the members' priorities. In addition, the DFT asked members to complete an online survey sent to them via email and also accessible on the DFT website.

"You can't always come to us," said Edna Reaves, DFT executive vice president, "so we're coming to you." Reaves took questions on such issues as sick days and large class sizes to saving the vocational programs.

"I want to know what's going on at a school level," she said. "One of my biggest goals is organizing and mobilizing."

One member was concerned about the longevity of the district's vocational centers.

"It's going to be a shame if they close these vocational centers and students don't get the opportunity to go there," said Patricia Bell, a teacher at Golightly Career and Technical

Center. "I'm fed up to here. The majority of these students are not going to college."

The district gave away 13 schools, including six high schools, to the EAA. It didn't consider the ramifications for the city's four vocational high schools, which are preparing students for high-skill jobs. Students from the other high schools travel to the vocational schools for a half day.

Reaves also addressed the "attendance threat" that teachers are feeling when they take a sick day. Reaves said teachers should know their rights and the rules of the Family Medical Leave Act. The district is now giving teachers written warnings of "excessive absences" after three sick days. Reaves advised teachers to get medical documentation if off for more than three days.

Since she became executive vice president a year ago, Reaves wanted to open up communication and mobilization among members. Since then the DFT got a Facebook page, sends email blasts, updated the website, visited members' homes during the summer, conducted telephone town halls, done robo calls, and is starting a text message hotline.

# DON'T FORGET THE YOU IN UNION

By Keith Johnson  
DFT President

I have become increasingly concerned by the willingness of too many of our members to stand aside rather than stand up when they witness their colleagues, their DFT brothers and sisters, getting bullied and intimidated by some administrators in our schools.

It is unconscionable to me that someone could refuse to "get involved" when they see a colleague mistreated because they don't want to feel the wrath of a principal on THEM.

The DFT that raised me in my professional career was comprised of members who felt that an attack on one was an attack on all. There were times when those who came before us knew they were putting their careers on the line when they stood up against injustice. They realized that the more they took the more they'd have to take. They realized that if you fail to stand up to an injustice, justice becomes harder to attain.

It was because of their sacrifices, their wins and their losses, their courage and their determination, the DFT, despite all we've had to endure, is still a strong union. This is evidenced by the rhetoric we hear from district leaders that "the DFT doesn't run DPS." We never claimed to, nor do we seek to.

What we will do is compel the district to honor contracts, follow policy and law, and make them pay when they don't. We cannot, however, continue our legacy of success if people are afraid to stand with us and for each other.

I recently encountered a DFT member at a Meijer store who came up to me and said "Hello President Johnson... I am one of your members." I greeted her and said, I need to come by your school soon to do a walkthrough just to see how things are going. Imagine my dismay when she frankly said, "Please don't tell anyone you talked with me."

I told the member how disappointing it was for someone whom I am paid to represent to be afraid for anyone to know she saw me in a store.

At the same time we hear complaints,

"What's the union doing about this, or what is the union going to do about that?" What do they expect the "UNION" to do without the people who ARE THE UNION?

Members call my office and don't want to give their name, yet want their issues addressed. Sorry, but I am not cut like that. I need to know who I am helping as president, and who we are helping at the DFT office.

I recently met with the staff at a school and one of OUR members apparently audio-taped the meeting because the principal subsequently approached some members who raised concerns the principal could only know about if someone told him or he heard the tape; (rest assured I WILL confront that principal on this issue).

NEWSFLASH to those who think that being the stooge, mole or informant will be your salvation. IT WON'T! I have born witness to many instances in which DFT members thought they were insulating themselves by keeping administration informed of what their colleagues were planning or doing, only to find themselves standing alone when the administration TURNED ON THEM! Their colleagues treated them like a pariah (deservedly so), and the administrator now had no use for them. Their next step, CALL THE UNION to complain about being harassed!

The DFT, like all unions, has taken some hits in recent years. That is indisputable. What is also indisputable is that we continue to fight back and win.

The current litigation regarding teacher evaluations would not have been possible if those victimized by this blatant injustice were not willing to stand up for themselves. Equally important, they had col-



**MAYORAL CONTENDERS** — Wayne County Sheriff Benny Napoleon and Mike Duggan, former Wayne County prosecutor and CEO of the Detroit Medical Center, visited the DFT in February. Na-

poléon (above) chatted with DFT President Keith Johnson and Executive Vice President Edna Reaves on one of his stops while considering a mayoral bid. Duggan (left) had a conference with Johnson and Reaves as well as the DFT Executive Board, outlining how he would revive Detroit.



leagues who were willing to be witnesses and testify on their behalf.

We recently won \$78,000 in back pay for a teacher who was unjustly terminated. It took three years to get her pay, BUT WE GOT IT! Another member recently received \$7,000 in back pay because the district refused to classify her as a certified contract teacher while having her in a position for which she was certified.

The DFT can't survive unless the members we represent are willing to stand with us and for each other. We did not become a strong labor union because of our spectators. We became strong because of our activists.

I make our struggle analogous with the struggle for equal rights, fair treatment under the law, and the right to even form unions. You must take a chance to have a chance. If you watch an injustice to your brother or sister and do nothing, what will you expect when an injustice is rendered on you?

To borrow from President John F. Kennedy: Ask not what your union has done for you, ask what you can do for YOUR UNION!

# Teachers, Take a Bow

By Edna Reaves  
DFT Executive Vice President



**H**ip, hip, hooray! The district is cheering. Roy Roberts and his team, a group that doesn't educate a single student, recently held a press conference celebrating an increase in our MEAP scores. Our students made improvements in 17 of 18 assessments. One would think he would have surrounded himself with teachers and students. After all, the teachers educate the students and the students take the test. Roberts and Superintendent of Academics Karen Ridgeway, along with central office personnel

## Updates . . .

### Stroll into Spring Fundraiser

The Student Assistance Services, Inc. is celebrating 60 years of service. SASI was founded by Detroit Public Schools attendance officers in 1953 to help school aged children remain in school. They provide needy students with material necessities to enable them to attend school regularly and to participate in educational programs. SASI gives children clothing, shoes, glasses, and the repair of hearing aids. To celebrate 60 years of this generous work, SASI is inviting the community to a "Strolling Buffet" fundraiser from 3:30 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, April 14 at the American Serbian Memorial Hall, 19940 Van Dyke in Detroit. The cost is a cash donation to SASI. Donations of \$25 and more are tax deductible. For more information, call SASI president Kathy Cornish at 313-460-5304 or chairperson Marquette Sims at 313-725-0252.

### Marcus Garvey Wins Grant

Marcus Garvey Academy on Detroit's east side has received a \$500 Transportation Grant from Michigan Youth Arts & Cultural Affairs (MCACA). Teacher Evelyn P. Holmes and Dean of Student Affairs Daryl Weaver applied for the grant to help subsidize the cost of transportation for Community Based Learning Instruction (field trips). Marcus Garvey continues to use various resources as part of an initiative to improve student attendance. Congratulations to Marcus Garvey Academy!

### DFT Members in Urgent Need of Sick Days

Four DFT members are in urgent need of donated sick days. They are: Denise Smith at Brewer Elementary School, Kimberly Leverett at Erma Henderson School, Andrew Thomas at Breithaupt Career & Technical Center, and Sheilia Weaver at Keidan Special Education Center. If you can help by donating a sick day to them, please download the form on the DFT website and fax it to the Office of Payroll at (313) 873-4448. The day IS NOT recorded as an absence; the number of days in your sick bank is just reduced and not recorded as used.

stood before the cameras filled with joy over the scores. Ridgeway claimed all the credit with barely a mention of teachers or students.

Why not give credit where credit is due? Roberts wants to take full credit, but I could argue that this administra-

tion is reaping the fruits of Robert Bobb and Barbara Byrd Bennett's initiatives. We all know it takes a couple of years to gauge the results of change. Are we starting to see how the use of "Open Court" is benefiting our students?

The MEAP test was taken in October, six weeks into the current academic year. Therefore, the scores being reported now are a reflection of last year's efforts. So who will get the credit for student growth on this year's evaluation reports?

Two of Ridgeway's second-semester goals include updating Individualized Learning Maps (ILM) and adding more robust professional development requiring teachers to use even more differentiated instruction. Not one teacher is opposed to making the necessary adjustments to ensure the success of students.

But the district's actions are to the contrary. This district continues to get in its own way of success. More differentiated instruction requires additional planning. If improvements on the MEAP are a reflection of differentiated instruction then why reduce the preparation periods that allow teachers to plan for such instruction?

When I first heard Ridgeway mention the Individual Learning Plans (ILP) last year, which I assume are now referred to as Individualized Learning Maps, I thought this data would be generated by central office and passed along to the classroom teacher. But it appears that teachers are developing these plans through data from all of the tests they administer; Dibbles, Burst, Accelerated Math, Accelerated Reader, MEAP and numerous other assessments that are administered throughout the year.

No one I've spoken with has received anything from the district in the form of an ILP or ILM. Ridgeway now says that each student will receive a "new easy-to-use Individualized Learning Map in the form of tri-fold brochures with each child's academic data showing what they have learned and what they need to learn." Who will prepare these tri-fold brochures?

Detroit teachers are walking on pins and needles, but they never lose sight of their purpose and responsibility: educating our students. In spite of what our legislators or administrators throw at us, we keep forging forward in educating the children in this district. Even though teachers had to overcome an unfair evaluation process, oversized classes, and the lack of support and supplies from this administration, they continue to strive for success. So if there is a need to celebrate MEAP scores, it should be done by the employees in the schools and the students. Teachers, take a bow, and celebrate your work and your students.



Edna Reaves

# THE DETROIT teacher NEWSMAKERS

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY DFT!



The DFT turned 82 in February and members celebrated at the Feb. 7 General Membership meeting. COPE chair Ivy Bailey, left, did the honor of cutting the cake. “Who would have thought in 2013 we would be in the same place as when we started?” said Edna Reaves, DFT executive vice president. Unionism is difficult work that never stops, she said, particularly in times like these.



**Sabrina Luvene started the school store at Marcus Garvey Academy**

## Shopping and Positive Behavior at Marcus Garvey

Lavertis Richardson, 8, flashed his “Garvey Bucks” proudly. What are they for?

“So you can shop and be good,” the second-grader said. “Listen to the teacher and do your work.”

And is that hard to do? “No,” he said.

Lavertis is one of hundreds of kids waiting to see the Marcus Garvey Academy store open and the light turned on.

Special education assistant Sabrina Luvene started the store as a way to merge three schools and get the staffs to gel. Three years later, just cracking the door of the store gets students excited because it’s open only once every week or two.

The store has everything from ice skates to sleeping bags to dress-up costumes. It has candy and stuffed animals, Frisbees and educational games.

Luvene got the idea from WC RESA for positive behavior support.

“The students are learning delayed gratification,” Luvene said, “which many of their parents need to do too.”

“They’re learning how to manage their own money, rewards and consequences, and budgeting,” she said.

Instead of constant disciplining, the Marcus Garvey staff is now concentrating on positive behavior and rewarding it with Garvey Bucks.

Luvene said every staff member is involved, even the custodian. The Garvey Bucks are helping with self correction and reducing suspensions.

“Any child being caught doing something positive,” she said, “coming to school every day, coming to school on time, can earn a buck.”



## Celebrating Black History at Carver Academy

Sixth-grader NanaAkua Obeng was dressed to the nines at the Black History Gala Feb. 26 at Carver STEM Academy. She owes a bit of thanks for her Ghanaian dress to her grandmother from Ghana.

“My dad is Ghanaian and his mother made this for me,” she said. Obeng has visited Ghana three times in her 11 years but her concentration was on African American history.

“Personally I think we’ve improved a lot over the years through a lot of people with inventions,” she said.

Carver counselor Bettina Carey reminded the students at the gala why it’s important to celebrate Black History.

“To understand your history is to understand that the voices of the past speak to us personally,” she said, “asking us what have we done, what are we doing, and what are we preparing to do to ensure our ancestors did not dream and die in vain.”



**Carver sixth-grader NanaAkua Obeng and counselor Bettina Carey.**



**Teachers Patriaka Rossell and Rita Lockridge.**

# THE DETROIT teacher NEWSMAKERS

## Poetry Contest Inspires Detroit Students

A Detroit public high schools' poetry contest, sponsored by the Native SUN, DPS Superintendent John Telford, and Detroit Team for Justice, has produced several winners:

The first place award and a \$100 prize went to Rachel Banks, of Detroit School of Arts (teacher John Wood), for her poem "In the Dark."

LeQuin Robinson, of Cody Academy of Public Leadership (teacher Sherina Rodriguez Sharpe), won second place and \$50 for his poem "So-Called Miranda Rights."

Cassandra Coleman, of Finney High School (teacher Jacquelyn Jones-Frederick), won third place and \$20 for her poem "The Girl From Your Dream."

Keith Cole-Wofford, of Martin Luther King High School (teacher Andrea

Kelly), also won a third place award and \$20 for his poem "I thought of You."

Clayton Malone, of Cody High School for Medicine and Community Health (teacher Sherina Rodriguez Sharpe), won honorable mention for his poem "Egypt."

Damien Willis, of Osborn Prep (teacher Sherina Rodriguez Sharpe), also won honorable mention for his poem "What It's Like To Be Black and Intelligent."

All of these students received autographed copies of Telford's latest book, CREATIVE INSUBORDINATION - 40 Successful Strategies (Harmonie Park Press).

The prize winners and the two honorable mention poets were invited to read their poems on The John Telford Show on WCHB NewsTalk 1200.



**DPS Supt. John Telford with poetry contest winner Rachel Banks and her father Robert Banks.**

### In the Dark

By Rachel Banks

In the dark  
of the night  
Overhead looms  
a single glowing  
orb of red  
It signals to a stop-  
A perfect standstill  
With a majesty  
all its own  
it commands you  
just to wait  
Then it's replaced  
by another light  
The proceeding order  
Is then undone

Patiently  
Red  
Bides  
Its  
Time

## Heart Smart at Carver

On Feb. 1, Carver S.T.E.M Academy participated in the American Heart Association's "Healthy Heart Awareness Day." The students and staff showed support by wearing the color red, signing "Healthy Heart Shout Out" cards and having a "Hustle for Healthy Heart" dance to promote awareness about heart disease and prevention.

Carver collected donations all month that will go to the American Heart Association and its campaign on the importance of heart health. Healthy minds, bodies and spirits equals a healthier you!



# Thinking of Retiring This Year?

By Patrick Falcusan,  
DFT Retirement Counselor

This is the time of the year when many DFT members begin giving serious thought to retirement. Following is a timeline to help members through the retirement process.



**Patrick Falcusan**

1. In order to retire, you must meet certain criteria (see box).

2. In order to retire, you need to determine if your pension (and Social Security if eligible) will provide you with enough income. Go to your mi account ([www.michigan.gov/orsmi-account](http://www.michigan.gov/orsmi-account)), calculate what your pension would be and compare that to your bring home pay now. (If you are eligible for Social Security, check with Social Security to see how much

that would be).

3. In early April, submit your retirement application to the State ([www.michigan.gov/orsmiaccount](http://www.michigan.gov/orsmiaccount)). If you are 65, or older, you need to apply for Medicare parts A and B if you have not already done so (see box).

4. In early April, if you have a TDP (buying time through payroll deduction) and wish to apply any of your lump sum payout money from the District (TIP, last four pays [if on 26 pays] etc.) toward your TDP, stop by the DFT office (call first at 313.875.6783 to make sure I am there) to pick up the forms needed.

5. In early May, contact your TSA agent if you wish to shelter any of your lump sum payout money from the District (TIP, last four pays [if on 26 pays] etc.).

6. In mid June (if you have not already done so), turn in your irrevocable Separation from Service (SFS) form to the District. Go to HR (10th floor Fisher Building) ask for two SFS forms, fill them both out (putting July 1, 2013 as your retirement date), check the box that says "retiring," get both SFS forms date-stamped, and take one SFS form with you for your records.

7. If you retire July 1 and follow the instructions above,

you should expect to get:

- your new insurance card from the state in June.
- one last pay from DPS in early July.
- your first pension payment on July 25.
- your lump sum payout money (TIP, last for pays [if on 26 pays] etc.) in August.

## Who is Eligible to Retire?

- If you have Basic and are under age 60, you must be at least 55 and have 30 years of service in order to get an unreduced pension.
- If you have MIP and are under age 60, you must be at least 46 and have at least 30 years of service in order to get an unreduced pension.
- If you are at least 55 but less than 60, you are eligible for an early reduced pension if you have 15 years but less than 30 years of service.
- If you are over 60, you are eligible for a pension if you have 10 years or more of service (Basic) or 5 years or more of service (MIP).
- If you are over 55 but under 60 with more than 15 years but less than 30 years of service credit, you may decide to retire by July 1 to preserve your right to health care along with your early reduced pension.
- If you are over 55 with 10 actual years worked, you might be able to buy five years to get you to the 15-year threshold.
- If you are under age 55 and have more than 10 years of service, you are vested with the state retirement system and would be eligible for a pension at age 60 even if you never returned to teaching in a public school that was part of the pension system. The pension would be based on your years worked.
- If you leave DPS and you have less than 10 years of service and are not vested, you could get a refund of your MIP contributions or leave your MIP contributions with the state in case you took employment with another public school in Michigan that was part of the retirement system. Your years in Detroit would then count toward the 10 years you needed in order to get vested.

## After You Retire

Several questions always pop up when folks retire: What happens to my health care? When does the payment for TIP come? When does my pension start, etc.? Below are many of the answers.

**Q:** What happens to my health care?

**A:** Your District insurance will stop the last day of the month you retire (June 30 for those retiring July 1). Your new retirement insurance will start the first day of the month

you retire (July 1 for those retiring July 1).

**Q:** What happens to my pay?

**A:** For those retiring July 1, one more regular check will come in July (both for 22 pays and 26 pays).

**Q:** I have 26 pays and retired July 1. What happens to the four checks that normally come in the summer?

**A:** Those four checks will come along with other monies owed you in one big final check.

**Q:** When will I get my final check for TIP monies, last four checks, etc.?

**A:** In most cases, the final payment will come in mid to late August for folks retiring July 1. If you are sheltering or buying time with any of this money, you must have notified the district ahead of time.

**Q:** When will my pension begin?

**A:** For most folks retiring July 1 the first pension payment will come July 25.

**Q:** Can I work after I retire?

**A:** You cannot work for a school district that is part of the retirement system for one month after you retire.

**Q:** If I get a job after I retire, will I have a limit on how much I can earn?

**A:** New rules about working after retirement became effective July 1, 2010.

1. If you work for a school district that is part of the state retirement system and you become an employee of that school district and are paid directly by that school district, you will have an earnings cap of one-third of your final salary average — \$20,000-\$24,000 for most folks.

2. If you work for a school district that participates in the retirement system but that district uses a third party to pay your wages, your pension and health care will stop as long as you are receiving wages from the third party.

3. If you become a consultant for a school district that participates in the retirement system and are paid as a consultant and not an employee, your pension and health care will stop as long as you are receiving wages from that district.

4. If you work somewhere that is not a participating employer or a private school, in private industry or a public school in another state beside Michigan, you can earn as much as you want.

**Q:** Will collecting Social Security impact how much I can earn?

**A:** Yes, between 62 and 66 (or your full Social Security age) there is a Social Security annual limit of approximately \$15,000 on how much can be earned without impacting your Social Security. After 66 (or your full

Social Security age), Social Security does not have an earnings cap. The pension system's earnings cap will remain in place the rest of your life.

**Applying for Medicare**

If you or your spouse are over 65 when you retire and want health care through the retirement system, you will need Medicare parts A and B. Almost all members over 65 already have Medicare part A but not part B. Here is what you need to do to have part B in place by the time you retire.

- On your retirement insurance form, put the date from your Medicare card when Medicare part A started. Put your retirement date for the date Medicare part B started. (If you don't yet have part A, also put your retirement date for when part A started).
- Three months before you retire, go to Social Security and notify them of your retirement date and tell them you want your Medicare part B to be effective the same day as your retirement date (and part A if you don't already have part A).
- If Social Security gives you a Medicare form to be filled out by your employer (they almost always do), take that form to the 10th floor of the Fisher Building (Human Resources). (Make an extra copy of the form in case the first copy gets lost and you have to repeat this process).
- Submit the form from Social Security to the District along with a copy of your Separation from Service form. If this is the first time you have submitted your Separation from Service form, submit two copies, get them date-stamped and take one copy with you for your records.
- The District will fill out your form from Social Security and return it to you. (Usually you will have to leave the form and come back later to pick it up).
- Take the completed form back to Social Security. (Make a copy for your records).

**DFT 2012 Dues for Tax Purposes**

Full Dues .....	\$894.08
Three-Quarter Dues.....	\$670.56
Half Dues.....	\$447.04
Quarter Dues.....	\$223.52

# Questions Without Answers

By Mark O'Keefe  
DFT Controller

**W**hy do people consider 20 years of experience an asset for doctors, lawyers, and bankers, and a liability for teachers?

How can the EAA escape accountability for this October's MEAP scores, claiming they only had the students for six weeks, while DPS credits their high scores to programs that were just instituted in those same six weeks?



Mark O'Keefe

Why do people work so hard to make teachers accountable for MEAP scores, while nobody tries to correlate low test scores to high class size, or the number of different teachers a student has in a year?

Why did the state move schools into EAA after only one year of priority school reforms, and then give EAA five years to see if their reforms work?

Why do people have one face on their heads and foreheads on their faces?

Why does the DPS teacher evaluation system punish teachers for every day they are absent, while students have no repercussions for excessive absences?

Why is kindergarten optional?

Why are schools allowed to eliminate physical education for many students at the very time when eliminating childhood obesity is a national priority?

Why do we treat people who do not get college degrees as failures, except for the 30 percent of our state legislators we elected in spite of their lack of a degree?



## Retired Detroit Teacher Works to Empower Girls

**G**wendolyn Peoples retired June 30 from Clark Preparatory Academy but felt she had more to offer her school and students. So she asked Clark's principal, Demond Thomas, if she could start an Empowerment Program in January for the middle school girls.

"My mission was to empower young women to believe in their individual abilities and strengths of leadership and creativity," Peoples said.

"One main focus of my program is to encourage young women to give back to their community through volunteer services," she said.

Peoples took a group of 12 students to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen Jan. 18 to expose them to people less fortunate than themselves but also to expand their senses of generosity and gratitude.

They served, cleaned tables, swept the dining hall, and greeted people for three hours.

"All 12 of my students stated what a wonderful time they had helping and serving others," she said. So much so that she will sponsor another group of students to serve at the soup kitchen in March.

We're on **Facebook!**

Check us out at

[www.facebook.com/DFT231](http://www.facebook.com/DFT231)



# Grants . . .

## Educator Awards

ING recognizes innovative, effective education through its ING Unsung Heroes Awards. The awards recognize U.S. educators in grades K-12 who devise and implement novel teaching methods that improve learning. Each year 100 finalists are chosen to receive a \$2,000 grant to the teacher and her school. Deadline: April 30, 2013. For info, visit [ing@scholarshipamerica.org](mailto:ing@scholarshipamerica.org).

## Libraries

The Gale/Library Media Connection TEAMS awards reward the collaboration between teachers and media specialists to promote learning, increase student achievement, and build 21st Century skills. Three winners will receive \$2,500, \$500 worth of Gale products and more. Deadline: June 30, 2013, For more info, visit [team-saward@cengage.com](mailto:team-saward@cengage.com).

## New Ideas

The Failure to Promise K-12 Educator's Grant provides funds to educators with new ideas on how to move students in literacy, mathematics, science and technology. Dr. Cleamon Moorer wrote a book about his own journey called, "From Failure to Promise: An Uncommon Path to Professoriate," about flunking out of school but ultimately moving into engineering, consulting and becoming a professor.

Grants of \$1,000 will go to a community-based organization, library or school with creative ideas for using the book in their curriculum. Deadline: July 31, 2013. For info, visit [www.fromfailuretopromise.com](http://www.fromfailuretopromise.com).

## Pet Care

The Pet Care Trust believes kids and pets are a natural combination, and integrating pets in the classroom is a way to help children learn how to treat and care for pets at an early age. The Pets in the Classroom Grants target preK-8 students, and help provide small animals and supplies or habitats for teachers wanting to bring in pets or supplement existing pets in their classrooms. For info, visit [info@petsinthe classroom.org](mailto:info@petsinthe classroom.org).

## High School Inventors

The Lemelson-MIT InvenTeams Award inspires teachers and students to work together to devise an invention that is well thought out and useful. The program is a competitive initiative in which high school students and teachers work in teams to cultivate their creativity and experience invention. They select a problem and develop a prototype invention through this

interactive, self-directed process, which is combined with STEM curricula. Grants up to \$10,000 are available. Deadline: April 5, 2013. For info, visit [inventteams@mit.edu](mailto:inventteams@mit.edu).

## Making a Difference

The Entertainment Software Foundation supports projects that improve the lives of young people age 7 to 18. The foundation wants to use the power of the entertainment industry to create positive social impact in communities. The foundation supports geographically diverse projects that benefit young people of all races and religions. Up to \$50,000 is available. Deadline: May 15, 2013. For info, visit [esafinfo@thesa.com](mailto:esafinfo@thesa.com).

## Young Scientist

Discovery Education and 3M invite young middle school students to enter the Young Scientist Challenge and vie for a grand prize of \$25,000 and the title of America's Top Young Scientist 2013. The challenge involves students submitting a one- to two-minute video that describes a new innovation or solution that impacts how people live, work or play. Deadline: April 23, 2013. For info, visit [YSC@discovery.com](http://YSC@discovery.com)

# Membership Meeting Attendance

School representatives who were in attendance for the months of January and February 2013 are listed below.

### JANUARY, 2013

Academy of the Americas  
 Bates Academy  
 Beckham, William J. Academy  
 Bow Elem. Middle School  
 Breithaupt Career & Tech. Center  
 Brown, Ronald Acad.  
 Bunche Elem. School  
 Carleton Elem. School  
 Carstens Elem. School  
 Carver Elem. School  
 Carver Stem Academy  
 Cass Tech. High School  
 Clemente, Roberto Academy  
 Clippert Academy Middle School  
 Communication and Media Arts  
 Davison Elem./Mdl. School

Det. Federation of Teachers  
 Det. International Academy for Women  
 Detroit School of Arts  
 Dixon Elem. School  
 Drew, Charles R. Trans. Center  
 Durfee Elem. School  
 Earhart Middle School  
 Early Intervention Diagnostic Center  
 Edison Elem. School  
 Elem. West School Social Workers  
 Ellington, Duke Elem.  
 Emerson Elem. School  
 Fisher Upper Academy  
 Garvey, Marcus Academy

Golightly Educ. Center  
 Greenfield Union  
 Holmes, A.L. Elem. School  
 King, John R.  
 King, M.L. High School  
 Mackenzie High School  
 Mann Elementary  
 Marquette Elem. School  
 Marshall, T. Elem. School  
 Mason Elem. School  
 Moses Field Center  
 Nichols Elem. School  
 Noble Elem. School  
 Northwestern High School  
 Palmer Park Prep. Academy  
 Priest Elem. School  
 Psychological Services

Randolph Career & Tech. Center  
 Spain Elem./Mdl. School  
 Thirkell Elem. School  
 Turning Point Academy  
 Vernor Elem. School  
 Western High School  
 Westside Alt. Ed. High School  
 White, Jerry L. High School  
 Wilkins Elem. School  
 Young, Coleman A. Elem. School

### FEBRUARY, 2013

Brown, Ronald Academy  
 Carleton Elementary School  
 Cass Tech High School  
 Clippert Academy

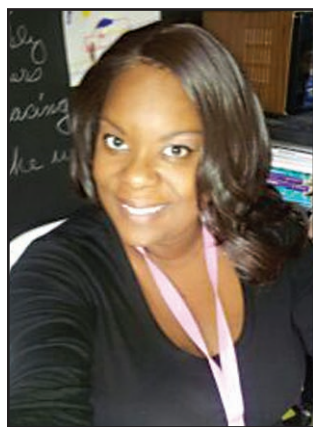
Davis Aerospace High School  
 DFT Office  
 Dixon Elementary Learning Academy  
 Drew, Charles R.  
 Edison Elementary School  
 Fleming Elementary School  
 Holmes, A. L. Elementary School  
 Keidan Special Education Center  
 King, J.R. Performing Arts Academy  
 Mackenzie High School  
 Mann Elementary School  
 Marquette Elementary School  
 Marshall, T. Elementary School  
 Mason Elementary School

Noble Elementary School  
 Northwestern High School  
 Osborn College Preparatory  
 Palmer Park Preparatory Academy  
 Priest Elementary School  
 Randolph Career Technical Center  
 School Social Workers – Elem. West  
 Spain Elementary School  
 Thirkell Elementary School  
 Turning Point Academy  
 Westside Alt. Educ. Academy  
 White, Jerry L. Center  
 Wilkins Elementary School

# Losing Preps is a Losing DPS Strategy

Jeanine Wilson put tons of cash into her classroom and helped her students when they needed a coat or a backpack. But the district's deep disrespect of teachers has put a halt to all that.

Wilson loved working at Detroit Open Elementary School when she started with the district 13 years ago. Now working in Detroit gives her so much stress and, at the same time, takes so much away.



Jeanine Wilson

"My first few years were wonderful," she said. "The leadership was amazing. But now the joy in education is gone.

"We're supposedly the worst district in the state as far as the test scores," she said. "And then you take away preps? You give teachers even less time to prepare?"

This year the district reduced prep periods from five to two a week. Wilson says she uses one prep to do all her planning for the week and the other to put student grades in the grade book.

"I have no time to differentiate instruction," she said. "How are you going to be effective?" She, like most teachers, used prep time to call parents, do research on technique, strategize with other staff, regroup and self reflect.

At a time when teachers are asked to administer more assessments and testing programs like DIBELS and BURST, they have less time to do it. And Wilson, like many teachers, wants to know where all the money goes?

Detroit gets as much per pupil funding as Utica Public Schools. But Utica gives all its students art, music and after school programs. Not so in Detroit.

"Kids in the suburbs get all that," she said. "It's like they're setting our children up for failure."



## Detroit Federation of Teachers Local #231 Retiree Chapter

We welcome you to join us for monthly meetings, free donuts and coffee, socializing, information about your benefits, and current news about Detroit Public Schools!

The DFT Retiree Chapter meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at the DFT Hall, 2875 W. Grand Blvd., (at Lodge Fwy) Detroit, MI 48202 (except for the December holiday luncheon, July and August).

### 2013 meeting dates:

- Tuesday, March 19, 2013- 11:30 a.m. (DFT teachers Retiree Round Up)
- Tuesday, April 16, 2013 - 11:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 21, 2013 - 11:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, June 18, 2013 - 11:30 a.m.

DFT Retiree Chapter Officers:

**President – Jewel Gines**  
**Vice President – Arthur Divers**  
**Program Chair – Ricardo Thomas**  
**Secretary – Charlene Smith**

For latest information about the DFT Retiree Chapter, go to: <http://dft231.mi.aft.org/retirees> or [www.dft231.com](http://www.dft231.com) then "membership" then "retirees."

**Any questions? Call 313-875-3500.**

**DFT Retiree Chapter**  
**Jewel Gines**  
**30001 S. Meadowridge, Farmington Hills, MI 48334**

## 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.

### March

- 7 Executive Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.**
- 14 General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.**
- 19 Retirees Chapter, 11:30 a.m.**
- 29 Schools closed. Good Friday**

### April

- 1-5 Schools closed, Spring Break**
- 8 Schools reopen**
- 11 Executive Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.**
- 16 Retirees Chapter, 11:30 a.m.**
- 18 General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.**

### May

- 2 Executive Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m.**
- 9 General Membership Meeting, 4:30 p.m.**
- 21 Retirees Chapter, 11:30 a.m.**
- 27 Memorial Day, schools closed**