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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Detroit Federation of Teachers Vote Overwhelmingly to Authorize Safety Strike**

**DETROIT – (August 19, 2020)** During an emergency special meeting Wednesday, members of the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) voted to authorize a potential safety strike aimed at pressing the Detroit Public Schools Community District to implement basic science-based safety protocols before schools reopen during the continuing coronavirus pandemic.

The vote authorizes the DFT executive board to call a safety strike if the union and the school district do not reach an agreement. Members voted 91 percent in favor of authorizing a safety strike.

“Over the past few months our members have raised concerns regarding the District’s reopening plan,” said DFT President Terrence Martin. “Choice on whether to work remotely or in person is yet to be codified with signatures and guaranteed for all our members. It is imperative that the District puts protocols in place to protect both staff and students.”

The vote to approve the authorization for the safety strike means that members agree to teach and work remotely, while not endangering their safety. It is not a work stoppage.

“This is the beginning of a fight to ensure that the health and safety protections for our members and our students are in place and enforced,” Martin said after the vote.

During the meeting, DFT leaders and members said the safety strike authorization vote takes a stand to protect safety for students, parents, the community at large and DFT members.

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