

DETROIT FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

General Membership Meeting

April 15, 2021

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order @ 4:33 by President Terrence Martin.

2. Roll Call of Officers

Absent: Darnese Wilkinson (excused)

3. Approval of Minutes

M1: Jason Posey (Broughton) made a motion to accept the March 2021 Membership Meeting Minutes with any necessary corrections. **Motion Passed.**

4. Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer Michelle Broughton read the financial report from July 2020 – February 2021, as well as the February 2021 report.
- All Members – when you have to change your credit card or have to make a change when it comes to your dues, please don't forget to go into Billhighway and make those changes so that you will not be overlooked for DFT business!
- Our finances reflect a real savings because most of us are working from home as well.

5. Elections Committee Report (Oath of Office)

- Election Committee Election 2021 was held March 11-12, 2021 to elect 3 new members to the Committee (members King, Mitchell and Green)
- Term from 2021 to 2023. There were 820 people who logged on to the meeting. 259 Members voted, about 30%.
- This election was held via Survey Monkey and was sent to members present in the March 2021 Membership Meeting, following the close of that meeting. The following members were on the ballot:

LaToya Archie Jackson - 121

Kendra Barclay - 115

Frank Donner-97

Spring Hardy-72

Regina Hunter-113

Mignon Pierce-112

Kerry Williams-62

- New Elections Committee Members were sworn in.

6. Organizing Report

Links to the Building Reps Training will be posted throughout this meeting. Report given by Yolanda King. New and recommitted DFT Members are at 29. We are still in the midst of wrapping up with t-shirts. If you are a Building Rep and you did not receive the link, please e-mail Jason Posey. We thank everyone who turned in forms that show that each building is represented.

7. Special Presentation – Kenneth Scott, HUD Certified Housing Counselor

M2: Vida Bonacci (Broughton) **Procedural Motion:** A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed for discussion or questions after both the President and the Executive Vice President reports. **Motion Passed.**

8. President's Report

- a. **F2F Pause** – Detroit is over 10% with a positive COVID rates. Macomb and Oakland Counties are closer to 18%. We are probably the only school district where our staff has a choice. Other districts have rules where staff must report regardless to whether there are students or not. Talking to colleagues around the country, this is a real struggle. Our choice will continue throughout the school year. As we look to summer and fall, we don't know what that will look like. We will sit down at the table and discuss what this will look like. There is a special Board Meeting going on right now, where decisions about a return, will take place. Our EVP is on that call right now.
- b. **COVID Vaccine** - We are looking for opportunities for the vaccines who are interested in getting one, they are being offered at different locations around the city: Western, Cass 230-0505 and make an appointment.
- c. **Bargaining** – Now, we are doing some contract clean up. We are trying to add language that is in line with our changing times. Our goal is to get as much as we can for our members, as well as a multi-year deal. We are also close to an agreement with LOA's with F2F instruction. In particular, those members who are pulling double duty – that is both virtual and F2F. These members need to be compensated. There has been another push to get those who have been vaccinated to be compensated. If you have been or willing to be vaccinated, there may be compensation there for you. This is strictly voluntary, and does not eliminate your choice for this school year. Members are NOT obligated to participate in F2F. We are also looking at addressing what our Registered Nurses have been dealing with during this ordeal.

9. Executive Vice President's Report

DFT has a choice, while our other Brothers and Sisters from other Unions do not have a choice. We have to be considerate. We are the largest district with the fewest resources. We have many buildings where we cannot even open windows to these classrooms.

- a. **Open Transfer Period** – This started April 1 – July 15 @11:59 p.m. If you have a feeling about where you are, don't miss the opportunity to make this change. Until the transfer is put through, it is confidential. The district will not reveal this information. Getting on social media, or reaching out to a Principal will open up the door for your present location to know what your intentions are. You can be transferred involuntarily, and all transfers may or may not be honored.

- b. **Michigan Learning Channel** – EVP is now on the committee. I will be sharing information for you to share with your students. I would like to recommend some DFT Members for this opportunity. Please let me know if you are interested. Detroit should be represented.

Q & A

Regina Hunter – Will the calendar for the next three years be a subject of bargaining? Dr. Vitti has sent an e-mail that there would be a cheek swab for students coming into the building to test. *TM: We have a calendar for next year that has already been decided. Later calendars will be included in bargaining. The process may be similar to this year where members are given the opportunity to weigh in. Testing has been brought up, but no definitive decision about that has been made at this time.*

Sonya Thomas – My concern about the calendar. We need to look at why our days are so much longer than the days of other districts. There should not be special pay for certain groups. Fight for us all! *TM: There are laws in Lansing that only apply to DPSCD. This includes days added to the calendar. We are going to bring forth, at our next meeting, someone from Wayne RESA or Michael Rice, State Superintendent, to discuss the calendar, days and hours or instruction. Many districts begin before Labor Day, and do not have a week off in February.*

Rozalyn Mitchell – Transfer Period is there a seniority based, and also, is there a list letting Agents know which schools are open for transfer requests? LW-L: The district does not have a process. Members send out their resume. You are putting out your own feelers. *TM: Only teachers DO NOT have seniority. Everyone else in the bargaining unit does. What comes into play is that Principals can decide who they choose.*

Stacey Goldman – After this pandemic, there seems to be people who want to stay online for instruction. Is that going to be a possibility? *TM: There is an appetite from parents and students to just have an online component. How this will look, we don't know yet. We are trying our best to get more money for our members each and every day.*

Maria Davis – the three days for Eid, is that starting this May or next year? For next year, Spring Break and Easter, and coming at the end of March. How is it that we have gotten that the break does not come after Easter? Lots of other districts start when we do. They get half days, we do not, and we still get out a week later. It appears that every year, we end the school year later and later. *TM: This is all predicated on testing. This is why we need to talk to RESA and the Superintendent about this. There are a lot of different things at play with the calendar. This is why a conversation with RESA and the Superintendent are very necessary.*

Nshan Robinson – Is there any movement on members who are still not being paid correctly. *TM: I can talk to you offline about your situation.*

Tracey Trayler – Can we negotiate a day off for grading at the end of the year? What percentage do you think that we need to stay out of school for? *TM: Our positivity rate is at 15%. If we exceed this, in the LOA for now. The summer and fall must be negotiated. It was recommended by the CDC and deemed to be what they said was safe. It is all about what is safe and healthy for people. This will depend on what the medical professionals say.*

Renee Rosa-Esperanza – The calendar is an issue. I asked if we are going to have an audit about the calendar. I do not understand why we are working one extra day.

We don't get a records day. Why are the half-days allowed? We should have had an option for the Eid holiday. I am really concerned about the calendar for this year. Other districts are getting out of school 8 days earlier. Why? I want to do what the state mandate is and no more. *TM: If there are any discrepancies about our calendar, they will be addressed as best as we can.*

10. Old Business

Candid COVID Conversations – Thanks to all Members who were able to stay on the call and ask questions about the virus and vaccines. Michigan has just proven all wrong. We opened up too fast, too soon. 5% was conservative, but it was the right thing to do. At 21% today, we are at the height of the pandemic, as this number is higher this year, than it was at this time last year. I hope that the conversation helped guide decisions.

11. New Business

Retirement Bank Seminar– May 1 is the date when we need to let the district know if we want to retire. Patrick Falcuson will be available to speak to MEMBERS ONLY to those who are considering retirement. Have your pay advice available, and go on MSPERS and set up your online account to verify the exact number of years that you have.

12. Good of the Order

- **"Teachers' Lounge"** - Leslie Piper has brought to us a cable television show that showcases the staff of DPSCD. Stations WHPR and WADL (soon to come) will broadcast 2 times a month on Sundays. This has given us access to our own media. We tape on Tuesdays. If you want to participate or help promote, please reach out to me. Availablegeeks.com can help with your website designs and other things. If you have questions e-mail lesliepiper8@gmail.com
- This pandemic has been very hard on everyone. We have to remember that many have lost loved ones, and are in pain themselves. Remember to lead with love, grace and understanding for people. Keep in mind that we have to look out for one another. Don't forget to check on one another. - TM

13. Adjournment

M3: Jason Posey (Booker) made a motion to adjourn. **Motion Passed.**

Meeting adjourned @6:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elena Brantley-Phillips, DFT Recording Secretary