

DETROIT FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
General Membership Meeting – December 9, 2021
Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order @4:38 p.m. by President Terrence Martin.

2. Roll Call of Officers

3. Approval of Minutes

M1: Jason Posey (Jennings) made a motion to accept the November 2021 Membership Meeting Minutes with any necessary corrections. **MOTION PASSED**

4. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Michelle Broughton read the financial statements from October 2021

5. Organizing Report

Yolanda King gave the Organizing Report for the month of November 2021. We can come in and assist with any school that needs to have an election in the school. We are the first point of contact for any members who need to pay dues as a new or recommitted member. You can reach out to us or to your Building Rep (to reach out to us) to assist with that. There will be no BR Training for the month of December.

M2: Procedural Motion - Board Member Vida Bonacci (Broughton) moved that a member be limited to 2 minutes to ask a question following the President's report and the Executive Vice President's report and that no one be given a second chance to speak until all members have had a chance to speak the first time.

MOTION PASSED

6. AIG – Fernando Aguirre

7. Elections Committee Report

Elections Committee Chair - Voting for the vacant Executive Board seat will begin this evening following this meeting. Eligible members will receive an e-mail of the survey following this meeting. Voting ends at 5:00 on Friday, December 17th. The e-mail will be coming from AFT Michigan starting around noon tomorrow.

8. President's Report

- a. **COVID Cases** – As you know, these cases have continued to increase with this Omicron variant. It is about 7,200 new cases per day, 19%. Only 35% of those ages 5 and up are vaccinated. There are cases in our school where there are students and staff isolated because of positive cases. We have encountered a few administrators who are not properly reporting cases. If there is a concern, please send an e-mail to the return to learn e-mail address. The district is requiring now that employees give their vaccination status. *Marshall Widick: The request of vaccination status is lawful, as long as they keep the information confidential. Both the employer and Union needs to know overall vaccination and case rates and is an important concern to the health and safety of all. There is a legal obligation to bargain if they think they want to institute a vaccine mandate. This is a very dynamic situation, but from a legal standpoint, we are on top of this. Lawsuits have ensued that have blocked these mandates, mainly in places where they felt that they could win. This is an evolving and fluid situation, but we are keeping an eye on it.*
- b. **Virtual Fridays** – Our Virtual Fridays began last week. As a reminder, they days were instituted to provide a level of relief to our staff and students, and to provide an opportunity for deep cleaning/sanitizing. It is important that we encourage our students to log in on these Fridays.
- c. **Student Attendance** As we visit schools, we are seeing fewer and fewer students in the buildings. Part of it is that some are quarantined, but a lot of it is that students are not coming to school. We don't want to be danger of not meeting the 75% attendance threshold. We were at 77% last Friday.
- d. **Vouchers** – Are being discussed again in Lansing. We are talking about using tax-free dollars for private schools. They will probably get the signatures that they need and it probably will be put on the ballot. We are going to do everything that we can to prevent them to happen. Families will get a check to put their children into private schools, thereby dismantling public education.

9. Executive Vice President's Report

- a. **Building Rep Survey** – This survey was sent out about a month ago. This is a living document, so this information has probably changed, but I think it is still a fairly accurate description of what is going on in the district at this time.
 - There were 92 responses which includes some departments such as the Office of Specialized Services.
 - In this survey, over 50% came from 6-12 buildings. 29% were K-3 members, while the remaining were grades 4-5.
 - Over half (52%) of our buildings have not met the enrollment number. This is what determines teacher service in a building.
 - 28% said that there were no vacancies.

- 66% are subs while 33% are teachers covering classes on preps, along with paras, AI's and other staff members covering classrooms.
 - Additional duties are not given on the rotation schedule as it should be.
 - Over half survey said that they are submitting missed preps to the administrators, however 29% said that they don't miss preps. Prep forms should be submitted to the administrators monthly.
 - There were over 58% of schools that said that there was no security guard in the building. This is a concern. We need to be protected.
 - 54% said that their classroom or work area are being cleaned and sanitized, while 45% said that there is not.
 - Most schools do not have a problem getting PPE in their buildings. 73% they do not have trouble getting it.
 - We still have classrooms that are still not getting masks, face shields, air purifiers, gloves, hand sanitizer.
 - Every building has a fresh air exchange system that takes air from outside and blows the inside air – out. This is a requirement for all public buildings – whether there are windows or not.
 - Most people are not being notified when there are positive cases in their buildings. They are being notified by e-mail, letter or robo call.
- b. Retirement & Separations** - This is the time when people do not return after the break. When you are separating from the district, you need to contact the DFT office. The district and the Union do not communicate that information. Send us an e-mail letting us know so that we can get those dues paid off.

Q & A

- **Tocarra Bailey (Jerry L. White)** – When you leave the district, do you get paid for your vacation or sick days? *LW-L: You are paid out are about \$45 per day up to day 100, and from 101 to 200, you will get \$65 per day. If you leave without notice, or leaving to go to another district, you will not be paid. Any days accrued past 200 days will not be paid.*
- **Maria Davis (Charles Wright)** – Do teachers have to attend a mandatory field trip because of COVID. What can teachers do about this? *TM: The teacher does not have to go. Perhaps that teacher can switch with another teacher who may be willing to go.*
- **Nicole Wells (Westside Academy)** – At this particular time, there are no security guards after January. We will basically be unprotected. We feel like sitting ducks. *LW-L: Had a conversation with Debbie Ayke where members from this membership that asked for the police to be defunded at a School Board Meeting. You will not be without security presence. They will be replaced with unarmed guards.*
- **Spring Hardy (Jerry L. White)** – I had a situation this week where my dad tested positive for COVID. I asked if I could go virtual, and was told no. *TM: District did not want to provide that extra time for people to work*

remotely. We did fight for this, but weren't successful in our Return to Learn LOA.

- **Courtney Harris (Moses Field)** – Staff member who found out that a student tested positive from the parent. The principal did not tell the teacher. What is the protocol at that point? The class was not quarantined or anything. *LW-L: There is a new matrix, 3% of a classroom is closed down for cleaning, and 5% of the total population, then the entire building is closed. The principal has a letter that should have been given to the teacher.*
- **Kelly West (Golightly Counselor)** – received information about open enrollment and the lack of disability insurance, and have been recently notified that there is no longer the option to have this insurance. *TM: Members will have to purchase their own insurance. This was lost through Emergency Management.*
- **MaryJo Brockman(Marquette)** – what is it that the custodians are supposed to be doing? Who do we go through if we did not get paid for Blended Learning? Where is this new matrix? *TM: It varies. They are supposed to be doing all of the things to help prevent the spread of COVID. If you are not being paid for Blended Learning – you should contact your principal and payroll secretary. The new Matrix is not available at this time because it has not been agreed upon. Any staff member exposed to a student should be told that the student was positive.*
- **S. Varghese(Shultz)** – How do vaccinated staff with a family member with COVID – can they return to school? *TM: if they are asymptomatic, they can return to school if they are not showing any signs of being ill – even without being tested.*
- **Lisa Scott (East English Village)** – If you are on FMLA, do those days count against you? *TM: Those days are taken because they are paid days?*
- **Dionne Shell (OT/PT Chapter)** – Principals at the three schools I service do not tell us about positive cases. Vitti said that after Thanksgiving, he would have a plan. *TM: I will follow up with him after this meeting and hold him to his promise.*
- **Toccaro Bailey(SSW)** – SSW's have not been paid for Blended Learning. What is the Union doing for those who have not been paid for this service? *TM: give us your information for times you are doing this (via e-mail).*
- **Rochelle Hicks (Mackenzie)** – If I have a student with a sibling who has tested positive. Should the teacher be notified of close contacts? If a student tests positive, the parent calls the student and lets them know. If the parent is the first point of contact, they need to report it to both the health department and the school. *TM: We will make sure that we will report that.*

10. Old Business

- **Tim Robertson** – The COVID protocols for students in a classroom are not being adhered to.
- **Regina Hunter (SSW – Charles Wright Academy)** – Still questioning the amount of paperwork and duties that seem to have been pushed on to the SSW. *LW-L: Although it was in the past, anything that deals with the behavior involves the SSW. MARSE (Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education), outlines who can conduct that evaluation - which can be performed by anyone on the MET team. The psychologist was the only one doing it before, however, it is not an ask that is outside of the SSW job description.*

11. New Business

- **Marnina Falk (FLICS)** - are organizing a healing meditation and sound vibrations for this Sunday, December 12th from 6:30 – 7:30. There is a flyer that will be mailed out.
- **Erica Muhammad** – I have over aged students in my classroom. There is a 17 year-old in my middle school classroom. *LW-L: Students cannot be made to go anywhere. Get with the Principal or the Counselor to assist with this to get the packet together to apply to Westside Academy. TM: The parent also has to sign off on the child being moved.*
- **Yolanda Smith (John R. King)** – Member safety. Because of the Oxford incident, the parents have gotten together and added teachers to the lawsuit. How are we protected in a case like this? What should we do moving forward to help protect ourselves from lawsuits? *TM: report things to your administrator or immediate supervisor to when you hear things that are of concern. LW-L: We are all mandated to report. You need to tell and e-mail the info to your admin. Form 3200 is for these reports. We have a duty to warn – no matter what.*
- **Michelle Broughton** – after we have enjoyed the holidays, there is an election that is coming up. It is really important this year that we work with AFT and DFT to help with protecting our jobs. Donate to the COPE fund.
- **Rachelle Green (SSW – Moses Field)** – Ancillary staff are not being told about positive cases. Why is OHI not being a considered as a change of duty for us.
- **Sadrika Campbell (Pershing)** – I e-mailed Vitti about the \$15,000 for Resource Teachers. To turn a blind eye to the rest of these teachers was wrong. No one was required to test after Thanksgiving break. I am concerned about Christmas break. *TM: We are supposed to test weekly.*

12. Good of the Order

- **Regina Hunter** – Attended a community engagement event that warned us about Critical Race Theory. The are trying to pass legislation that if teachers teach students about Jim Crow or slavery or the like, that there would be less funding given to those districts. *TM: Critical Race Theory is a theory. Teaching the truth about this country is a different story. Things like this that come before the Governor will be vetoed.*

- **Sedricka Campbell** – What is the recourse of students who are in school and do not get tested? *TM: Inform the admin that the student has not been tested. The admin is supposed to test them at that point.*
- **David Redfield (Western International HS)** – wants to thank the negotiating team for the \$2,000 bonus.

13. Adjournment

Have a wonderful and safe New Year! We will see you in 2022!

Meeting was adjourned by President Martin @6:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Elena Brantley-Phillips, DFT Recording Secretary