

DETROIT FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

General Membership Meeting

January 13, 2022

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order @4:30 p.m. by President Terrence Martin.

2. Roll Call of Officers

Excused: Michelle Broughton

3. Approval of Minutes

M1: Jason Posey (Jennings) made a motion to approve the January 2021 Meeting Agenda. **MOTION PASSED**

Members were presented with the December 2021 Executive Board and General Membership Meeting Minutes.

M2: Elena Brantley-Phillips (Posey) made a motion to accept the General Membership Meeting Minutes from December 2021 with any necessary corrections. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Treasurer's Report

Executive Board Member Sarah Niemi gave the financial report for this evening from the July-December 2021 Profit and Loss report. We are up do date with the AFT Michigan, AFT National per capita payments, and with the payments to the AFL-CIO. We are also reconciled with DPSCD.

5. Organizing Report

Yolanda King gave the report for December. There were 34 new and recommits for the month of December. Building Reps Training will be on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

6. Elections Committee Report

Stacey Jackson gave the election results for the vacant Executive Board seat .

- Results, Benjamin Royal 217, Queen Watkins 207, Gavin Buckley 178, LaVar Johnson 82, , MaryJo Brockman 71.
- Benjamin Royal was the clear winner of this election, however, Brother Royal has since resigned his position from the District.
- The Elections Committee has since met and would like to recommend that Queen Watkins take the vacant Executive Board seat.
- President's in the past have appointed members to the seat, but this Board wanted to have an election.

M3: Nicole Conaway(Nicole Stuckey) made a motion that this body does not accept the recommendation of the Elections Committee – to move Queen Watkins in the seat left vacant because of the resignation of Benjamin Royal.

Amendment to the Motion: (Nicole Conaway)We recommend the Executive Board order a new election. **AMENDMENT FAILS.**

M3: MOTION FAILS

M4: Procedural Motion - Board Member Dwan McGrady (Fresh) 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**

7. President's Report

- a. **Virtual Learning** – We are now at a 35% positivity rate for COVID. This is probably the highest that we have seen since the start of this pandemic. We cannot continue to have face-to-face instruction. Things have not gotten any better, so we will be going another week, but probably until the end of the month. It is not in our best interest or for our health and safety that we continue. We are not alone in this, there are other locals dealing with this. What we are noticing here is that they are fighting for things that we currently have in our current LOA. Chicago fought for weekly testing, and a matrix to determine safety. Any lengthening of the school year will result in hardship for our members. Reaching the 75% attendance threshold is important, we have no control over our students showing up each and every day. Many of our students are out of the home, ill, quarantined elsewhere, making it difficult for them to engage the way that they want. One thing that we need to be in lock-step on is the health and safety of our students. This is no different than it was a year or two years ago. There is no expectation for anyone to be in front of a computer all day. After you have given your lesson, check in periodically to be responsive to your students. Signing in and out – if you want to log in, feel free. There is no need to sign out. This is not connected to your pay.
- b. **Short-Term Disability** – Approximately 500 of our members that had American Fidelity, and that relationship has expired. We need to find other short-term disability. This has nothing to do with your insurance. A message was sent to the District asking that our members do not suffer hardship because of it. We asked that our members have a choice.

8. Executive Vice President's Report

- a. **Vaccine Update/COVID Testing** – There is information that breaks daily about the virus, vaccines and testing. Dr. Vitti sent out communication that all employees must test. Over 600 tested positive. Our community is upwards of 30%. If you have lost your vaccination card, please call 313-876-4667. You will

be prompted to push 2 and then push 2 again. Don't create your own card. Call and get a replacement. Vitti attended our December meeting. He said there was no rush toward a policy. In a few weeks, he issued the policy. He stated that the policy is unacceptable. These are our working conditions, because it will negatively impact our classrooms. We reserve the right to bargain for those who are unvaccinated. We are in negotiations regarding the exemption form. The form was supposed to go live on the HUB on the 17th. The District does not have the capacity to do this work. He put in a policy that he can't handle. You may or not see a form on the 17th, or not. We want there to be a process for this. We want members who want or are willing to get the shot, to have time to get it. The district does not have the means to handle the volume of paperwork stemming from these exemptions. The Supreme Court decision halted the vaccine terminations with private companies. This does not impact us because we are public employees. *TM: It has always been the duty of this local and administration to represent EVERYONE. We have consulted with our attorneys, as well as the AFT National attorneys. We are all going through the same thing at the same time. When we got word that this could be a possibility. Last year, we asked the District to offer the incentive for the vaccine. 85% of DFT members are vaccinated. We thought that it was dropped when he told us that a policy would not be implemented. He makes these statements, and often has to walk them back. It is our responsibility to protect the vaccinated and the unvaccinated.*

COVID Testing – We are being asked by the EVP to continue to test, even while you are remote, if for no other reason, for your own peace of mind. At anytime that you may decide to go to the building for any reason, you need to have a negative COVID test on file. No other District in the country can test. We have them, be sure that we are healthy and can catch anything early if it comes up.

- b. **Observations** – THRIVE Cycle I is running. We know that our Principals will be making their rounds up to February 18th. We don't want our members to be slammed. It is unannounced. Many people had issues last year with participation. Be creative with getting students to engage/respond.

Q&A

- Karl Burnett (Vernor) – Taking away breaks. Have you talked to Dr. Vitti about it? Members have made plans and will not be available to work. With the vaccine exemption, will there be something that will need to be attached? *LWL: We have no idea. They are not prepared. I would have things at the ready. TM: Any change in the calendar has to be negotiated.*
- Debra Bondy(Dixon) – Is there an option for long term disability. In order to be eligible for disability, would you have had to have had it last year? When speaking about logging in, do you mean on TEAMS? *LWL: We will get some information out in our weekly update on Monday. Members can still use American – just not for short-term disability. Companies are all different. You have to reach out to the company individually.*
- Donna Kennedy(Great Start School Readiness Program – SSW) – We were told weeks ago that we had to sign in and out. I am trying to get clarity. We can sign in, but we have been told that they will begin to monitor where we

are and what time we enter and leave these different buildings. Vaccine mandate? *LWL: We do not want to see progressive discipline or see anyone terminated over a vaccine. There have to be procedures in place that need to be addressed for those who are unable to get the vaccine. It is a professional courtesy to sign in, and a protection for you- the member to sign in, however, there is no need to sign out.*

- Sherita Burse – American Fidelity said that there was 1,000 people who lost their disability. Commerce want \$110 per month. With AF, it was \$185 per month for 6 people. The District dropped AF, and will not respond to them as to why. This is critical for people who have pre-existing conditions. We have to impress upon the School Board and Vitti to bring in something
- Vanessa Dawson(Paul Robeson) – Processing FMLA papers. I had to send paperwork in 3 times. It is taking a long period of time. I fell at school, but EHS didn't do what should have been done in a timely manner. Are we to make Administrators owners of our class? *LWL: They don't need an invitation. They can get in whether you invite them or not. Go ahead and invite them. The District does not have the ability to maintain this paperwork. This is why EHS is taking so long to process.*
- K. Reaves(Henderson - AI) – please clear your voicemail and check your e-mails, please. Since September. *TM: I will try to get through those messages as quickly as I can. I have been waiting since September. I a holding down classes and expected to grade students without being compensated. LWL: We are aware of your question about being compensated for covering classes. The District is in negotiation with the other Unions. Now, we can go back to the table to discuss these other pressing issues.*
- Kendra White(Virtual School) – Putting 4 people in a classroom to teach with headphones on is not working. I am not an AT&T operator. *TM: We know that the building is not conducive to teaching and students learning.*
- Daneen Holmes-Hill (Davis Aerospace) – The vaccine mandate is no different than any other position. It is not a part of our contract. It should not be on the table. You need to look at this contractually and legally. You allowing this would be this Union ignoring and a failure to represent. *LWL: Whether you are vaccinated or not will not change how you are represented.*
- Jamie Gasanov(Cooke) – Will the deadline be extended? Are there penalties for those who are not fully vaccinated? Fully means both shots, prior to February 18th. *TM: We need to look at the Supreme Court ruling to see how it impacts us, if it does at all.*
- Nina Jackson(Durfee) – Did you identify a company for short-term disability? I have a letter and I want to send it in. Who do I send it to? *LWL: there is no one to send it to at this time. Vitti sets a policy, with no one in place to handle it. As of right now, there is no form, or criteria in place.*
- Karissa McLeish(Pershing HS) – What is the magic number that we are seeking before going back to the building? The student must have a test permission slip on file. What if they don't get tested? *TM: The goal is to get as many to test as possible. There is no magic number. There are many factors that are considered that weren't in place last year.*

- Meredith Summer (Davison) – Why are we still being evaluated? At the very least, we should try to get Vitti to waive the evaluation for effective or highly effective teachers. *LWL: We do not negotiate evaluations. It is a state requirement. Most of the other districts are in-person. This is not a subject of bargaining.*
- Julie Hughes(Western) – I heard that because the fiscal year ends on June 30, the school year can't be extended beyond that. FMLA takes weeks to give a response on requests. This is illegal. Is this a Union issue or do I need to get a lawyer? *TM: Vitti was conflating school closures with days that can be forgiven. We lose money when the attendance is below 75%. The governor has forgiven those days in the past, and we fully expect her to consider doing the same this year. We have been on them about the FMLA. They have very limited staff there. We will meet with the District about this tomorrow.*
 - Goldie Gibson (J.R. King) – How do you do an observation online? What do they look for? When you are doing screenshare, you can't see the students. If they come in, and the kids don't have cameras on and being observed? *LWL: There is no different evaluation tool as in person. These are conversations that should be had at your building staff meeting. There will not be a different tool used.*
- Donna Kennedy(Great Start – SSW) – I need clarity on signing in and out. We are signing out with a survey. It is not a fair process because this is being put on just the SSW's, and not on any other ancillary staff members. *LWL: Sign in. The only way that your pay can be adjusted is through the discipline process through the District. TM: Would it help if we asked the District for clarification? We will address it. Luis Solano said that you do NOT have to sign out. We need to get this in writing.*
- Maria Davis(Charles Wright Academy) – When we had to do CLP's during the first round, and there is an excessive amount of paperwork. *LWL: A lot of this paperwork is required. We are online, so we are in a different instruction delivery mode. This comes from the state.*
- Camille Burch(Marion Law) – What about the new masks? *TM: We will make a request to the district to provide N-95 masks to all staff and students. Student testing and our jobs are not connected.*
- Toccara Bailey(Jerry L. White - SSW) – Some people sign in. We are required to fill out a survey and talk about things that we did. Supervisor told me that if I don't sign in or out that my pay would be docked. I am concerned because many of us have done what you have asked, but your e-mails and voicemails are full. I am being bullied and harassed by my supervisor, and I feel like I'm being backed into a corner. *LWL: When the supervisor responds that there is movement on an issue, I don't need to step in. It is being corrected by the supervisors. If you want a timeline, we are just as much in need as you are. Payroll is backed up because there is so much to payout. Payroll is in a reduced capacity just like Employee Health Services. It has always been bad, but it is even worse now. They need to hire in Central Office.*

- Sheryl Evans (Clippert) – Oversize class pay. Where is the form for first semester. Any class over the limit should be paid. *TM: We will check into that tomorrow,.*
- Michelle Haliburton(Bagley) – Students and COVID testing. A child MUST have a form on file, or they will be put in the Virtual Classroom. I teach PreK, and that can't happen because there is no classroom for the PreK student, due to state funding. *LWL: This was another message sent in haste.*
- Dionne Shell (OT/PT) – We feel ignored and disrespected in this contract. I sent you a message about Blended Learning. We are bargaining members and should be addressed with Blended Learning? We have sent our names and I want to know who we need to send the information to when nothing is being done to address it? *TM: Blended Learning pay is for ALL members. The District does not agree. It takes time to get things resolved. Anyone who is addressing students both in person and face to face should be paid. If you sent me something, then I have addressed it to the District. Any additional information should be sent directly to me. We want to make sure that our ancillary staff and anyone else, receives that pay.*
- Kendra Barclay(Spain) – New hires and accrued sick days. Contract says that 10 days were put in the sick bank. Our member took 2 and was not paid? *TM: He should be paid and that time should have been paid.*

9. Old Business

10. New Business

M5: Nicole Conaway(Nicole Stuckey) –Resolution - No Return Until it is Safe.
MOTION FAILS.

11. Good of the Order

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elena Brantley-Phillips, DFT Recording Secretary

Detroit Federation of Teachers Special Executive Board Meeting Roll Call

Date 1/24/2022

Last Name	First Name	Position	Absent	Present	Excused
Martin	Terrence	President		✓	
Wilson-Lumpkins	Lakia	Ex. Vice President		✓	
Booker	Glenda	Vice President		✓	
Jennings	Robin	Vice President		✓	
Broughton	Michelle	Treasurer		✓	
Brantley-Phillips	Elena	Secretary		✓	
Bonacci	Vida	Executive Board		✓	
Card	Lisa	Executive Board		✓	
Fresh	Rodney	Executive Board		✓	
Hoskin	Samantha	Executive Board		✓	
Lee	Crystal	Executive Board		✓	
McGrady	Dwan	Executive Board		✓	
Niemi	Sarah	Executive Board		✓	
Posey	Jason	Executive Board		✓	
Sadiku	Dashmire	Executive Board		✓	
Walton	Marcus	Executive Board		✓	
		Executive Board			
Green	Rachele	Trustee	✓		
Needham-Fletcher	Marva	Trustee	✓		
Wasilewski	Jeffrey	Trustee		✓	