

DETROIT FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

General Membership Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2022

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order @4:34 p.m. by President Terrence Martin

2. Roll Call of Officers

3. Approval of Minutes

M1: Jason Posey (Jennings) made a motion to approve the September 2022 General Membership Meeting Minutes with any necessary corrections. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Treasurer's Report

There is no Treasurer's Report this month because the controller had a death in his family.

5. PAC Report

Marcus Walton gave the report for this month. There are 27 days until Election Day. We appreciate all those members who have been walking and helping with the efforts to help candidates. You can request your ballot now. They will not be sent automatically. As a reminder, the Gubernatorial Debate this evening between Gretchen Whitmer and Tudor Dixon. Michelle Broughton reminds everyone that early voting has started in Detroit and Wayne County. This midterm election is pivotal and we need to engage in a meaningful way.

6. Organizing Report

Yolanda King gave report for October 2022. There are 32 new or recommitted members. Over 70 buildings or work locations are now represented. We still have elections that are ongoing and we are awaiting the results of elections. If you have questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Organizers. This Tuesday, October 18th at 4:30 will be the first Building Reps Training for this school year.

7. Elections Committee Report

Report given by DeVette Brown, Chair of the Elections Committee. Nicole Conaway wants to know if nominations will be taken from the floor this evening. Also wants to know if the names submitted have been vetted at this time.

Executive Board

Marva Fletcher (UTR)
Frank Donner (UTR)
Marcus Walton (UTR)
Dwan McGrady (UTR)
Lisa Card (UTR)
Everette Whitfield (UTR)
Jeff Wasilewski (UTR)
Dashmire Sadiku (UTR)
Crystal Lee (UTR)
Sarah Niemi (UTR)
Samantha Hoskin (UTR)
Cedric Cook
Dena Gazdag-Calhoun (Members United)
Renee Rosa-Esperanza (Members United)

President

Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins (UTR)

Vice President

Jason Posey (UTR)
Glenda Booker (UTR)
Robin Jennings (UTR)

Treasurer

Rodney Fresh (UTR)

Recording Secretary

Elena Brantley-Phillips (UTR)

Trustees

Cassandra Davis (UTR) Mark Duffy (UTR) Kaira Gandy (UTR)

8. President’s Report

- a. **Class Size** – As many of you know, class size has been through the roof. We are seeing sizes in all grade levels. What we are asking members to do is to start to take the surveys so that we will know names, grade levels and numbers. In the next couple of weeks, there have been new staff members hired, or are still in the onboarding phase of the hiring process. Please reach out to these new faces and encourage them to be part of the Union. What we aren’t seeing enough of is people in special education. In addition to teaching staff, we are also in need of aides. According to the Superintendent, help is on the way!
- b. **Attendance Incentive LOA** - If you have been with the District for over 20 years, you remember the old incentive. You can cash in up to 9 days if you want to participate. If you are close to retirement, you may want to hold on to your days and get paid. This is optional.

9. Executive Vice President’s Report

- a. **Reading Opens the World** - We had our second event this past Saturday, October 8th at the Horatio Williams Foundation. Thanks to the Executive Board for their assistance. This was a beautiful event and we put these brand-new books in the hands of parents and children at no cost. There are still books! Please come and get books! They must go by tomorrow!

- b. **Cycle Zero** – The first quarter from September to the end of the first marking period. It is not evaluative. This is an observation. Following the observation, there should be a debrief so that you are clear about the expectations. The next visit will count.
- c. **Reorganization** – as District employees we can be placed at any building at any time, based on our certification. Contractually, all displaced/transferred members have 3 days to prepare the classroom prior to the start of teaching. Reorganization is not new. Many may have not experienced this before, but it is need to fill vacancies.

Q & A

- Stacy Jackson (Randolph Career Tech) – This is an issue for counselors. There were counselors who were moved from their offices into classrooms, especially when the job Counseling position is still posted.
- Nicole Ames Powell – (Carver Stem Academy) – If you choose to have the days paid out now. If you have catastrophe days or over 200 days, you may want to take advantage of the incentive.
- There was a grievance filed from the EDIC and others who were not paid the \$1,000.
- Kendra White – Is our District trying to get funding for COVID and the effects of COVID – because our students are so far behind. What can we do to get the state to continue to fund us with this huge gap? **TM:** *We were at a deficit before COVID. There has not been enough for what we need. At the state level, there are 2 bills that are going to be presented. One will create a separate line item to just address facilities issues. Another is to just address special education needs. There is no additional money from the state to assist with the needs from our District. DPS has a lobbyist, but this may be a great question for the Superintendent.*
- Rene Rosa Esperanza – You have the Attendance Incentive LOA? What was the previous incentive because it does not seem like this is an incentive when 9 days have to be given up. How is it that the incentive came after the start of school? People are still getting COVID and must deal with that. **TM:** *The previous incentive gave \$1,300. Before, the amount did not come out of the ill bank, but it does now. This is good for those with catastrophe days. This allows for those people to get paid for those days. We are close to a COVID LOA where you can still be eligible for the attendance bonus. Approved absences do not penalize you.*
- Mignon Pierce (Emerson) – Master Teachers and duties. Does a report have to be submitted by them? Is it in the same style as the administrative report? I need clarity. **LW-L:** *Master Teachers are DFT! They are not administrators; therefore, they are not evaluators. Principals have tasked MT's with this. We take issue with any MT's who are given the same tool as an admin. They are supposed to be supported, lessons modeled. Do not invite them into your room if you feel that they are coming in to do anything other than support.*

- Stacy Jackson – Do we have information/list on who we are supporting for School Board? **TM:** *We are endorsing Angelique Petersen-Maybury, Dr. Deborah Hunter-Harvil, and Bessie Harris.*
- Carl Burnette – People who did not get paid because they did not come to work on the start date. The District is still refusing to pay. We have been moving up the chain with many other people who have not been paid. We are trying to get them paid as soon as possible.
- Cassandra L. Davis (SLP) – Has there been any conversation with the District about our being short staffed, our increased caseload size. **LW-L:** *I do not like the ESE bonus. It was a double-edged sword for us. We are moving forward and fighting for bonuses for everyone with their hands-on ESE students.*
- Renee Webster – there is no rep in our building. The Committee has been trying to get in touch with Terrence Martin. Is there another number where we can get in touch with you? **TM:** *Jason and Yolanda can assist with helping you with getting a Building Rep. If you need to reach me, please send me an e-mail and I will call you back.*
- Torie Anderson – Why weren't members polled to see who members wanted to support for School Board. **LW-L:** *There was a poll for all members who attended the screening, but it was voted on. The results are the people that those members at the meeting voted for.*
- Nicoa Wells (Westside Academy) – So excited for the Attendance Bonus. **TM:** *For now, it is just for one year, to see how it works.*
- Renee Rosa -Esperanza – Is the Union's viewpoint not to support the form to evaluate teachers - and come across as admin. **LW-L:** *Did your Principal requiring you to use this form. If you were instructed to use the form, do it and we will deal with it later.*
- Mary Brockman (Marquette) – Clarification for Dean of Culture? Meeting in person for Union meetings? Virtual makes it a lot easier to attend. **TM:** *many organizations are trying to figure out how to address the meetings. We get more participation virtually. Hybrid is not difficult to do, but it takes planning and preparing. Deans are not DFT.*
- Regina Hunter – Members are asking about the DFT calendars. Project Find needs to be put back in place. **LW-L:** *There is an entire team devoted to this project.*
- LaRonda Paden – I am having a hard time wrapping my head around some of the things I am being asked to do. Is e-mail sufficient to reach out to Principal? Do I need to use any other sources? **LW-L:** *if you are not been paid for anything after school, you do not have to attend. You are only scheduled for contract things on Wednesdays.*
- Dionne Shell – OT/PT Chair – I am disappointed with the Blended Learning situation. I sent an e-mail to Vitti to find out the status, who told these people will not get the payment and that they were never supposed to get this payment. **TM:** *I am often times just as frustrated as you are. A grievance has been filed. We have had meeting dates set and they have been cancelled. This is the*

latest in a long list of issues that we have had to address with him – and they lost! If we need to go to arbitration on this, we will. We fully expect people to be paid for this work. LW-L: It's about time that the District has finally been transparent. They came up with Blended Learning, and now they don't want to pay people? I am glad that they have finally admitted it in writing. Please send it to me, and thank you!

10. New Business

- Jennifer McMurray – 2 years ago, I was suspended during COVID. I took my loss. I lost a point on my evaluation last year, but I disputed it. I lost a point last year because I was suspended the year before. I was transferred a few weeks ago. I have called the Union, but no one has called me back. Normally, someone will reach out, and when I need you the most – no one calls me back. **TM:** *We are very sorry that this has happened to you. We need to put people in office who care about how people like you have been treated. LW-L: Speaking about this at the Board Meeting may help to change policy.*
- Jennifer Stathopoulos (Fisher Lower) – The attendance policy – when does the positive test have to show? Before you take your COVID test or after? **TM:** *Give us a moment to get this straight. There is a form that you get from your administrator. We are trying to retro-active those with cases of COVID, but we don't have answers as of yet.*
- Tracy Arneau – When I got the e-mail from Vitti about the incentive program for attendance. I did not take advantage because I don't trust Vitti and didn't hear anything from the Union about it. Can there be an extension? **TM:** *I will look into tha. It happened so fast, so I will inquire.*

M2: Jason Posey (Fresh) made a motion to end Q & A after the 11 people presently in line. **MOTION PASSED.**

- Daneen Holmes-Hill – How is seniority done if there is no seniority? **TM:** *Seniority can no longer be used as a determining factor for placement and transfer for teachers, only. It is still used with ancillary staff members.*

11. Good of the Order

Open Nominations from the Floor:

President	VP	Treasurer	Secretary	Executive Board	Trustee
	LaVar Johnson - Renaissance (Nicole Conaway)		Ingrid Rivers - Thirkell (Nicole Conaway)	Rachele Greene (Rachele Greene)	Ursula Byrd- FLICS (Conaway)
				Sherita Burse - Bagley (Nicole Conaway)	Myra Akpabio – Keidan (Conaway)
				Matthew Tafelsky (Sherita Burse)	
				Marla Williams – Munger (Conaway)	
				Jacqueline Hernandez – OT (Conaway)	
				Brenda Nimocks - Cass (Conaway)	

Nominations are now closed.

12. Adjournment

M3: Jason Posey (Fresh) made a motion to adjourn. **MOTION PASSED.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elena Brantley-Phillips, DFT Recording Secretary