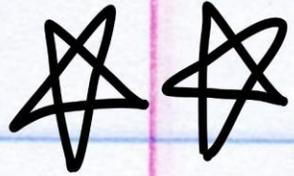
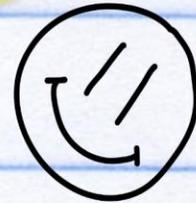
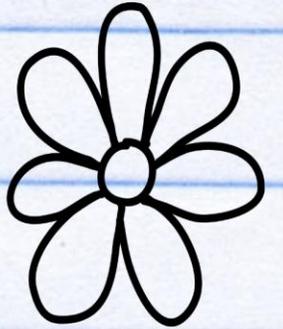


The Detroit Teacher



September 2025



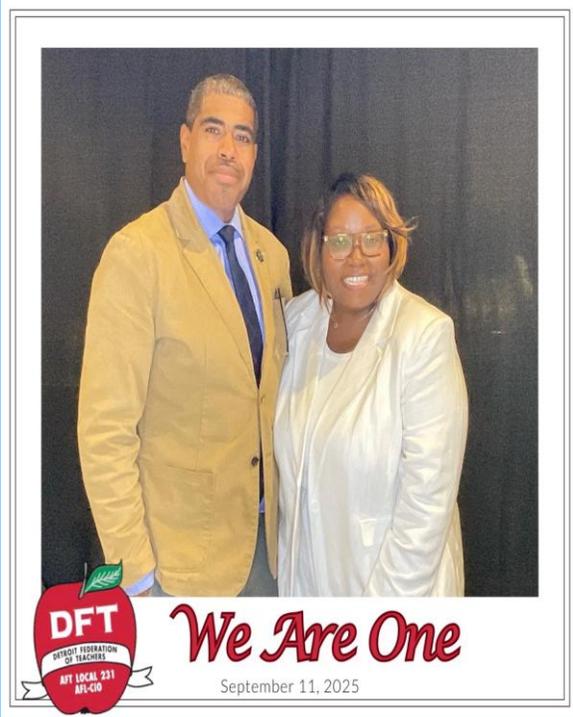
The Detroit Teacher is the official publication of the Detroit Federation of Teachers,
American Federation of Teachers Local 231, AFL-CIO.



Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins, President
Jason Posey, Executive Vice President



From the Pen of the DFT President & Executive VP



Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins &
Jason Posey

As we start the 2025-2026 school year, we want to express our sincere appreciation for the work that each of you do every day for our students, our families, our communities, and for each other. This year, more than ever, it is a time to reflect on our shared responsibility—not just as educators, but as union members in solidarity. Our union is demonstrative of our commitment to advocate for public education due to the challenges we face such as funding gaps, policy shifts, and the attitudes of lawmakers who do not align their values with ours.



It is a historic time for the Detroit Federation of Teachers as we proudly announce our merger with the Detroit Federation of Paraprofessionals. This unification brings together teachers, paraprofessionals, noon-hour assistants, food service workers, and other support staff under the banner of the **Mighty DFT**, creating a stronger, united voice to serve Detroit’s students, families, and communities. We have always worked side by side--teachers and paraprofessionals. This merger strengthens our solidarity, ensuring we speak with one powerful voice for the dignity and respect all education workers deserve. We have a shared commitment to unity across job classifications and marks a major step forward in advancing educational equity, labor rights, and student success within the district.



STRIVING, TENACIOUS, RESILIENT, ORGANIZED, NURTURING,
GENEROUS, EDUCATORS, RESOURCEFUL

From the Pen of the DFT Political Action Committee



Marcus Walton &
Robin Jennings

Why Local Elections Matter

Welcome back and we hope your school year is off to a great start. Fall means the campaigning for votes is upon us (although we know that our work with candidates and ballot initiatives is yearlong). It's time for us to step up to encourage others to vote in the upcoming municipal elections. Summer primaries are usually a lower turnout, which held true for the August 2025 primaries: in the city of Detroit, only about 17% of registered voters participated. Wayne and Oakland Counties had about 18% of voters casting a ballot; and Macomb had less than a 14% turnout. Elections matter, especially for local races.

Because local elections often see low voter turnout, your vote is even more powerful. While millions vote in presidential elections, local races can be decided by just a handful of votes, every vote counts. In some cases, elections have come down to single digits or even a coin toss!

When we think about elections, our minds often jump to presidential races, but the truth is that local elections shape our daily lives just as much—if not more! Local governments handle the services and programs we rely on every day: schools, public safety, parks, transportation, and zoning laws. City councils, township boards, school boards and county officials make choices that affect everything from classroom sizes to road repairs. When you vote locally, you choose the leaders who will decide about the place you call home.

Some of the biggest policy changes in history started at the local level before becoming national movements. Issues like education reform, environmental initiatives, and public health policies often begin in communities and states before they grow into larger-scale action. You help set the stage for the changes you want to see by participating in municipal elections.

Local officials are right here in our communities, making them more accessible than national leaders. You might spot them at the grocery store, at a community event or a coffee hour that they host which gives you the chance to chat with them directly! This close connection means they're more likely to listen to you—especially when you let them know you're a registered voter who is active in voting. Let's make our voices heard and celebrate the power to shape our community together!

A great example of local officials being in the community was at the annual Labor Day March. Several candidates who want your vote made sure to participate in this annual event on the streets of Corktown. As DFT members, we stopped to speak to them and let them know why labor unions and public education matter.

Your union works for you by hosting forums that bring candidates to the membership. We participate in statewide and national actions that are of importance to public education and social justice causes. These “Calls to Action” are sent to members via emails and posted on our website.



One of the ballot initiatives that is of primary concern to us is the *Invest in MI Kids* which would establish a state Constitutional Amendment to add, beginning in 2027, an additional 5% tax on annual taxable income over \$1 million for joint filers and over \$500,000 for single filers. This tax is in addition to existing state income taxes, which will be deposited into the State School Aid Fund and required to be used exclusively on local school district classrooms, career and technical education, reducing class sizes, and recruiting and retaining teachers; and subject funds to annual audits.

INVEST IN MI KIDS



PREMIUM
QUALITY
education

A STATEWIDE BALLOT INITIATIVE

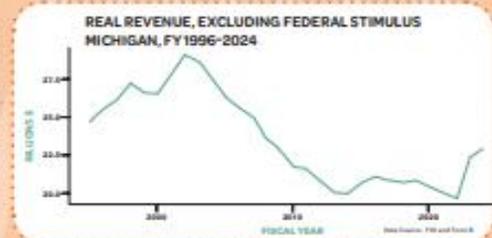
to raise new funds for local school districts

- **REDUCE CLASS SIZES**
- **EXPAND CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION**
- **RECRUIT AND RETAIN HIGH QUALITY EDUCATORS**

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT OUR SCHOOLS ARE CHRONICALLY UNDERFUNDED

"It would cost \$4.5 billion to bring districts to funding adequacy based on estimates updated from the 2018 Michigan School Finance Research Collaborative (SFRC) adequacy study. This cost includes an estimated \$1.6 billion to introduce universal, no-cost preschool."

- Education Law Center



TOTAL EDUCATION REVENUE IN MICHIGAN
INFLATION ADJUSTED, BILLIONS OF \$

BUT MICHIGANDERS CAN FIX THIS!

Michigan currently has regressive tax laws, where the highest earners pay a lower effective tax rate than everyone else.



Paid for with regulated funds by Invest in MI Kids - PO Box 11022, Lansing, MI 48901-1022

THE PLAN:

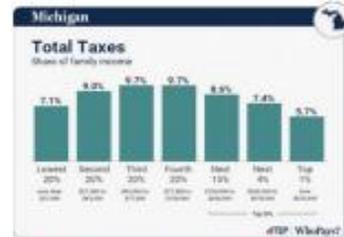
Invest in MI Kids will fund our schools with a 5% "fair share surcharge" on annual individual income over \$500,000 for single filers, or over \$1 million for joint filers. This will raise about \$1 billion each year for Michigan's public schools.

STEP 1 Identify & train
7,000 signature gatherers

STEP 2 Together, collect
700,000 signatures over 180 days

STEP 3 2.8 million people
vote YES in November 2026

WHY A FAIR SHARE SURCHARGE?



A fair share surcharge creates more balanced tax laws and funds our future!

INVEST IN MI KIDS



A STATEWIDE BALLOT INITIATIVE

to raise new funds for local school districts

FAQS

JOIN US! ➤



Q: HOW WOULD A FAIR SHARE SURCHARGE WORK IN PRACTICE?

- Mary is a single woman who makes \$600,000/yr.
Fair share surcharge:
($\$600,000 - \$500,000$) x 5% = \$5,000
- Emma and Liam are a married couple who make \$1,200,000/yr.
Fair share surcharge:
($\$1,200,000 - \$1,000,000$) x 5% = \$10,000

➤ **THIS RAISES THEIR TAXES
BY LESS THAN 1%**

Q: DOESN'T THE LOTTERY ALREADY FUND SCHOOLS?

The lottery is an important contributor to public schools in Michigan, but probably makes up less of the total than you think. In FY2023, the lottery made up 6.2% of the School Aid Fund.

<https://www.michigan.gov/budget/budget-offices/ofm/faq-pages/state-finance/where-does-the-funding-for-the-school-aid-fund-come-from>

- **REDUCE CLASS SIZES**
- **EXPAND CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION**
- **RECRUIT AND RETAIN HIGH QUALITY EDUCATORS**

LEARN MORE AT WWW.INVESTINMIKIDS.ORG ➤

Paid for with regulated funds by Invest in MI Kids PO Box 11022, Lansing, MI 48901-1022

Q: HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO OTHER STATES?

Because each state relies on a different mix of types of taxes (sales, property, income, etc.), it doesn't make sense to compare this surcharge to any particular tax in another state. Instead, we should look at all state and local taxes together.

Michigan currently has the 34th lowest average effective tax rate in the country, lower than all neighboring Great Lakes states. <https://growingmichigan.org/wp-content/uploads/Michigan-Overall-Effective-Tax-Rates.pdf>

Q: IS THIS A TAX ON SMALL BUSINESSES?

No, The "fair share surcharge" is levied only on individuals whose annual taxable income exceeds \$500,000 for single filers or \$1,000,000 for joint filers. The fair share surcharge is not a tax on businesses. There are some business owners, corporate executives, and others whose individual taxable income is high enough to trigger the fair share surcharge - about 2% of all tax filers in Michigan. The 5% surcharge is only levied on their income above and beyond \$500,000/\$1,000,000.

Q: WON'T HIGH INCOME INDIVIDUALS LEAVE?

New research shows that the number of wealthy individuals has actually GROWN in states after increasing taxes on high earners. On average, state tax levels have minimal impact on decisions to move into or out of states.

<https://ins-rc.org/report-wealth-expands-after-higher-state-taxes-on-high-income-earners/>

PREMIUM
QUALITY
education

CALENDAR

October

1 Count Day
2 Executive Board 4:30 p.m.
8 PTC HS
9 General Membership 4:30 p.m.
14 DPSCD School Board 5:30 p.m.
15 PTC
16 Middle School Chapter 5:00 p.m.
16 ESE Chapter 5:30 p.m.
20 AI Chapter 6:00 p.m.
21 DFT Retirees Chapter 11:30 a.m.
21 PAC Committee 6:00 p.m.
23 Early Childhood Chapter 5:00 p.m.
27 Quarter 1 ends
28 Quarter 2 begins

November

3 Report Cards
4 Professional Development for Staff
6 Executive Board 4:30 p.m.
11 DPSCD School Board 5:30 p.m.
9 SSW Chapter 5:00 p.m.
13 General Membership 4:30 p.m.
17 AI Chapter 6:00 p.m.
18 DFT Retirees Chapter 11:30 a.m.
18 Building Rep Training 4:30 p.m.
18 PAC Committee 6:00 p.m.
20 Middle School Chapter 5:00 p.m.
20 ESE Chapter 5:30 p.m.
26-28 Schools Closed: Thanksgiving

December

1 Schools Reopen
4 Executive Board 4:30 p.m.
9 DFT Retirees Holiday Party
9 DPSCD School Board 5:30 p.m.
11 DFT General Membership 4:30 p.m.
15 AI Chapter 6:00 p.m.
16 PAC Committee 5:00 p.m.
18 Middle School Chapter 5:00 p.m.
18 ESE Chapter 5:30 p.m.
22-31 Schools Closed: Winter Break

Dates and times are subject to change.

DFT events are on website @ <https://dft231.mi.aft.org/events>.

DPSCD information can be found @ <https://www.detroitk12.org/>

Member Spotlight: Nathaniel Horn @ Schulze (MS Math)

This active union member knows who has our backs: the Union. He has learned this since he started teaching at Schulze Academy for Technology and Arts 5 years ago. His educational career started through the *On the Rise* program where he earned a teaching certificate for Secondary Math and has since taught 6th and 7th grade middle school math.

Nathaniel Horn is proud of his union affiliation because as he puts into his own words “it is through the union that working people like all of us can come together and fight back against those who seek us harm. It is only through banding and standing together that we can wrest power from those who don’t deserve it. The joy and comradery that one experiences from being part of a group that all share an ideal is like no other. The exhilaration from seeing your efforts to better something successful because you banded together with your brothers, sisters, and siblings is not describable with words. Knowing that there are people who have your back gives you such a sense of courage that you could never get on your own.”

He has been very fortunate to attend a few AFT events. Brother Horn went to AFT Teach this summer which he states was such an amazing experience; the resources he has been able to bring back to his school is amazing. He attended a Leadership Summit where he learned valuable skills about communicating to potential members and activists. His goals include participating in the AFT Michigan Union Building Institute and the AFT National’s Civil, Woman, and Human Rights Conference.

He invites everyone to find a No Kings Protest event on October 18th. He’ll be there, wearing his DFT t-shirt with pride. Thank you, Nathaniel Horn, for your Union activism.



SHOUT OUT TO MS. MAE FOR GETTING US READY



Getting ready for an event means someone makes sure we have all the materials. Here is Office Assistant, Mae Winters, making sure we have our banner, flags and t-shirts ready for the Labor Day March. She even wheels it down to the elevator and into the lobby so we can load up the car.

OUR UNION IN THE NEWS: LABOR DAY MARCH



[What Union Members Are Saying About Labor Day](#)



[Annual Labor Day Celebration in Detroit](#)

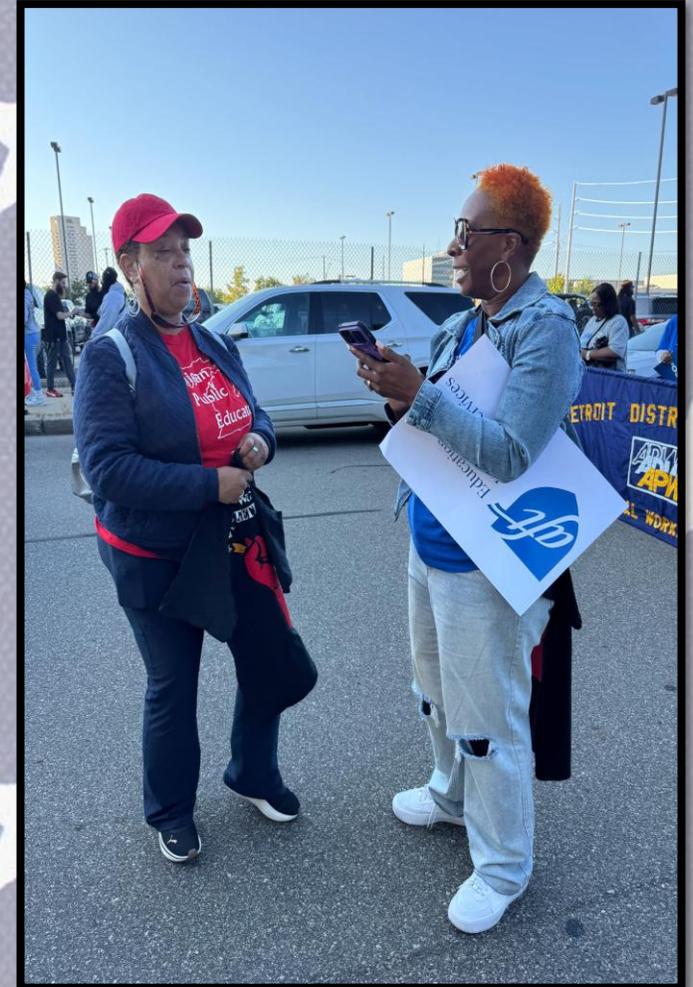
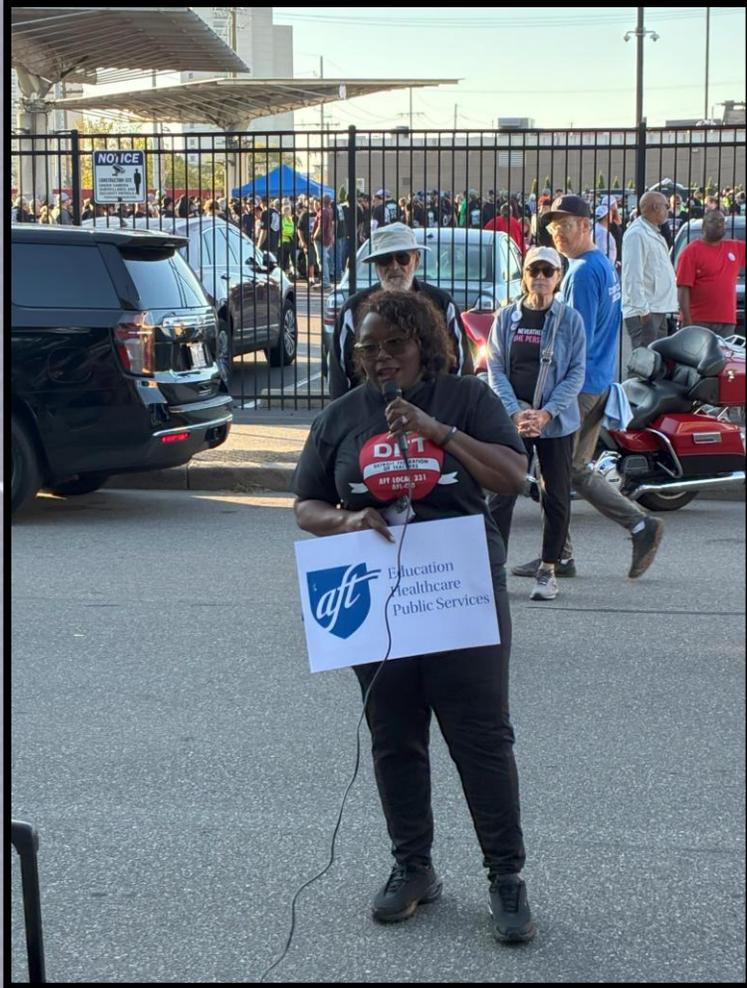
HONORED TO HAVE AFT HERE IN DETROIT



Check out this YouTube which features both DFT and AFT Michigan as well as Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist

[AFT National: Labor Day 2025: Standing Up For What All Working People Deserve](#)

GETTING READY TO STEP OFF



GETTING READY TO STEP OFF



GETTING READY TO STEP OFF



GETTING READY TO STEP OFF IN PRIDE: RANDOLPH CTC



A special recognition goes out to Building Rep, Stacy Jackson, at Randolph CTC (pictured left). We thank the staff and administrators for highlighting their participation in the Labor Day parade on their DPSCD school webpage. Check it out:

[Randolph Marches With Pride](#)



AND WE'RE OFF.....



AND WE'RE OFF.....



AND WE'RE OFF.....



STANDING PROUD WITH THE DFT



President Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins is standing with the band director of Southfield HS.



Here she is standing with Coleman Young II, a Detroit City Council Member, at large.



STANDING PROUD WITH THE DFT



Detroit City Council
Candidate for District 7,
Denzell Hines-Campbell



State Representative Regina Weiss (left),
stands with State Representative Matt
Koleszar (middle) and State Senator,
Stephanie Chang



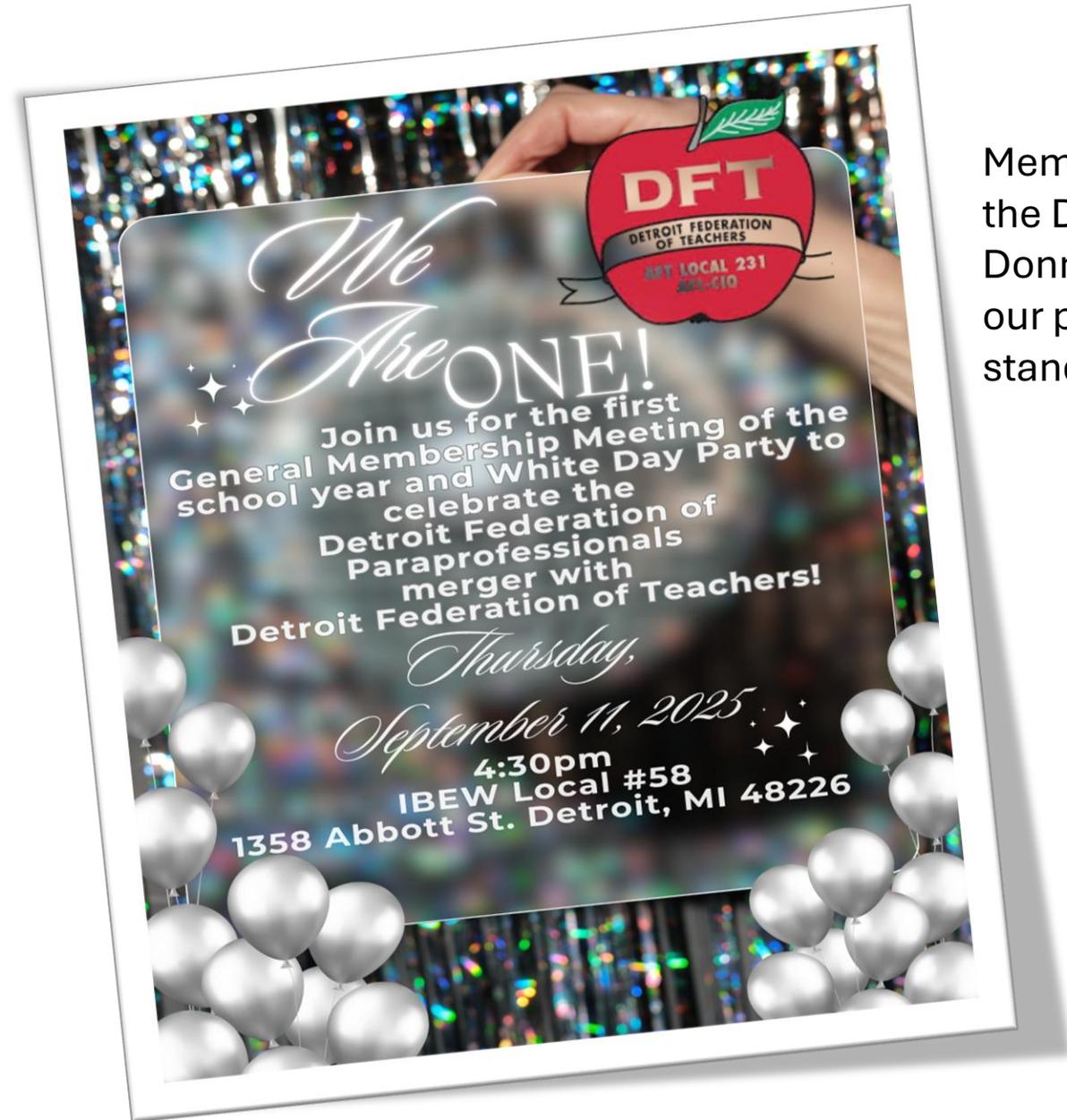
US Senate Candidate, Abdul El-Sayed
(in red), stands behind the DFT banner

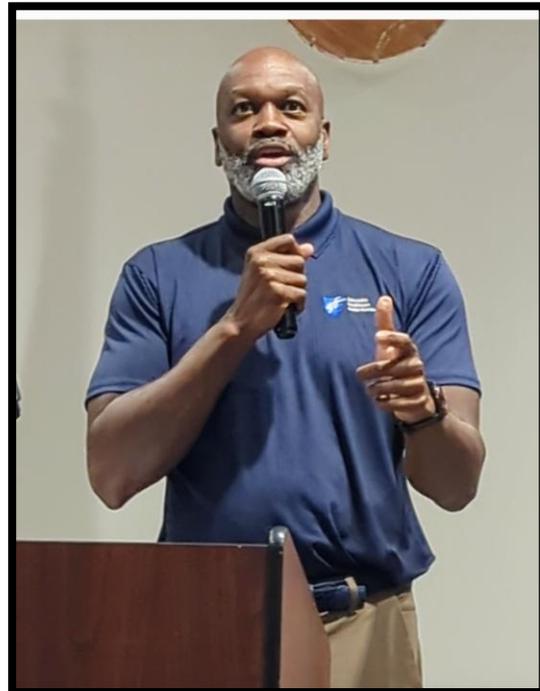
WHAT'S A PARADE WITHOUT MARCHING BANDS?



A Historic Day for the DFT: Merger of DFT with DFP

Members were on hand to witness the signing of the documents as the Detroit Federation of Professionals merged with Local 231. As Donna Jackson, the former president of DFP, said, “this will activate our power as we work on growing together, fighting together, and standing together.”





Members watch as President Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins welcomes our new brothers, sisters, and siblings to the DFT. AFT President Terrence Martin states that in the name of solidarity, this merger is in the best interest of advocating for all students and for all workers.

Welcome Paraprofessionals, Noon Hour Aides, Food Service, and School Culture Facilitators to DFT 231.

September Meeting Highlights



Molly Sweeney, 482Forward, explains the *Invest in MI Kids* ballot initiative to members.

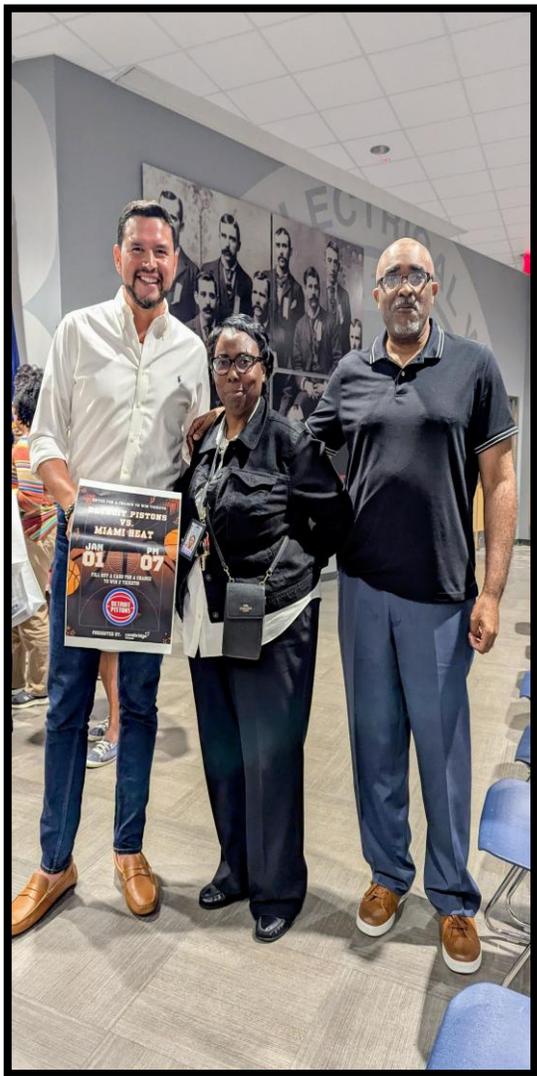


The Organizing Fellows welcome Union brothers, sisters, and siblings from the DFP and give their monthly report.



Quanita Cunningham, the OF working with DFP presents her first report to DFT members.

Lucky Raffle Winners



Queen Watkins was the winner of Detroit Pistons tickets, from Corebridge.



Carmen Williams



Shawanda Baskin
Campbell



Jackie Washington

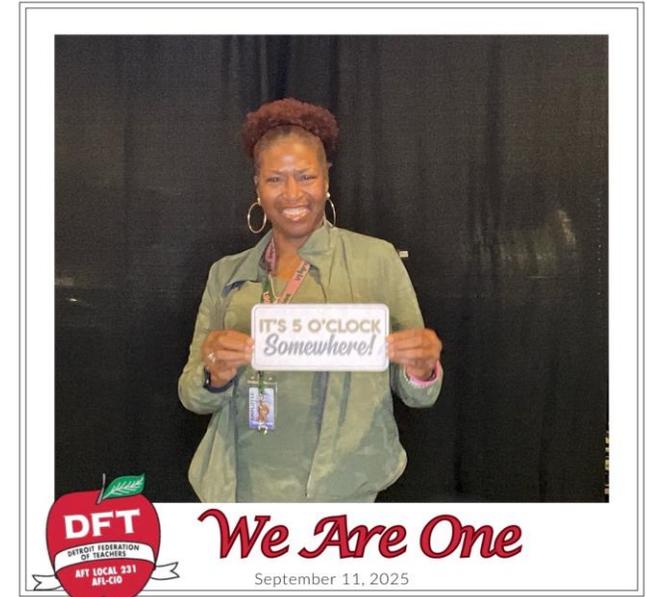


Tracy Arneau



Photo Booth Fun...Whom Do You Recognize?





**Photo Booth Fun...Whom
Do You Recognize?**

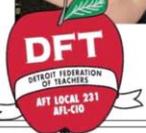


**Photo Booth Fun...Whom
Do You Recognize?**



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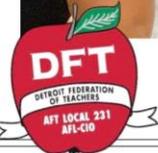




We Are One

September 11, 2025

Photo Booth Fun...Whom Do You Recognize?



We Are One

September 11, 2025



We Are One

September 11, 2025



We Are One

September 11, 2025



Photo Booth Fun...Whom Do You Recognize?



Photo Booth Fun...Whom Do You Recognize?





Work Locations Represented September 2025 General Membership Meeting

- ❖ Academy of Americas
- ❖ AOA Logan
- ❖ Adult Education
- ❖ Bagley
- ❖ Bates
- ❖ Bethune
- ❖ Brenda Scott
- ❖ Brewer
- ❖ Bunche
- ❖ Burns
- ❖ Burton
- ❖ Carstens
- ❖ Carver
- ❖ Cass Tech
- ❖ Central HS
- ❖ Charles Wright
- ❖ Cody
- ❖ Coleman A Young
- ❖ CMA
- ❖ Cooke
- ❖ Davis Aerospace
- ❖ Davison
- ❖ DFT Office
- ❖ DFT Retirees
- ❖ DSA
- ❖ Dossin
- ❖ Drew
- ❖ Duke Ellington
- ❖ EIDC
- ❖ East English Village
- ❖ Edison
- ❖ Edmonson
- ❖ FLICS
- ❖ Gardner
- ❖ Golightly EC
- ❖ Hamilton
- ❖ Harms
- ❖ Hutchinson
- ❖ Jerry L. Wright
- ❖ John R. King
- ❖ Keidan
- ❖ Law
- ❖ Mackenzie
- ❖ Marcus Garvey
- ❖ Marquette
- ❖ Marygrove
- ❖ Moses Field
- ❖ Munger
- ❖ Neinas
- ❖ Noble
- ❖ Nolan
- ❖ Northwestern
- ❖ Palmer Park
- ❖ PRMXA
- ❖ Priest
- ❖ Sampson-Webber
- ❖ Schulze
- ❖ Southeastern
- ❖ SLP
- ❖ Thirkell
- ❖ Turning Point
- ❖ Vernor
- ❖ Wayne
- ❖ Western

DFT Retirees Chapter for September



President Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins was on hand to swear in the officers for the 2025-2026 school year. Taking the oath were (from left to right) are Victor Gibson (president), Cynthia Pearson-Matthews (executive vice president), Lois Lofton-Doniver (social vice president), Gracie Wooten (secretary) and Mary Helen D'Angelo (treasurer).

DFT Retirees Chapter for September



President Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins was one of the guest speakers. She brought information about the Invest in MI Kids ballot initiative, explained about the DFT-DFP merger, and answered a few questions. A second speaker, Katrina Ellison, Ph.D., Associate Professor at the University of Michigan School of Social Work brought forth information about a study she is conducting. She spoke about FOCUS: Facing Forward, a ten-week program for African-American cancer survivors and their families to explore healthy behaviors and support each other's well-being.

EMU Black Alumni Spotlight

Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins B.A. Elementary Education

Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins is a lifelong Detroit—born, raised, living and working in Detroit, she is an outspoken advocate for social, educational and economic justice. For more than 25 years, Wilson-Lumpkins has been an active member in the Detroit Federation of Teachers. In 2014, Lakia was elected to her first term on the DFT Executive Board. Since then, Lakia has served as both Vice President, Executive Vice President and President of the DFT.



Lakia is humbled, privileged and blessed to be elected as the 9th President of the DFT. Professionally, Lakia is honored to represent over 3000 of the world's best educators and support staff.

 emuba.detroit@gmail.com

 <https://easternmichiganuniversityblackalumni.wildapricot.org/>



EMUBA's first Alumni spotlight feature is Mrs. Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins. We thank you for your continued work in the field of education especially here in the city of Detroit!!  

GO GREEN!
GO WHITE!
GO EMU!
E

Congratulations to DFT Member, Corrine Lyons

MCTE Middle School English Teacher of the Year

Middle School English Teacher of the Year

2025-2026

Corinne Z. Lyons

Detroit Public Schools Community District



“What sets Corinne apart most is her unwavering belief in the potential of every child. Her students consistently achieve academic success and grow in confidence because they know they have a teacher who believes in them without reservation. She is the kind of educator who changes lives—and in doing so, changes the future.”



Michigan, August 25, 2025 — The Michigan Council of Teachers of English (MCTE) is proud to recognize **Corinne Z. Lyons**, teacher at Sampson Webber Academy in the Detroit Public Schools Community District, as the recipient of the Middle School English Teacher of the Year Award for 2025-2026.

A native Detroit and proud Wayne State University alumna, Lyons is recognized for her dedication to advancing literacy equity, mentoring students through creative expression, and leading colleagues in professional learning. At Sampson Webber, she serves as the School-Based Transformative Engagement Lead, planning and facilitating staff professional development to reimagine teaching and ensure access to success for all learners.

Lyons’s career reflects a deep commitment to using literacy as both empowerment and liberation. She has supported students through culturally relevant practices such as poetry slams, open mics, and spoken word workshops, while also leading academic initiatives like the 9th Grade Promise Academy at Frederick Douglass Academy for Young Men to smooth the transition from middle to high school. Beyond her classroom, she has taught with the TRIO| Upward Bound program at the University of Detroit Mercy and the College of Education TRIO Summer Academy at Wayne State University, helping first-generation students prepare for college success.

Her leadership extends statewide and nationally. Lyons served on the Coalition of Chairs for multiple Michigan Reading Association conferences, chaired MRA’s Diversity and Justice Committee, and was honored by the organization as its 2023 Secondary Educator of the Year. She has also shared her voice through the American Federation of Teachers’ *Voices* publication and represented Detroit educators at the AFT’s Freedom to Teach event.

Reflecting on this recognition, Lyons said:

“Langston Hughes penned, ‘What happens to a dream deferred?’ I, named after a woman who could not read, descended from a woman who was not allowed to teach, born of a woman who had to fight to teach—have been named Middle School Teacher of the Year by the Michigan Council of Teachers of English. I now carry the chalk, the lesson, the light. I carry their dream, no longer deferred, in every lesson I teach. I am the answer to Hughes’ question. The dream did not dry up or explode—it was planted, watered, and it bloomed... in me.”

REMINDERS

❖ DUES/MEMBERSHIP CONCERNS

Contact an Organizing Fellow: West Side locations handled by Yolanda King; East Side locations handled by Regina Fuqua, for Paras, Food Service and NHAs, contact Quanita Cunningham. You may also contact Office Assistant, Mae Winters.

❖ ADDRESS, EMAIL, PHONE NUMBER CHANGES

Please make sure your correct personal email, home address and telephone number are on file with the DFT Office. If you change it with the district, that information is not sent to the Union Office. You may send corrections to dues@dft231.com. *We are not allowed to send communications to your DPSCD email address.*

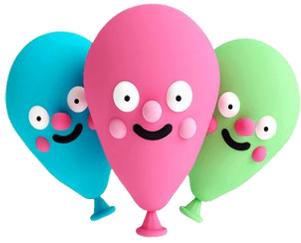
❖ SEPARATION FROM THE DISTRICT

It is the member's responsibility to notify the DFT Office when you separate from the district, whether resignation or retirement or Please contact an Organizing Fellow or the Office Assistant, Mae Winters.

❖ CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR CERTIFICATION EXPIRES IN 2026

You should be making plans to have your requirements fulfilled. The state is now accepting your credentials. More information can be found by logging on to your account at <https://mdoe.state.mi.us/moecs/login.aspx>.

ALL DFT CONTACTS ARE ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS DOCUMENT



VIEWING PAYROLL COMPENSATION HISTORY

1. Log in to PeopleSoft with your DPSCD credentials.
2. Click on the **Compass** icon in the top right corner to open the Nav Bar. A drop-down menu will appear.
3. Click on **Navigator** icon.
4. Click on **Self Service**.
5. Click on **Payroll and Compensation**.
6. Click on **Compensation History**.
7. View your current salary with its location on the DFT Salary Schedule.

REMINDERS

ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS

If you are called to a meeting with management that you suspect will be disciplinary in nature you have the right to request union representation under the U. S. Supreme Court ruling, NLRB v. Weingarten.

If in a meeting with management you are questioned to obtain information and you have reasonable apprehension that your answers could be used as a basis for discipline or other adverse action, it is your responsibility to ask to reschedule the meeting or resume when your union representative is present. If you choose to remain you may refuse to answer.

If you are in a situation where Weingarten may apply, read or present the statement exactly as outlined below.

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

If this interview could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union be present at this meeting. Until my representative arrives, I choose not to participate in this discussion.

CONTACT INFO FOR DFT STAFF



<https://dft231.mi.aft.org/contact-us>

Lakia Wilson, President, 313-875-6788, LWilson@dft231.com

Jason Posey, Executive Vice President and Labor Affairs Administrator (West Side Locations, West of Woodward), 313-875-6786, JPosey@dft231.com

Karin Whittler, Labor Affairs Administrator, 313-875-6776, KWhittler@dft231.com East Side locations (east of Woodward), also Cass Tech, DSA, Burton

Jacqueline Washington, Labor Affairs Administrator, JWashington@dft231.com, 313-875-6789, Paras, Food Service, NHA

Yolanda King, Organizing Fellow, 313-804-5580, YKing@dft231.com

Regina Fuqua, Organizing Fellow, 313-875-6775, RFuqua@dft231.com

Patrick Falcusan, Retirement Counselor and Financial Analyst, 313-875-6783, PFalcusan@dft231.com

Mae Winters, Office Assistant, 313-875-3500 press 6, MWinters@dft231.com

Vida Bonacci, Data Communications, 313-875-3500, VBonacci@dft231.com