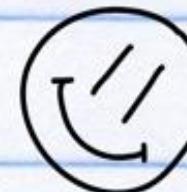


The Detroit Teacher



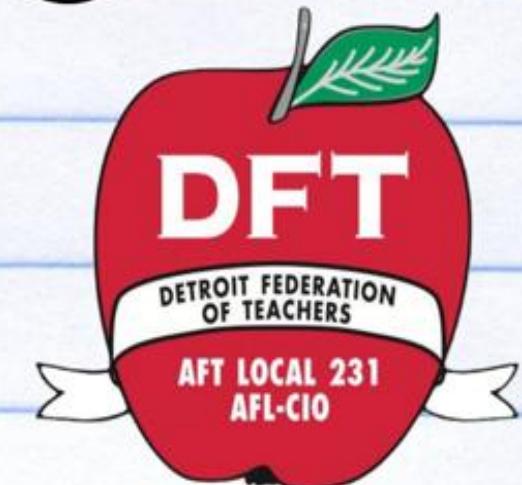
October 2025



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



Introducing DFT Staff Members: Quanita Cunningham and Jacqueline Washington



Greetings from the two of us. We are pleased to be on board with the DFT as part of its historic merger with the Detroit Federation of Paraprofessionals. We just want to take a minute to introduce ourselves to our Union siblings.

Quanita Cunningham (left side) is the Organizing Fellow for paras, noon hour aides, food service workers, and school culture facilitators. She is in the schools, city-wide, recruiting for membership. Jacqueline Washington (right side) is the labor affairs administrator for paras, noon hour aides, food service workers, and school culture facilitators. If you need assistance that is beyond the scope of the building representative at your work location, contact her.

Quanita Cunningham : I started my career with DPS as a special education assistant at Webster Elementary. Then I moved to a bigger playground called GSRP, PreK, where I became a paraeducator. I stayed in this position until I came to a “much more bigger” playground called the DFT. Over my career I have worked at Earhart, Ronald Brown Academy, and Marcus Garvey.

Jacqueline Washington: My career at DPS lasted 35 years, being at Clippert Middle School for 33 of those years. I was at Jeffries Elementary for the first couple of years before it closed. I started off as a noon hour aide, moved over to being a paraeducator, and retired as a School Culture Facilitator. **Side Note: She was featured in Time Magazine for her dedication in assisting families during the pandemic: [Time Magazine Article About Jackie Washington](#).

They have been out in schools across the district, so be sure to stop and say hello. It's exciting for Local 231 and former Local 2350 to be a part of this new direction for the Mighty DFT!

Invest in MI Kids Ballot Initiative

The goal is to get 700,000 signatures on petitions by February 2026. WE CAN DO IT!

<https://investinmikids.org/>

Invest in MI Kids

Curious about how to get plugged into the ballot initiative that would create \$1 billion per year for Michigan's public schools? Check out the link below to find an event near you!

bit.ly/imik_events



We are encouraging all of our members, who are registered voters in the state of Michigan, to sign the petition.

Petitions are available at DFT General Membership meetings and at the DFT Office. Also, many building representatives have picked up petitions so check with that person.

This 10-minute training video will teach you everything you need to know about collecting and submitting signatures to help bring our campaign to the ballot. Watch this so we can ensure that every signature we have counts.

<https://investinmikids.org/volunteer-hub>

Thank you, State
Board of Education!

Invest in MI Kids Ballot Initiative

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

SUE CARNELL, Ph.D.
INTERIM STATE SUPERINTENDENT

Resolution to Support and Endorse the Invest in MI Kids Proposal

WHEREAS, the Michigan State Board of Education acknowledges that Michigan's public schools are the cornerstone of our communities and the foundation of our children's future; and,

WHEREAS, the Michigan State Board of Education believes strong public schools attract families, boost property values, and strengthen the workforce—benefiting everyone; and,

WHEREAS, Michigan's public schools are underfunded by \$4.5 billion, and more than 3/4 of all Michigan public school students attend schools in districts that are over \$2000 per pupil below adequacy¹; and,

WHEREAS, funding for Michigan's School Aid Fund has significantly decreased over the last two decades, and between 2015 and 2022, seven studies found Michigan does not provide enough money for the state's public schools²; and,

WHEREAS, in the 2021-2022 school year, Michigan offered the lowest starting teacher salary in the Great Lakes region³; and,

¹ What Will it Take to Achieve Funding Adequacy for All Michigan's Students, Education Law Center https://edlawcenter.org/assets/Michigan/2023_ELC_MichiganReport_Final.pdf

² Augenblick, Palach & Associates. "Michigan Education Finance Study." (2016).
- Koenigsknecht, et al. "Special Education Funding Subcommittee Report, Submitted to Lt. Governor Brian Calley." (2017).
- Michigan School Finance Collaborative, "Costing Out the Resources Needed to Meet Michigan's Standards and Requirements." (2018).
- Arsen, David, Delpier Tanner, and Nagel, Jesse. "Michigan School Finance at the Crossroads: A Quarter Century of State Control." (2019).
- Nagel, Jesse. "Special Education Finance in Michigan: Implications for Equity." PhD diss., Michigan State University, 2021. Hollenbeck, Kevin, Timothy J. Bartik, Randall W. Eberts, Brad J. Hershbein, and Michelle Miller-Adams. "The Road Toward K-12 Excellence in Michigan: How an Upgraded Financing System Can Better Support Enhanced Student Achievement." (2015).
- Morgan, Ivy, Reethel Presume, Mary Grech, and Ary Amerikaner. "Michigan's School Funding: Crisis and Opportunity." Education Trust-Midwest (2020).

³ Michigan Teacher Shortage Study: 2025 Report. Education Policy Innovation Collaborative. January 2025. https://edpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Teacher-Shortage-Report_Full-Report_Dec2024.pdf

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

PAMELA PUGH – PRESIDENT • ELLEN COGEN LIPTON / TIFFANY D. TILLEY – CO-VICE PRESIDENTS
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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909 • WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/MDE • 833-633-5788

WHEREAS, the top 1% earners in Michigan pay a lower effective tax rate than everyday people pay (5.7% for the top 1% vs 7.1-9.7% for the bottom 80%)⁴; and,

WHEREAS, the lifetime earnings of Michigan's current K-12 students could increase by \$27 billion if their educational achievement matched the national average⁵; and,

WHEREAS, A 10 percent increase in per-pupil spending improved low-income students' graduation rates by seven percentage points, and their adult hourly wages by 13 percent⁶;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Michigan State Board of Education hereby endorses the Invest in MI Kids proposed amendment to the Michigan Constitution to impose a 5% fair share surcharge on annual taxable income over \$1 million for joint filers and over \$500,000 for single filers, to raise funds for career and technical education, reducing class size and attracting and retaining educators in public schools across the State and is subject to an annual audit.

Resolution passed on October 14, 2025, by a vote of 5 – 2.

⁴ Michigan: Who Pays? 7th Edition. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. <https://itep.org/whopays/michigan-who-pays-7th-edition/>

⁵ UpJohn Institute <https://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1218&context=reports>,

⁶ Does Money Matter in Education? Tanner Delpier, Jesse Nagel, Kelly Stec, Alonso Gilzene, David Arsen <https://edge.sitcorecloud.io/michiganstab57e-msistrateg1294d-prnd985b-7a5e/media/Project/MSU/Education/Files/k12/does-money-matter-policy-brief.pdf>

INVEST IN MI KIDS



PREMIUM
QUALITY
education

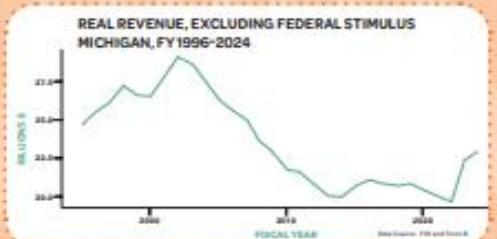
A STATEWIDE BALLOT INITIATIVE

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

A STATEWIDE BALLOT INITIATIVE

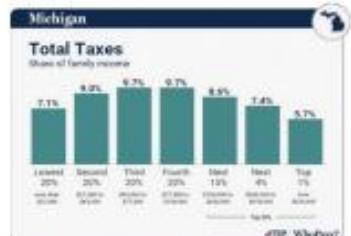
to raise new funds for local school districts

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

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

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

➤ 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/dfaq-pages/state-finances/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 ➤

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JOIN US! ➤

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://ios-dc.org/report-wealth-expands-after-higher-state-taxes-on-high-income-earners/>



PREMIUM
QUALITY

DFT Commemorates World Teachers' Day Across the Border



The DFT was invited to participate in a media event with teacher unions in Windsor, Ontario to highlight the similarities both countries have in public education. The Canadian teacher unions involved in the press conference were the OSSTF/FEESO (Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers' Federation/Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario), ETFO/FEEO Windsor/Essex (Elementary Teachers' Federation Ontario/Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario) and the Windsor Essex Elementary Catholic Teachers local of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (WEEOECTA).



DFT Commemorates World Teachers' Day Across the Border

The four unions held a joint press conference in Windsor, Ontario.

- local newspaper: [Windsor News Today/Teacher Unions](#)
- local television station: [CTV/Teacher Unions](#)
- local radio station: [CKLW/Teacher Unions](#)



Listen as President Wilson-Lumpkins is interviewed by the Windsor media:

[DFT President Media Remarks](#)

DFT Commemorates World Teachers' Day Across the Border

Press Conference in entirety runs 12:12

<https://youtu.be/0btBUKCqowY?si=dxvmTHUMwPfsknfz>

Intro & DFT remarks: runs 1:19

https://youtu.be/Qn_j93PElP0?si=kgeVDUPEXaP_Va_V

Jody Meloche, president of the Ontario English Teacher Catholic Association, Windsor Essex Secondary Unit remarks: runs 3:28

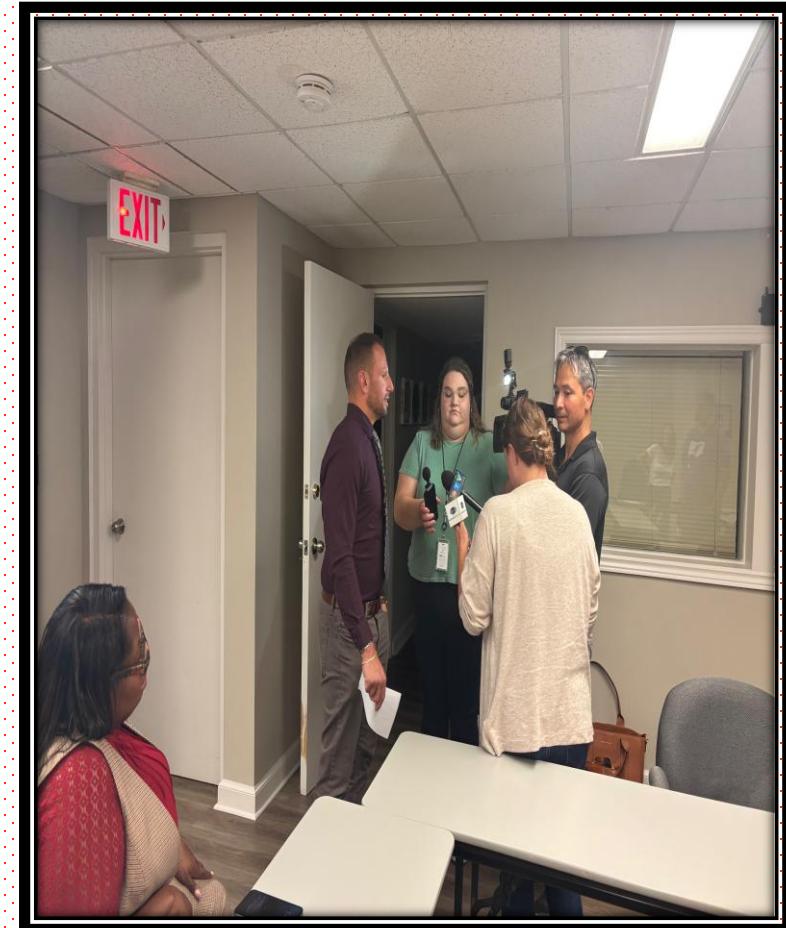
<https://youtu.be/fjT2G4RNl7M?si=c-rDa2mR3nVor8N1>

Joanna Conrad, parent and leader of an organization called Youth Diversion: remarks 2:58

https://youtu.be/_iLl7VB_Lbc?si=HT7cmb7QrGNoO9P0

Lisa Gretzky, member of Provincial Parliament Windsor West: remarks 4:29

<https://youtu.be/fd6OaMDHESw?si=jpmuxmsLmy6bvJWt>



DFT Commemorates World Teachers' Day Across the Border





CALENDAR

November	December	January
3 Report Cards 4 Professional Development for Staff 6 Executive Board 4:30 p.m. 11 DPSCD School Board 5:30 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	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	5 Schools Reopen 8 Executive Board 4:30 p.m. 13 DPSCD School Board 5:30 p.m. 15 DFT General Membership 4:30 p.m. 20 PAC Committee 5:00 p.m. 22 Middle School Chapter 5:00 p.m. 22 ESE Chapter 5:30 p.m.

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/>

Honor Roll

Work Locations Represented October 2025 General Membership Meeting

- ❖ Academy of Americas
- ❖ Bennett
- ❖ Bethune
- ❖ Brenda Scott
- ❖ Bunche
- ❖ Burton
- ❖ Carstens
- ❖ Carver
- ❖ Cass Tech
- ❖ Central HS
- ❖ Charles Wright
- ❖ Clippert
- ❖ Cody
- ❖ Cooke
- ❖ Crockett
- ❖ Davis Aerospace
- ❖ Davison
- ❖ DFT Office
- ❖ DFT Retirees
- ❖ DIA
- ❖ Detroit Lions
- ❖ DSA
- ❖ Dossin
- ❖ Drew
- ❖ Duke Ellington
- ❖ Earhart
- ❖ EIDC
- ❖ East English Village
- ❖ Edison
- ❖ Edmonson
- ❖ FLICS
- ❖ Gardner
- ❖ Golightly EC
- ❖ Gompers
- ❖ Hamilton
- ❖ Harms
- ❖ Hutchinson
- ❖ Jerry L. Wright
- ❖ Law
- ❖ Mann
- ❖ Marquette
- ❖ Marygrove
- ❖ Moses Field
- ❖ Neinas
- ❖ Nichols
- ❖ Noble
- ❖ Nolan
- ❖ Northwestern
- ❖ Pasteur
- ❖ Pershing
- ❖ Priest
- ❖ Ronald Brown
- ❖ Schulze
- ❖ Southeastern
- ❖ Speech and Hearing Clinic
- ❖ SLP
- ❖ Thirkell
- ❖ Turning Point
- ❖ Vernor
- ❖ Wayne
- ❖ Western

Detroit City Council Candidates Address the DFT Membership in October



Renata Miller, District 5



Mary Waters, at large



Coleman A. Young II, at large

DFT Members Participate in this Nationwide Protest



Steven Portnoy in Rochester Hills



Terra Strohm in Ferndale



Marcus Walton in Ferndale





Rochell Dunson in Farmington Hills



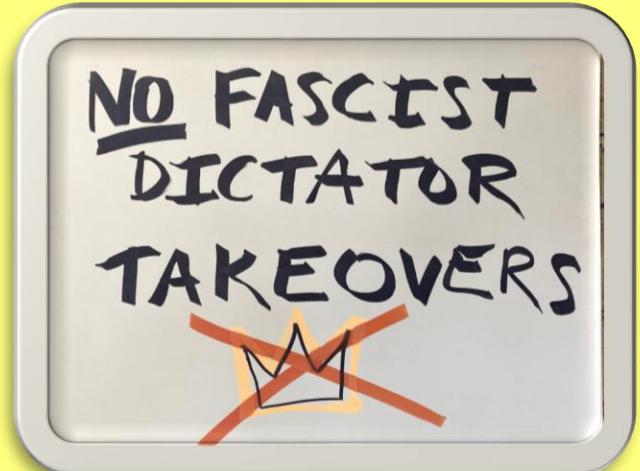
Vida Bonacci in Dearborn



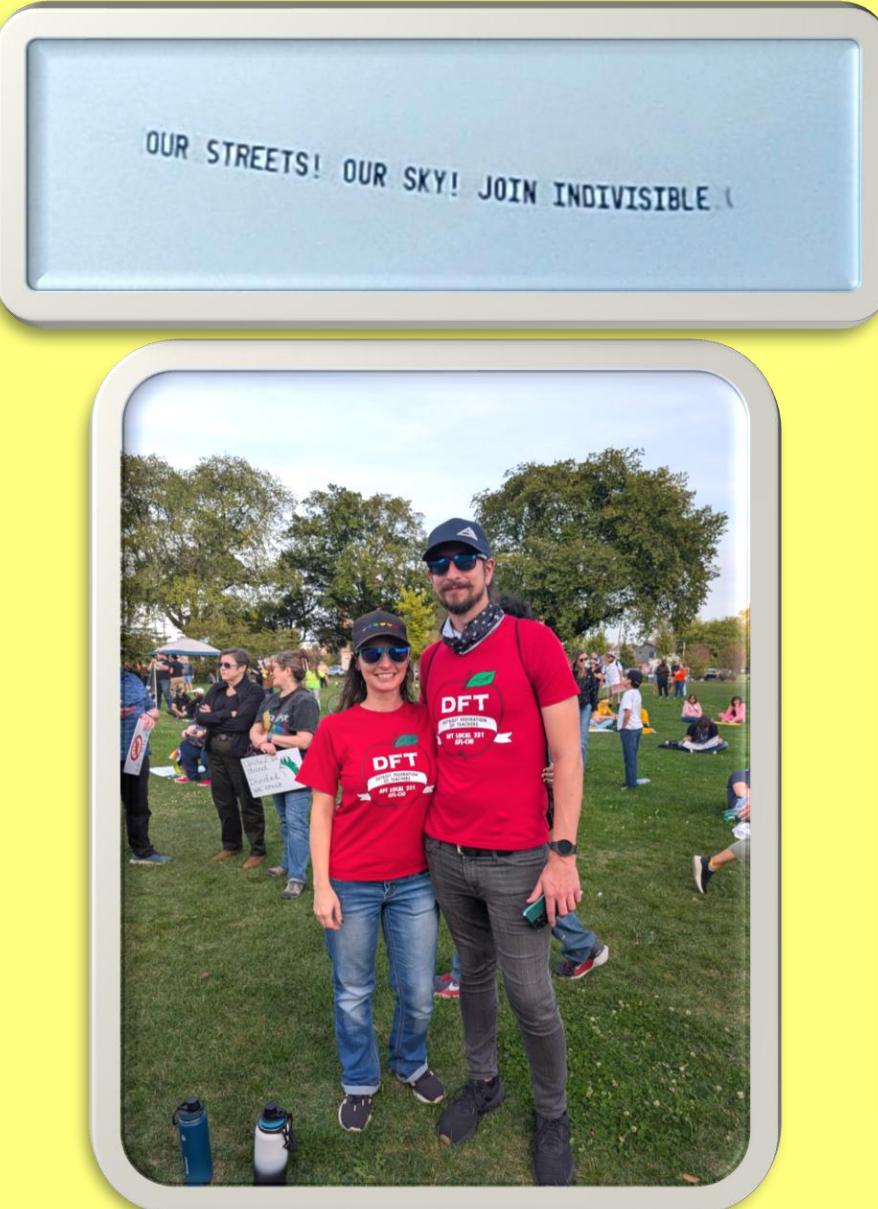
Sheryl Bonness in Livonia



2 Members of Congress at Schoolcraft College on Haggerty Road in Livonia: Rashida Tlaib with Debbie Dingell



DFT Turns Out in Detroit at Roosevelt Park



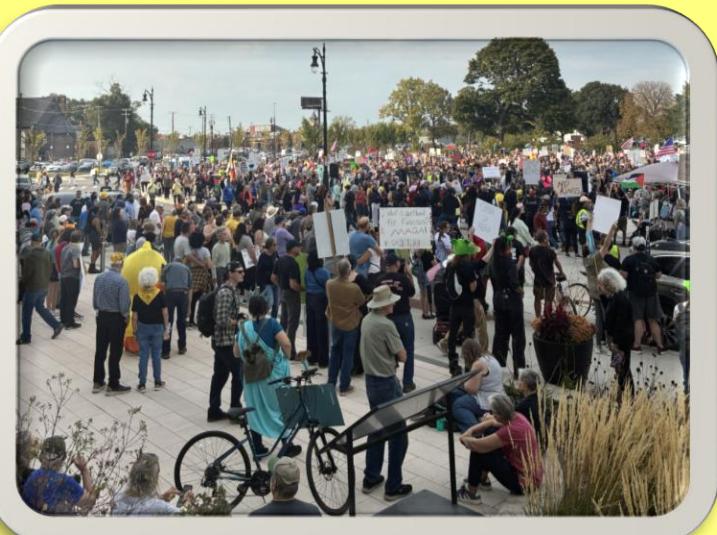
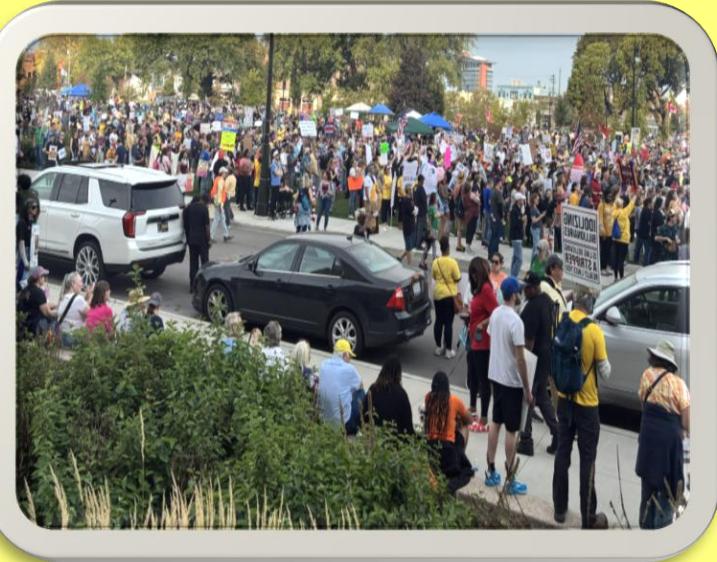
DFT Turns Out in Detroit at Roosevelt Park



DFT Turns Out in Detroit at Roosevelt Park



DFT Turns Out in Detroit at Roosevelt Park



Staying Busy With Union Professional Development

Building Reps Listen to the President at the September 2025 Building Rep Training



AOA HS
AOA Logan
Bethune
Blackwell
Bunche
Cass Tech
Central
Charles Wright
Cooke
Davis Aerospace
Denby
DIAYW
DSA
Dossin
Drew
EEVPA
Edmonson
Gardner
Golightly EC
Gompers
JL White
JR King
Marygrove
PRMXA
Priest
Schulze
Southeastern
Spain
SHC
Thirkell
Virtual

Staying Busy With Union Professional Development

DFT leaders attend the annual AFT Michigan Fall Summit



Staying Busy With Union Professional Development

Detroit Hosts AFT National's Civil, Women and Human Rights Conference



Detroit delegation: Rodney Fresh, Marcus Walton, Nathaniel Horn, Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins, Felecia Slappy, Robin Jennings, Jason Posey

Participants engaged through three core training tracks

- ✓ Communications Training—Disrupting disinformation and reclaiming public narrative, by use of social media tools
- ✓ Political Training—Advancing democracy at the ballot box and building durable civic power
- ✓ MOVE (Mobilize. Organize. Vote. Empower.) Training for grassroots resistance, cross-sector coalition-building, and union-based movement work

To read more about this biennial conference:

[**AFT 2025 Conference: Civil, Women, Human Rights**](#)

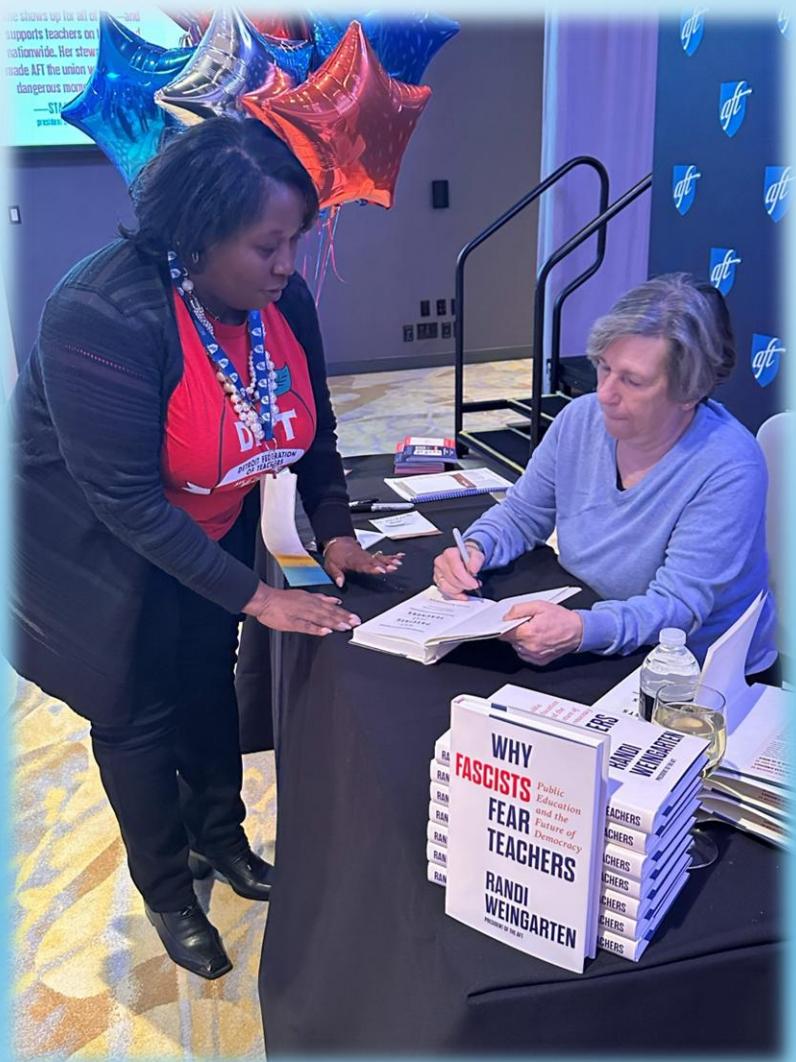
Staying Busy With Union Professional Development

Detroit Hosts AFT National's Civil, Women and Human Rights Conference



Staying Busy With Union Professional Development

Always time for a book signing



“There is a war on knowledge and teachers are on the frontlines,” President Randi Weingarten says. “I wrote *Why Fascists Fear Teachers* to answer the question so many educators and parents are asking right now: Why the relentless attacks on public schools and on educators? This book also honors the incredible work educators do every day to create opportunity, build safe and welcoming schools, and help young people thrive.”

Staying Busy With Union Professional Development

DFT...Union 101

Join us for a morning of food, fun and fellowship.

DFT...That's My Union!

“Power concedes nothing without a demand.” Fredrick Douglass

Discover the power of solidarity! Join us for a morning of learning more about our labor union and how we're working together to protect, empower, and uplift members.

November 1, 2025 at 9:00am
IBEW Hall ~ 1358 Abbott
Detroit, MI 48226

To register, scan the QR Code or go to <https://forms.gle/L7q8XTWuWw2ASrF7> or email dues@dft231.com

Continental breakfast and refreshments provided



Top, left to right:
Angela E. Ford,
Samantha Hoskin,
Aquice Ward,
Jessica Pressberry



Bottom, left to right:
Quanita
Cunningham,
Jacqueline
Washington, Lakia
Wilson-Lumpkins

See What Our Members Are Doing

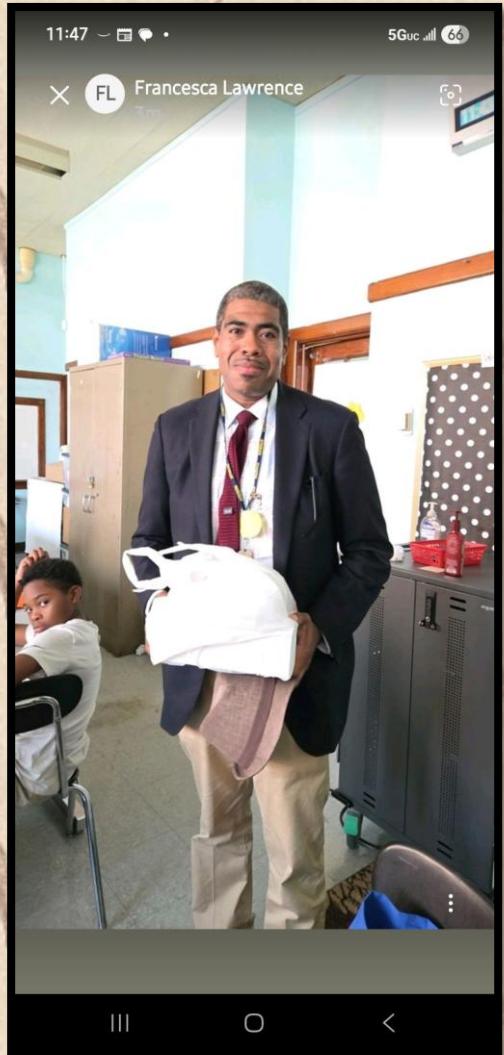


Ronald Brown Academy Promotes
Climate and Culture for Staff



Ready for the Press Conference
Announcing the Merger of the DFT with
the DFP

See What Our Members Are Doing



EVP Jason Posey at Burns for Count Day, standing with Building Rep, Francesca Lawrence (middle) and Alternate, Denzel Washington (right)

See What Our Members Are Doing

Cody HS Groundbreaking: President Lakia Wilson-Lumpkins is there.



More about this at [DPSCD Announcement](#)

See What Our Members Are Doing

More Pictures from the Labor Day Parade



See What Our Members Are Doing

More Pictures from the Labor Day Parade



See What Our Members Are Doing

More Pictures from the Labor Day Parade



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.

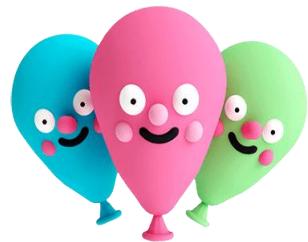
❖ SEPARATION FROM THE DISTRICT

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/moecls/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.

DFT Office Contacts

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

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

Jason A. Posey, Executive Vice President, 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
- Felecia Slappy, Labor Affairs Administrator, 313-875-3500, Fslappy@dft231.com, West Side locations (west of Woodward)
- Jacqueline Washington, Labor Affairs Administrator, JWashington@dft231.com, 313-875-6789, Paras, Food Service, NHA
- Yolanda King, Organizing Fellow, West Side locations, 313-804-5580, YKing@dft231.com
- Regina Fuqua, Organizing Fellow, East Side locations, 313-875-6775, Rfuqua@dft231.com
- Quanita Cunningham, Organizing Fellow, Paras, Food Service, NHAs, 313-875-6778, Qcunningham@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, Communications Specialist, 313-875-3500, VBonacci@dft231.com