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Our Children's Academic Success Is Everyone's Job

The call to action to ensure our children's academic success is everyone's responsibility. The concept of "It Takes a Village," remains relevant. Parents, community residents, churches, businesses and government agencies must come together to support high-quality education and academic achievement.

The demands on our youth to compete in an ever-advancing global & technological society increase every day. Our young people deserve to be prepared for life in a knowledge-based and technology-driven society. Whatever your race, ethnicity, or socio-economic background, higher education continues to be the great equalizer that provides people with knowledge, skills, and the confidence to be successful.

When parents support local after school programs, volunteer their time as a mentor and tutor, students benefit. Encourage extra-curricular activities that enhance educational development beyond video games, sports and "hanging out." Stay connected and informed with local and national news related to education. Having information is the key to success for everyone.

Quality public education can only exist where the entire community is engaged. Professional educators are partners in a team effort which also requires constructive participation by parents, caregivers, the business community, and civic and political leadership in order to succeed. We each have a role to play. We all share a stake in the outcome. So let's all keep working . . . together.



Shirley Stancato
President & CEO
New Detroit, Inc.

"Thanks to district administrators and teachers unions for starting school on time. They have a commitment to put the students first."



Sharlonda Buckman
Executive Director
Detroit Parent Network



“What we want is what is good for students and fair to teachers and staff.”

What is the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) ?

The DFT is an organization of the women and men who have devoted their working lives to educating Detroit’s children. What we want is what is good for students and fair to teachers and staff. And these things are most often the same thing.

Smaller class sizes make it easier for your child to learn and for the teacher to teach.

Safe and welcoming schools are good for your child and her teachers. Common preparation time and meaningful professional development allow teachers to improve themselves and each other and, therefore, be more effective teachers for your children.

And as your child’s teacher we want to **work with** DPS administration to improve our schools so

that every child receives the education they deserve. We fight for our members and advocate for our students.

Our union’s commitment to your child is why we urge parents to be involved with their child’s education and school. We believe that a strong partnership between schools and parents is essential to the academic well-being of students. When school staff and parents work together to reinforce high standards of conduct and achievement, the result is a school that “works,” a learning environment that promotes success.

Other school districts pay more. Some other school districts have newer, better equipped schools.

But DFT members choose to teach in Detroit. Our members are committed to your children.

By Keith Johnson, President, The Detroit Federation of Teachers



Preparing Your Child for School



Success in school begins at an early age.

From the **United States Department of Education**, there are some suggestions to help prepare your child for a successful transition to school. Following are the “7 Steps to Kindergarten”:

1. Find out if the school that your child will attend has a registration deadline. Some schools have a limited number of slots for children. Start early to find out your school's policy and the procedures.

2. Learn as much as you can about the school your child will attend before the school year begins. Schools—even schools in the same district—can differ

greatly. Don't rely only on information about kindergarten that you have received from other parents—their schools might have different requirements and expectations.

You will want to find out the following:

- The principal's name
- The name of your child's teacher
- What forms you need to fill out
- What immunizations are required before your child enters school
- A description of the kindergar-

ten program

- The yearly calendar and daily schedule for kindergarten children
- Procedures for transportation to and from school
- Available food services
- How you can become involved in your child's education and in the school.



Preparing Your Child for School (continued)

3. Find out in advance what the school expects from new kindergarten students. If you know the school's expectations a year or two ahead of time, you will be in a better position to prepare your child.

4. Visit the school with your child. Walk up and down the hallways to help her learn where different rooms-her classroom, the library, the gym, the cafeteria-are. Let your child observe other children and their classrooms.

5. Talk with your child about school. During your visit, make positive comments about the school-your good attitude will rub off! ("Look at all the boys and

girls painting in this classroom. Doesn't that look like fun!"). Talk with your child about the teachers she will have and how they will help her learn new things. Encourage your child to consider teachers to be wise friends to whom she should listen and show respect.

6. Consider volunteering to help out in the school. Your child's teacher may appreciate having an extra adult to help do everything from passing out paper and pencils to supervising children on the playground. Volunteering is a good way to learn more about the school and to meet its staff and to meet other parents.

When the long-awaited first day of kindergarten arrives, go to school with your child (but don't stay too long). And be patient. Many young children are overwhelmed at first, because they haven't had much experience in dealing with new situations. They may not like school immediately. Your child may cry or cling to you when you say goodbye each morning, but with support from you and his teacher, this can change rapidly.

7. Each day as your child leaves home for school, let them know how proud you are!



Parents and students being prepared for school can make all the difference in the world.

Small High Schools in Detroit

The *Small Schools Initiative* has begun with the redesign of Cody and Osborn high schools. These schools are part of the *Small Schools* turnaround initiative. The initiative is funded by the Greater Detroit Venture Fund, created by United Way for Southeastern Michigan and funded with major investments from AT&T, the Ford Motor Company Fund, the Skillman Foundation and the United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

The goal is to develop an environment that provides

more personalized attention and learning experiences for each student.

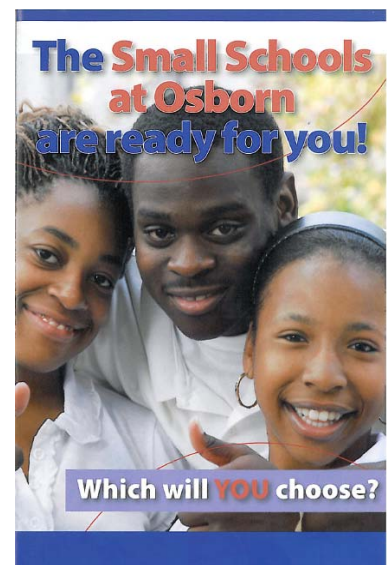
There will now be four separate high schools under one roof at Osborn, three beginning at the 9th grade and one at the 10th. There are five high schools at Cody with four for grades 9-12 and one for 10-12 grades.

Each of the schools will have its own principal who will lead and guide the educational process within their own school. Each of the schools also has a unique

focus with a broad range of options from Leadership and Medicine to Global Communication and Technology.

This is the beginning of a movement that is bringing the best practices in education around the world to the students in Detroit. As the job market becomes more and more competitive requiring highly educated candidates, Detroit students will be fully prepared for the challenge.

“Let Them Know How Proud You Are”





New Detroit is the nation's first urban coalition dedicated to race relations. The coalition of nearly 100 leaders representing business, labor, media, community based and civil rights organizations and education, health and religious institutions, works to improve race relations in this region. New Detroit addresses economic, educational and social disparities that can be measured by race. For more information on New Detroit, Inc. visit:

www.newdetroit.org or call 313-664-2000.

The **Detroit Parent Network** works to improve the parenting and leadership skills of active parents so they can improve parenting in their homes, neighborhoods, churches and schools. Detroit Parent Network serves 10,000 parents annually and has 1,400 registered members. The Detroit Parent Network developed an "Agenda for Detroit's Kids". The Agenda identifies five areas that can give our kids a fair shot at success:

- Safe Communities
- High Functioning Schools
- Out of School-Time Opportunities
- Family Friendly Neighborhoods

For more information on the Agenda or to become a member of Detroit Parent Network call: **313-832-0617** or visit: www.DetroitParentNetwork.org



Resources for Students

DPS Office of Parental Involvement

Fisher Building, Suite 2150
3011 West Grand Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48202
Phone: (313) 873-7490
www.detroitk12.org/resources/parents

Parental resources on topics such as enrollment, scholarships, parental and community concerns from the Detroit Public Schools.

The Youth Connection

333 West Fort Street, Suite 1230
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3150
Phone: 313-963-3660
www.mayorstime.org

Database of after school activities, publications, health, family life, and school success resources.

Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program

100 Farnsworth
Suite 249
Detroit, MI 48202
Tel: 313-831-3050
www.dapcep.org

DAPCEP offers students intensive computer, technology, science, math, and engineering training.

Communities in Schools of Detroit, Inc.

5830 Field Street
Detroit, MI 48213-2454
313.571.3400
www.cisdetroit.org

CIS coordinates after school services in 42 schools in Wayne County, and manages a Community Technology Center, volunteer services, and a warehouse of incentives for students.

Boys & Girls Club of Southeastern Michigan

Diehl Club
4242 Collingwood
Detroit, MI 48204-1614
Phone: (313) 931-7190
www.bgscsm.org

The Boys & Girls Club of Southeastern Michigan provides high quality youth development programs, sporting activities, events and a safe haven for children.

YouthVille Detroit

7375 Woodward
Suite 2800
Detroit, MI 48202
Phone (313)309-1300
www.youthvilledetroit.org

YouthVille Detroit offers a broad range of programs within six core areas: leadership development, cultural and fine arts, education and academic enrichment, technology, health and fitness and music.

Detroit Urban League College Club

15770 James Couzens
Detroit, MI 48238
(313) 831-5137
www.deturbanleague.org

College Club and College Resource Library to help youth prepare for college with access to a comprehensive selection of related information and resources.

Metro Youth YMCA

7375 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48202
Phone: (313) 309-1552
www.ymcadetroit.org

The Collaborative provides a range of programs that are fun and engaging for youth, while working to develop specific life skills that prepare them for the challenges ahead.

City Year Detroit

1 Ford Place, 1F
Detroit, MI 48202
Phone: (313) 874-6825
www.CityYear.org

City Year unites young people of all backgrounds for a year of full-time service, giving them the skills and opportunities to change the world.

*Each issue of **Focus on Education** will feature resources for parents to assist their school aged children.*