OPPOSE THE STATE'S APPOINTMENT OF A CEO OVER EAST DETROIT PRIORITY SCHOOLS

WHEREAS: In February of 2016, the State School Reform Office (SSRO) directed by Natasha Baker,

an appointee of Governor Rick Snyder, declared that East Detroit High School, Kelly Middle School, Bellview Elementary School and Pleasantview Elementary School were being placed under the authority of the SSRO and a Chief Executive Officer for failure to

improve results as reported on the State Priority Schools List; and

WHEREAS: East Detroit Public Schools (EDPS) entered into an agreement with the Macomb ISD to

partner as joint decision makers in constructing a successful turnaround plan. The ISD has demonstrated the ability to help turn around priority schools in several instances and has been successfully working together with the EDPS to effect positive change; and

WHEREAS: The State has not demonstrated a successful program of turning around performance in

low achieving schools using a CEO or Emergency Manager model; and

WHEREAS: The SSRO failed to act in a transparent and reasonable fashion in identifying and naming

this group of schools. In fact, three of the four schools were not in the final year of

priority status as required for state take over; and

WHEREAS: EDPS has recently emerged from massive financial hardship without state intervention

or assistance, while teachers have endured five years of a 25% cut in wages causing

significant teacher turnover and instability in staffing and enrollment; and

WHEREAS: State intervention threatens to further erode the community's confidence in the well-

being of the schools, as evidenced by dropping enrollment in the Educational

Achievement Authority, causing a new exodus of students which will throw the district

back into financial hardship; and

WHEREAS: The recent financial crisis has been overcome by cooperation between all stakeholders

and the district has already demonstrated many statistical signs of improvement, including a graduation rate higher than the state average, nearly double yearly growth rates in English Language Arts and Mathematics scores and improved disciplinary rates;

and NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED: That AFT Michigan opposes the usurpation of local control of a school community via

the appointment of a CEO or Emergency Manager by the SSRO or any other arm of the state government and reaffirms our call for the repeal of Michigan's emergency

manager law.

Submitted by:

East Detroit Federation of Teachers Local #698

Revised & Recommended by Legislation & Resolutions Committee