

## RESOLUTION #1

### Sexual Assault In Higher Education

- WHEREAS:** Michigan's institutions of higher education are experiencing a crisis of sexual assault and insidious gender, sex, and sexuality based harassment; and
- WHEREAS:** The tenets of mutual defense that are core to the labor movement demand a response to this crisis in campus safety and personal security; and
- WHEREAS:** Current campus conversations related to improving responses to sexual assault, harassment, and identity-based discrimination are primarily reactive, rather than proactive; and
- WHEREAS:** Current campus reforms related to safety on university campuses frequently fail to include the perspectives of graduate student employees who study and work on these campuses; and
- WHEREAS:** The sexual violence and identity-based discrimination that graduate student employees experience is unique, due to their unique status as both employees and students on university campuses. Women, people of color, trans people, LGBTQ+ and disabled people are particularly at risk for violence and harassment at all workplaces, including university campuses; and
- WHEREAS:** As the only union representing graduate employees in the state of Michigan, AFT Michigan is ideally positioned to coordinate statewide advocacy efforts in response to sexual assault, harassment, and discrimination on public university campuses; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That the AFT Michigan Administrative Board will convene a special sexual assault advisory committee of representatives from all higher education locals in the state with special attention to graduate employees; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** That the AFT Michigan will work with sexual assault advisory committee to contact community advocates for sexual assault prevention and non-discrimination around the state of Michigan to seek their input and guidance in shaping proactive institutional policies to create safe and supportive spaces for survivors of sexual assault; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** That the AFT Michigan Administrative Board will consider reasonable expense requests from the sexual assault advisory committee to compensate these professionals for their time and knowledge as needed; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** That the sexual assault advisory committee, so convened and supported as described above, will prepare a final set of recommendations to the AFT Michigan Administrative Board that at minimum will include recommendations for best practices in the areas of mandatory reporting, affirmative consent education, and defining campus security in trans, queer and disability inclusive terms, as well as all other areas of sexual assault and harassment prevention considered necessary by the committee; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY**
- RESOLVED:** That the final recommendations will be submitted by the AFT Michigan Administrative Board to governing boards at colleges and universities where we

represent employees no later than April 2019, in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Submitted by:

Michigan State University Graduate Employees Union Local #6196  
Revised and recommended for adoption by the Human Rights Committee  
Approved by AFT Michigan 75<sup>th</sup> Convention (May 19, 2018)

## RESOLUTION #2

### **Walter Bergman Human Rights Award Michigan Student Power Network**

- WHEREAS:** The Michigan Student Power Network (MSPN) is a statewide association of progressive student organizations that works to connect student struggles across campuses, issues and identities, in order to share skills and build a statewide movement capable of effecting progressive change; and
- WHEREAS:** Since forming the network in 2014, MSPN affiliates have built strong relationships with AFT Michigan locals and other unions on many campuses, including Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, Lansing Community College, Michigan State University, Northern Michigan University, UM-Ann Arbor, UM-Dearborn, Wayne County Community College, Wayne State University, Washtenaw Community College, Western Michigan University; and
- WHEREAS:** MSPN has developed a successful Student Organizer Fellowship Program. Now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the program will train 25 students in the basics of community organizing, political education, and strategic campaigning, while building statewide bonds between organizers from all over Michigan this school year; and
- WHEREAS:** MSPN has been active in many campaigns, including a statewide march to deliver demands on behalf of Michigan's young people; engaging students in the 2014, 2016, and 2018 elections; protesting Emergency Financial Management; protesting the murder of Black and Brown people at the hands of the police; pressuring university regents to support lower tuition; building solidarity alongside local unions during organizing drives and contract campaigns; and lobbying to promote the MSPN Reclaim Higher Ed platform; and
- WHEREAS:** MSPN's 2018 goals include registering 5,000 voters, expanding their network to new campuses, pushing for increased funding for higher education through lobbying and direct action, supporting comprehensive survivor-centered sexual assault legislation, and supporting voting rights and workers' rights ballot initiatives;  
**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY**
- RESOLVED:** AFT Michigan thanks and honors the Michigan Student Power Network as the 2018 recipient of the Walter Bergman Human Rights Award.

Submitted and Recommended for adoption by: Human Rights Committee  
Approved by AFT Michigan 75<sup>th</sup> Convention (May 19, 2018)

## RESOLUTION #3

### Safer Working Environment

- WHEREAS:** All staff and students deserve safe, welcoming, supportive school environments where they can learn and thrive without fear; and
- WHEREAS:** It is the right of every student to be safe from the threat of violence in their schools and their communities; and
- WHEREAS:** It is the right of every school district employee – administrators, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals and other school staff – to live and work in environments that are safe from the threat of violence; and
- WHEREAS:** No academic faculty, professional faculty, staff or student in an institution of higher education should attend class or engage in campus life under the threat of violence; and
- WHEREAS:** Gun violence prevention is currently receiving significant public attention, however the threat of physical violence from students and family members most directly affects the learning environment on a day-to-day basis; and
- WHEREAS:** Student violence threatens millions of students and educators on a daily basis on school grounds, especially in communities of color and economic hardship; and
- WHEREAS:** Recent reports indicate that 8.1% of all teachers report having been threatened by a student and 4.3% have actually been physically attacked by a student; and
- WHEREAS:** In the same study, urban teachers reported more than 12% of teachers were threatened and nearly 6% had actually been attacked; and
- WHEREAS:** In an effort to protect themselves, peers or students victimized by violence many teachers are reporting injuries and anxiety resulting from a dangerous encounter with a violent student; and
- WHEREAS:** Trauma suffered by such attacks has resulted in school personnel experiencing depression, anxiety, and other mental stress disorders, including receiving diagnoses of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; and
- WHEREAS:** Teachers, aides and support personnel regularly working with students who receive special education services, often face escalated exposure and injury due to student violence; and
- WHEREAS:** These statistics give support to the perception that the threat of student violence presents a clear and present danger to the students, parents, educators, administrators and other school staff of many schools within the state; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan stands with students, parents and educators across the nation, and reaffirms and demands that all students have the right to attend schools and

live in communities that are safe from student violence; and **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**

**RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan affirms its commitment to call on the Department of Education and state legislators to provide adequate resources and staff to support student well-being; and **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**

**RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan joins with its members to proclaim the tolerance of student violence directed at school staff and other students is not ethically or morally acceptable; and **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**

**RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan demand that all teachers and staff are informed in advance if a student has been assigned to them that has a history of violence; and **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**

**RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan actively works to promote better safety and emergency training for all staff and to develop effective protocols to ensure safety; and **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**

**RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan actively works to promote adequate supervision of students in non-classroom environments, i.e. during transportation and lunch activities, where violence might be possible; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY**

**RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan work with legislators and the Michigan Department of Education to develop reasonable adaptations to FAPE interpretations that allow administration and Boards of Education to address violent student outbursts that disrupt the learning environment for teachers and other students.

Submitted by: Lincoln Stocks, President, Eastpointe Federation of Educators #698

Revised and recommended for adoption by the Legislation & Resolutions Committee

Approved by AFT Michigan 75<sup>th</sup> Convention (May 19, 2018)

## RESOLUTION #4

### Paraprofessionals and School Related Personnel Access to IEP

- WHEREAS:** Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a public school must allow paraprofessionals who are responsible for the implementation of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) access to the IEP. This is required under 34 CFR & 300.323 (d) which discusses accessibility to the IEP. IDEA requires that a team of the child's parents and educators develop every IEP; and
- WHEREAS:** Paraprofessionals include, but are not limited to Para-educators, teacher assistants, instructional aides, program assistants, media specialist, school culture facilitators etc.; and
- WHEREAS:** Paraprofessionals and school related personnel should be informed of his/her specific responsibilities related to implementing the students IEP goals and behavior plans; and
- WHEREAS:** To maximize optimum support for students who qualify for an IEP, specific accommodations, modifications and behavior management support must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP. Therefore, paraprofessionals and school related personnel along with teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech pathologists, social workers, administrators and other support professionals are needed to support the whole child; and
- WHEREAS:** Building relationship teams must include all support service staff. Student IEP teams should collaborate with strong ongoing communication, which is essential for student IEP goals and behavior plans; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan shall work with locals to provide team-building support to promote paraprofessional involvement in the development of IEPs in all schools; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY**
- RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan shall work with locals to ensure paraprofessionals are able to be fully informed on IEP requirements and implementation planning for the students with whom they work.

Submitted by: Detroit Federation of Paraprofessionals #2350

Revised and recommended for adoption by the Legislation & Resolutions Committee

Approved by AFT Michigan 75<sup>th</sup> Convention (May 19, 2018)

## RESOLUTION #5

### **Part-Time Faculty Eligibility For Public Service Loan Forgiveness, Regardless Of Part-Time Status**

- WHEREAS:** Between 1975 and 2015, the number of part-time faculty teaching college has increased from twenty-four percent (24%) to forty percent (40%) of the labor force; and
- WHEREAS:** The number of tenure-track positions decreased accordingly, moving from forty-five percent (45%) of faculty being either tenured or on the tenure track in 1975 to twenty-nine percent (29%) in 2015; and
- WHEREAS:** The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program is available to full-time employees of eligible non-profits and forgives student debt after ten years of payments (120 payments); and
- WHEREAS:** College faculty non-profit higher education institutions are eligible for Public Service Loan Forgiveness, and so long as they maintain full-time status for two semesters of the academic year, it will be considered one year toward loan forgiveness; and
- WHEREAS:** Part-time faculty at non-profit higher education institutions are eligible for Public Service Loan Forgiveness, so long as they achieve full-time status by working at multiple institutions; and
- WHEREAS:** Part-time faculty find it nearly impossible to maintain full-time eligibility, due to the reduced course offerings and course cancellations as well as the geographic difficulty of commuting between several colleges; and
- WHEREAS:** Due to the contingent nature of their employment, many part-time faculty qualify for income-based student loan repayment and still struggle to repay their student loans; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan will support an effort to revise Public Service Loan Forgiveness to make it available to part-time faculty even if they are below full-time employment; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** That each semester a part-time faculty person teaches should count as six months toward the ten years needed for loan forgiveness, so long as that person also qualifies for income-based repayment of the loan during the same period; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY**
- RESOLVED:** Just as a full-time employee can apply for the program and have their eligibility begin in October 2007 when the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program began, October 2007 should be considered the first month that part-time faculty would be eligible to have semesters of teaching counted toward forgiveness.

Submitted by:

Revised and recommended for adoption by the Legislation & Resolutions Committee

Approved by AFT Michigan 75<sup>th</sup> Convention (May 19, 2018)

## RESOLUTION #6

### Relieve the Debt Burden on All U.S. Students

- WHEREAS:** Equal and unfettered access to higher education is a necessary requirement for a working democracy; and
- WHEREAS:** Access to higher education is neither equal nor unfettered in Michigan.
- WHEREAS:** The average Michigan graduate with student debt in 2017 owes \$30,852 in student loans, including both federal loans and private loans; and
- WHEREAS:** Between 2008-09 and 2011-12, cost of tuition in Michigan's public universities and community colleges has risen 19% and 21% respectively, while state appropriations have fallen 23% from 2008-09 to 2013-14; and
- WHEREAS:** Twenty percent of all federal loan borrowers have defaulted on their loans, according to 2016 DOE data, translating into \$121 billion of loans in default while an additional 20% of all borrowers are not making any payments, and are in some sort of forbearance or delinquency; and
- WHEREAS:** Cancelling student debt for 44 million students would likely lead to an increase in U.S. GDP between \$86 billion and \$108 billion for each year over a 10 year period (Levy Institute Report, 2/2018); and
- WHEREAS:** Since 2000, 80% of tuition price increases are attributable to state funding reductions; nearly 100% when factoring in institutional financial aid (inflation-adjusted, as of FY 2014, House Fiscal Agency, December, 2014); and
- WHEREAS:** State-to-student cost shift in paying for a Michigan Public University Education has reached chilling proportions: in 1979 appropriations were 70%, tuition & fees were 30%, in 2015 appropriations were 23%, tuition and fees 77%; and
- WHEREAS:** Rising costs have made it difficult for most working families to send their children to college without student financial aid and increasingly a large share of student aid actually takes the form of student loans; and
- WHEREAS:** Student debt in this country now equals \$1.4 trillion, more than the combined total of U.S. non-mortgage debt; and
- WHEREAS:** Student loans, unlike a mortgage loan or credit card debt, cannot be discharged in bankruptcy but will impact students for years, even decades, after they graduate, negatively affecting their ability to start families, buy homes, continue their education; and
- WHEREAS:** Education Secretary, Betsy DeVos, is a zealous advocate of for-profit colleges, there is therefore a continuing threat of for-profit colleges which have had dismal graduation rates and very high default rates on student loans but report growing profits for shareholders; and
- WHEREAS:** Lobbyists working for the for-profit colleges and universities have been successful in persuading lawmakers and policymakers that tax revenues funding student financial aid are income streams for Wall Street investors; and
- WHEREAS:** This diversion of resources has fundamentally contributed to the growth of student debt levels to truly frightening proportions; and



- WHEREAS:** These trends outlined above need to be halted and reversed. The current model is unsustainable in a truly democratic society; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That AFT Michigan Higher Education locals will support a sustained data collecting effort to identify, track, and publicly disseminate information on the level of student debt in our institutions; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** To work with student groups, college and university boards, philanthropists, legislators, stakeholders, and interested parties in an effort to reduce student loan levels while growing access to higher education by increasing state and federal support for higher education; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** To pursue creative ways to reduce student debt levels, including recent models that advocate for extending free public education to the first two years of college (grades 13 and 14); and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** To educate our members, students, and communities about the success Wall Street financiers have had in diverting for their profits public resources that should have been available to support student access to higher education; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER**
- RESOLVED:** To remind ourselves and our fellow citizens that democracy is most effectively nourished by robust institutions of public education; that working students and their families should not be dependent on Sallie Mae, or banks, or employers to fund their education; and **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY**
- RESOLVED:** To pursue the elimination of student debt, to lobby for public policies that ensure that banks and financial institutions that have profited from student debt, as well as the for-profit institutions that have used public revenues to fund corporate profits, are constrained from doing so in the future.

Submitted by: Wayne State University Union of Part Time Faculty Local #477  
Revised and recommended for adoption by the Legislation & Resolutions Committee  
Approved by AFT Michigan 75<sup>th</sup> Convention (May 19, 2018)