

LACK OF STATE BUDGET AND EDUCATION FUNDING APPROPRIATION
Ralph Grimm
District 205 Superintendent

Now that the Illinois Legislators have once again ended a fiscal year with no state budget and no funding appropriation for public K-12 and Higher Education, the question now becomes how do we move forward in District 205.

The continued budget impasse means that we now need to shift our focus on NOT doing what is best for our students and stakeholders but to now planning for the very real possibility that we will not have the funds necessary to complete a full 2016-2017 school year. The lack of the General State Aid that comes as part of a spending appropriation will be the reason we are not able to complete the full 2016-2017 school year.

We will continue trying to develop a FY 17 district budget. We will now begin working on preparing two distinct district budgets: one that includes General State Aid revenue and one that does not. The difference in revenue between the two budgets will be approximately \$17 million dollars. We will also be looking at additional ways we can lower our expenditures to stretch our limited cash reserves as far as we can.

At this point, I don't see the starting date for the 2016-2017 school year changing. Our plan currently is to continue to plan for a Monday, August 15, 2016, Teacher Institute Day and the first day of K-12 student attendance will be Tuesday, August 16, 2016. How far into the 2016-2017 school we can go without an education spending plan remains to be seen. Discussions with the District 205 Board of Education on this topic will begin later this month.

I want to encourage all District 205 stakeholders to continue to contact our local legislators, our legislative leaders and the Governor. There needs to be continued pressure put on these elected officials to do what they were elected to do and that is put together a spending plan to provide for basic government services to continue. We need a spending plan that provides for the basic safety and welfare of this states children. And we need it now. Our elected officials need to find whatever common ground there can be agreed upon. The major philosophical arguments that exist need to be put aside for another day. The budget battle does not have to be fought and won all at once. Our elected officials need to come to this realization sooner rather than later.

The livelihood of approximately 650 staff members who work for District 205 is at stake. The economic vitality of our community is at stake. Millions of dollars could be taken out of the local economy if this budget stalemate is allowed to continue for very long. This situation is real. The consequences for our students, our staff, our stakeholders and our community are real.

I will do my best to continue to communicate with our stakeholders about this situation. The pressure of this situation has increased substantially with the legislator's failure to pass a K-12 spending plan by the May 31st session ending deadline. Our stakeholders must likewise increase the pressure applied to our elected officials. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have as we move forward in these uncharted waters.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Ralph Grimm

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