



# Community Unit School District #205

..... *Helping Students Achieve Their Dreams* .....

District Website: [www.galesburg205.org](http://www.galesburg205.org)

Lincoln Education Center: 932 Harrison Street, P.O. Box 1206, Galesburg, IL 61402-1206  
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May 11, 2016

Dear District #205 Stakeholder:

If you have been following the news media for the last several months you know that the State of Illinois has been operating during this fiscal year without a state budget. The ramifications of the situation are far reaching. If you are a social service provider or a recipient of social service agencies, you have already felt the effects of this situation. If you are a college student who depends on the MAP grant to attend college, you have felt the effects of this situation. The list of the effects of this situation goes on and on.

Public school districts in Illinois, have not yet felt the dramatic effects of other agencies throughout the state because an Education budget was passed by the Illinois Legislature and signed by Governor Rauner for the 2015-2016 school year. As a result, we have received our General State Aid for this school year so far. The state is behind in the payment of some of the reimbursements that they owe us but that has become the norm and is expected.

Over the last six years, the State of Illinois has not been paying local school districts the full amount of General State Aid that they are owed. The State has been prorating the required payments which mean they have been paying about .89 cents for every dollar of General State Aid that a district has earned. For District #205, these prorations have added up to approximately \$6.8 million dollars that the district should have received in General State Aid but has not received due to the State's inability to pay its required obligations.

I write to you today because of the grave concerns that I have regarding the possibility that the State will enter a second consecutive year without a State budget. I am also concerned that should this happen, we are hearing that for FY 17, unlike FY 16, there will be NO Education budget which means there will be no state money sent to public school districts as long as there is no budget. District #205 received approximately \$17.92 million dollars in FY 2015 from the State of Illinois. If there is no state budget, we are in jeopardy of losing this money from the State. This situation could severely cripple our ability to educate the children of this school district.

I have made the Board aware of our concerns regarding this budget situation. There will be continued conversations with the Board about how we will respond to the lack of a FY 2017 State budget. We will explore all available options to us to continue providing a quality education to our students and to be responsive to the needs of our community. But, we are not miracle workers. Without the State support outlined above, there will come a point where we cannot continue offering all of the programs that we currently offer. We are monitoring this situation carefully.

If the State does not meet its constitutional requirement to provide funding for public education, we will be forced to make some very difficult choices. All options will be on the table including delaying the start of the 2016-2017 school year, operating on a shortened school week, further elimination of programs and further reduction in staffing levels.

I encourage each of you to contact our local legislators regarding this situation. Let them know of your concerns about their inability to do the one thing they are responsible for; providing services to the residents of this State. Tell them how this lack of a state budget has impacted you personally or will impact if you the budget stalemate continues. I have included the contact information for our local legislators, the legislative leaders and the Governor with this letter. Please call or write them today to let them know your position on this issue. We need a budget for the State of Illinois and we need one that fully funds education. This situation has gone on long enough. We need immediate action from our legislators, our legislative leaders and the Governor.

I also want to let you know that there will be a joint Board meeting for all of the Boards of Education in Regional Office of Education region 33 on Tuesday, May 17, 2016, at 6 pm in the auditorium of Knoxville High School in Knoxville. Additional information about these issues will be shared with members of the public. I encourage each of you to attend.

Thank you in advance for taking a proactive approach to this problem. Please contact our legislators and the Governor today and voice your concerns. The future of Galesburg District 205 as well as the 4500 students we serve each day depends on you taking action immediately.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions that you may have about this situation. My phone number is (309) 973-2100. My email address is [rgrimm@galesburg205.org](mailto:rgrimm@galesburg205.org).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ralph Grimm".

Ralph Grimm  
Superintendent

## LEGISLATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Rep. James Durkin**

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**Senator John Sullivan**

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**Senator John Cullerton**

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