

BOND COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2

1008 North Hena Street
Greenville, Illinois 62246

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To: All parents, faculty and staff, community members
From: Wes Olson- Superintendent
Re: School Funding
Date: August 14, 2017

Illinois has the most inadequate and inequitable school funding system in the nation. Bond County Unit #2 schools have suffered under the current state school funding formula for years. The state owes us hundreds of thousands of dollars from last year and on August 10th, for the first time in recent history; the state missed paying a state aid payment for schools. Due to years of underfunding, our district has few cash reserves. We rely on the state for about 45% of our revenue. Bottom line: we can't hold on for much longer. This letter is a call to action for our parents and community.

We have strongly supported a bi-partisan approach to implementing a more adequate and equitable, evidence based school funding formula. Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) represents years of bi-partisan compromise to improve our school funding formula. The Governor has criticized SB 1 and earlier this month, issued an Amendatory Veto (AV) of SB 1. On Saturday night, a funding model of the Governor's Amendatory Veto was published, showing approximate amounts districts would receive under the AV. **In the initial years, BCCU2 would receive more state aid under the Governor's AV than SB 1. However, in three years, the AV would have a negative impact on our district.**

Here's how the AV hurts BCCU2 students and schools:

- Inflates districts' local property wealth (by including TIF's) and falsely represents what local taxpayers can actually afford. This will cause BCCU2 to receive less state money.
- Eliminates using inflation and regional difference to determine the real costs to educate students, which shortchanges the system.
- Removes protections for minimum funding of schools, which weakens the state's commitment to public schools and puts us at risk of cuts (aka proration).
- Removes protection in pension costs that are shifted back to districts, which further shifts the burden onto local property owners.
- Creates winners and losers from year-to-year by removing the hold harmless after three years, which creates another financial cliff for districts that have endured years of cuts in state funding.

SB1 provides a "hold harmless" that would provide a base minimum of adequate funding for years to come. In addition, SB 1 is the only bill to pass both houses and currently, the best chance to become law and take our funding system from worst to first. SB1 has been supported by all major education agencies in our state and garnered state wide support among school districts because no district would lose money under SB 1.

On Sunday, August 13th, the Senate took action to override the Governor's AV 38-9. The House of Representative will convene on Wednesday, August 16th. **We are asking you get involved by contacting [Representative Cavaletto](#) (Springfield office: 217-782-0066, Salem office: 618-548-9080) and urging him to support an override of the amendatory veto or support a quick compromise that includes an adequate and equitable, evidence based, school funding formula for our current students and generations to come.**

Please feel free to call my office with questions (618)-664-0170.

Sincerely,



Wes Olson
Superintendent of Schools-Bond County Unit 2