



February 6, 2017

Dear LSC Members,

As you know, a few weeks ago Governor Rauner vetoed \$215 million in funding for Chicago students. The Governor went back on his word – breaking his promise to fund current students fairly. Like President Trump, he is attacking Chicago to score political points. It's shameful.

As a first step to address the Governor's cut, we announced four furlough days for staff over the course of this school year. These are non-student attendance days, and they are expected to save the District \$35 million, but we know that they come at a cost for your schools, which are losing valuable professional development time.

Unfortunately, there is still more we must do to close the \$215 million hole Governor Rauner blew in our budget.

Today, we are forced to take the next step by freezing half of all available non-personnel school funds and buckets, until further notice. This will preserve approximately \$46 million of the \$215 million in funding Governor Rauner promised. We are also eliminating the remainder of centrally funded professional development funds for a savings of \$5 million. After closing more than 400 Central Office positions at this time last year, we have also asked managers to do more with less, and there have been and will continue to be spending reductions and unfilled vacancies in the administration.

**Before we go on, it's critically important to understand what else happened recently in Illinois' drawn-out debate over education funding reform. The Governor's taskforce on education announced that we need to fix our broken education funding system, the most inequitable in the country.**

**We urge the Governor to immediately make good on his promises of equity for Chicago children this year, and to move forward with the ideas that will address the growing inequity in school districts across the state. CPS students receive just 76 cents for every dollar the state provides other Illinois school districts on average. We encourage you and your school communities to call on the governor to fund Chicago students fairly. Visit [cps.edu/Equality](http://cps.edu/Equality) for more information.**

To further illustrate the inequitable system the Governor is perpetuating is this stark fact: last year, the State of Illinois actually widened its unfair education funding even further, increasing pension funding for every teacher except in Chicago by \$243 million and cutting pension funding for Chicago teachers by \$215 million. This means the state will be paying \$4.0 billion for statewide pensions in FY17 and a mere \$12 million for Chicago – a paltry 0.3 percent of the pension funding going to the state's largest school district.

Because Governor Rauner is perpetuating this disparity, we know that schools will now have to make difficult decisions about how they will use resources for the remainder of the year. Though this was not an easy choice to make, our hope is that this path minimizes disruption to classrooms. We established parameters for this freeze so that no school sees a freeze of more than 5 percent of the initial overall school budget.





To help manage this process, CPS' budget and grant support team will be available to provide your school's principal with assistance and guidance as decisions are made about how to best allocate your non-personnel resources. If your school has an emergency situation, we've asked your principal to contact your Network Chief.

We will keep you updated on our efforts to address the Governor's unjust budget cut, along with efforts to reform Illinois' inequitable system. As we move forward together, we cannot thank you enough for your tireless advocacy, professionalism and commitment on behalf of our students and we encourage you to use [cps.edu/Equality](https://cps.edu/Equality) to contact Governor Rauner.

Above all, it is the fight for long-term equitable funding that we must all be committed to win. We cannot settle for anything less than Chicago students, teachers, principals and families deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Forrest Claypool", with a long, sweeping underline.

Forrest Claypool  
Chief Executive Officer