

Illinois Budget Impasse FAQ

Q: How long has Illinois been without a full state budget?

A: As of April 24, 2017 we have operated more than 22 months without a full state budget.

Q: What does the budget impasse mean?

A: The country's fifth-largest state has been operating with continuing appropriations and court-ordered spending, while the pile of unpaid bills grows to nearly \$13 billion. The state has approved a partial budget for education and stopgap or band-aid measures for most everything else. This has meant frozen and reduced budgets at local government entities, community organizations, and education agencies that aim to support our families and all sectors of society. Without a budget we all suffer.

Q: How does the lack of a state budget impact the services provided?

A: School districts launched Pass Illinois' Budget! in late April when school chiefs should already know their financial revenue situation for Fiscal Year 2018. Like any business, school districts need to know several months - preferably more - in advance how much money they'll receive so that education leaders and elected board members can make thoughtful spending decisions, from hiring staff to allocations for curriculum, maintenance and repairs, and much more for the coming school year.

Q: Where does Illinois school funding currently come from?

A: The state's education budget is primarily made up of local revenue, primarily property taxes, state funds, and federal funds. On average in the Meridian School District local revenue makes up about \$5,800,000 (62.9%) of the District's budget, the state contributes about \$3,273,000 (35.5%) and the remaining funds are federal.

Q: What percentage of public school funding is Illinois responsible for and how much does it cover?

A: The state, by constitutional mandate, has the primary responsibility for funding its public schools but has never come close to covering even half the cost. Illinois ranks 50th in the nation for providing state funds for education.

Q: What is the problem with the current school funding formula?

A: The current funding formula does not adequately and equitably fund education in Illinois.

Q: Have there been any proposed solutions to fix the school funding formula?

A: There are some proposed solutions, but all require the state to pass a budget with revenue to support it.

Q: Why is the state behind on payments to school districts and which payments?

A: The state has delayed payments because there is not enough revenue being received by the state to cover the expenditures that are due. These unpaid bills are part of what's called "Mandated Categoricals" and include funding for special education, bilingual education,

transportation, and other important services. Meridian Schools has received no categorical payments for this fiscal year.

Q: How do late state payments impact Meridian School District?

As of April 24, 2017, the total owed to Meridian CUSD #15 is \$ 412,613.17.

Here are the largest funds due:

- Transportation - \$215,221.73
- Special Education - \$110,744.44
- Early Childhood - \$84,000

These late payments mean that Meridian School will need to reduce expenditures or deficit spend in Fiscal Year 2018 since we are not receiving all of our budgeted revenue. It also means that the school district will deficit spend over \$266,000 for the 2016-2017 school year.

Q: What are school leaders doing about the state's financial situation?

A: More than 360 superintendents (as of 5 p.m. April 21) are calling on the Illinois General Assembly and Governor Rauner to do the following:

- Immediately, and with bipartisan support, end the state budget impasse.
- Improve the state's education funding formula and invest in students and schools, including higher education institutions.
- Pay school districts what they are owed this year.

Q: What can parents of public school students and other Illinois residents do?

A: Speak up! Contact your local legislator. To find your local legislator, visit:

https://openstates.org/find_your_legislator/ and ask them to make these three requests a priority:

- Immediately, and with bipartisan support, end the state budget impasse.
- Improve the state's education funding formula and invest in students, including students in higher education institutions.
- Pay school districts what they are owed this year.

Spread the word with friends and on social media with the hashtag #PassILBudget. Make this [logo](#) your Facebook profile picture.