

April 24, 2017

Senator or State Representative (Fill in Name Here)

**We call on members of the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor to do the following:**

- **Immediately support an end to the state budget impasse.**
- **Fix the education funding formula and invest in students in schools, including higher education, throughout the state.**
- **Pay school districts what they are owed this year.**

School districts across Illinois are facing a financial crisis due to the inability of the Illinois State government to fund public k-12 schools appropriately and due to the failure of the State to pay the school districts in a timely manner. For the school district where I reside, Meridian CUSD #15, state funding comprises nearly 43% of revenue for the Education Fund and about 67% percent of revenue for the Transportation Fund. During the most recent fiscal year (FY17), the Meridian School District has received all of its General State Aid payments. However, the school still hasn't received a mandated categorical payment for fiscal year 2017. Mandated categorical payments equal approximately \$650,000 of revenue per year to our school district. This equates to almost 9% of our total revenue for the operating funds.

The State of Illinois' delinquency in paying these payments, along with reduced funding over the last several years, has put a stress on Meridian CUSD #15's financial health. To be more specific, the Meridian School Board has recently begun the process of amending its 2016-2017 school year budget to reflect the missing mandated categorical payments. The budget adopted in the fall of 2016 had a positive balance of \$76,000 in these operating funds. However, with the missed payments, the school board will be forced to amend that budget and now will carry a deficit of \$266,000.

To date, the Meridian School District has been utilizing its' reserve funds to maintain the programs it offers our students. However, those reserve funds are limited and we cannot continue to cut another 9-10% of expenditures without effecting the programs that we offer.

We need your support to find a solution to this problem immediately. I urge you to help end the state budget impasse, fix the education formula and pay school districts what they are owed this year prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Sincerely,