



MOKENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 159

11244 Willowcrest Lane • Mokena, IL 60448-1334 • (708) 342-4900 • www.mokena159.org

June, 2016

Parents and Guardians,

As you may know by now the impasse at the Capitol continues as legislators and the Governor were unable to reach agreement on a budget. In the coming days you will hear a great deal of speculation pertaining to whether schools will open in the fall.

Without a state appropriation for K-12 education in Fiscal Year 2017, (begins 7/1/16) many school districts will face dire circumstances. Mokena School District 159 is projected to receive \$1,433,627 in funding from the State of Illinois in fiscal year 2017. This amount is equivalent to 7.45% of estimated total District funds in FY17. The district has fund reserves that will allow the opening of school. Of course, this would mean that the dysfunction at the Capitol has resulted in a shift of the cost of educating Illinois' children to local property taxpayers.

The top priority for our elected officials must be to enact a budget that includes adequate funds for public schools for the upcoming school year. This will ensure that schools across the state open on time and are adequately funded for the full year. An evidence-based funding model is the most sound and fair long-term answer to having an adequate and equitable school funding model in Illinois. It is founded on research-based practices.

The toxic climate at the Capitol often leads one to avoid getting involved. Yet, as taxpayers and as citizens who are concerned about the health and future of our state, now is the time to be engaged. Contact your elected officials Senator Mike Hastings at <http://www.senatorhastings.com> and State Representative Margo McDermed at <http://www.repmcdermed.com> to let them know your feelings about the current "state of our state." Meanwhile, be assured that your Board of Education and I will continue to monitor this situation closely. We will also continue to develop contingency plans to respond to the prospect of an ongoing budget impasse into the fall. We are committed to continuing the outstanding educational services that your child deserves, and are committed to serving our school community without interruption.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

Sincerely,

Omar Castillo
Superintendent

Jim Andresen
School Board President

District Administration

Dr. Omar Castillo
Superintendent

Dr. Kathleen Wilkey
Asst. Supt. of Instruction

Mr. Raphael Obafemi
Chief School Business Official

Mrs. Eileen Parente
Director of Student Services



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