



Forrest Claypool
Chief Executive Officer

42 West Madison, 3rd Floor • Chicago, Illinois 60602

January 13, 2017

Dear CPS Employees:

Thank you for your professionalism and unrelenting dedication to Chicago's students in the face of the district's fiscal crisis. Today, we face a challenge not unlike those before, but caused by a governor who broke a promise to treat Chicago's children fairly by cutting \$215 million from schools with the stroke of his pen.

For our part, once again we will fight tooth and nail to protect our classrooms, and to ensure that these political games won't roll back the tremendous progress made by Chicago students. However, with a hole of this size in our budget, we have no choice but to begin to take immediate action to preserve CPS' solvency.

As a result, I am writing to inform you that all CPS employees will be furloughed for the four non-instructional days in the remaining school year. We expect that this will save approximately \$35 million in cash – a first step in addressing the Governor's misguided cuts.

On each furlough day, affected employees will be required not to work, and will not be paid. Benefits such as health insurance will continue. Schools, as well as Central and Network offices, will be closed.

The furlough days will take place on previously scheduled School Improvement Days, which are non-instructional days for students. The furlough days are:

Friday, Feb. 3, 2017

Friday, April 7, 2017

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Employees who have already worked June 22 because they are in schools that redistributed it as a flex PD day will be paid for that day because the time will have been worked. Additionally, training funded with federal grants will continue to take place.

I want to again provide key context for why the fight for state funding is so critical to our mission, and Chicago children's future.

No other District in Illinois pays for teachers' pensions – because the state makes those payments for them. This year, Chicago Public Schools has a \$733 million pension payment on June 30 – and the state's \$215 million in promised pension funding was a recognition that Chicago's children deserve to be treated like other children in this state.





What makes this injustice even more striking is that the State of Illinois has increased its funding for other districts' pensions by 400 percent in the past 10 years even as it cuts funding for CPS – and that simply cannot stand. To be clear: Governor Rauner cut funding for CPS pensions by \$215 million at the same time that the state is increasing its contributions for other districts' pensions by \$300 million, to nearly \$4 billion.

We will continue to do everything within our control to minimize disruptions to classrooms. Not only have we raised property taxes by the legal maximum every year, we instituted a new property tax of \$250 million that is dedicated entirely to pensions. In the past two years, hundreds of employees have been laid off, Central Office operations have been streamlined and schools face ever-tighter budgets.

However, if Gov. Rauner continues to treat Chicago children as political pawns, CPS will be forced to take additional steps to reduce spending, focusing our efforts on minimizing disruptions to classroom instruction as best we all can.

I will continue to provide updates as budget developments occur. Thank you for your continued sacrifices, dedication and professionalism as we work toward ensuring that Chicago students get the funding they deserve.

Sincerely,

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

Forrest Claypool
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools

