

Beiser says Rauner's education plan doesn't do enough for Riverbend schools

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ALTON – State Rep. Dan Beiser, D-Alton, is calling on lawmakers and the governor to come together to support a plan that would allow schools to open after the summer break. Beiser also criticized Governor Bruce Rauner’s education proposal because it provides massive funding increases for wealthy suburban Chicago school districts, while some schools in Beiser’s district see zero funding increase.

“Governor Rauner’s proposed education funding plan does not invest enough money into our local schools,” continued Beiser. “Education funding needs to be made a priority by the governor and my fellow members of the General Assembly, because if an

agreement is not made, many schools may not be opening in the fall. It is important that everyone works together to move our all of our schools forward—not just some of our schools.”

Under Rauner’s plan, which was unveiled only hours before the May 31 deadline, two schools in Beiser’s district would see no increase in state funding, East Alton-Wood River CHSD 14 and Wood River-Hartford Elementary School District 15. In total, the governor’s plan would send \$2.6 million dollars less to local schools than the plan that Beiser supports.

“The education funding plan that I voted for would send \$34.4 million to schools in the 111th district, which would represent an increase for each school district,” Beiser said. “The governor’s plan fails to help every school. In fact, Governor Rauner’s plan shifts funding towards wealthy suburban school districts, while schools like East Alton-Wood River would not see any additional investment. That’s not something I can support.”

Senate Bill 2048, a measure that Beiser supported, would increase General State Aid to schools by \$760 million and create a \$700 million equity grant to ensure increased funding for every school. The bill also proposes an increase to the Early Childhood Education Block Grant.

Beiser, a former educator, says an investment in education is an investment in the future, and Rauner’s plan simply doesn’t do enough to help local schools. Lawmakers return to Springfield on Wednesday to take further action on the state budget.