

Dr. Andre talks about challenges ahead after failure of Proposition E

by Dr. Lynda C. Andre
November 15 2016 5:03 PM



SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Dr. Lynda C. Andre
November 15, 2016

Failure of Proposition E

On Tuesday, November 8, citizens voted down District 7's plan to ensure its ongoing financial stability and academic excellence by increasing the Education Fund tax rate by \$0.55. Proposition E lost by a vote of 14,468 to 13,388 – a difference of 1,080 votes.

As a result, District 7 will continue to face challenges in providing all of our children with the excellent education that is the hallmark of our school district. It is critical that the District balance its budget. The decision made last week will have a significant impact on the education of thousands of students as we continue to grapple with a decline in state and federal funding.

The District 7 Board of Education will have tough decisions to make in the months ahead in an effort to reduce the borrowing that is expected to reach \$5 million in the spring as a result of the state's failure to honor its funding commitment to District 7. The Board of Education has taken all available steps since 2008 to try to minimize the impact of its financial crisis on students. That is no longer possible. We will continue to be good stewards of taxpayers' dollars and will make the financial decisions necessary to provide quality educational services for our students.

I want to thank community members who were willing to accept the challenge of assisting the District in its effort to address this extremely complex issue for the benefit of the children in our communities.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

I encourage all parents and guardians to schedule a parent-teacher conference next week if you haven't already done so. Conferences will be held in all schools on Monday, November 21 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 22 from 1:00 – 7:30 p.m., and Wednesday, November 23 from 8:00 a.m. – noon.

The online scheduling website is www.pickatime.com/ecusd7. Pick-a-Time will be open to parents until Sunday, November 20, at 10:00 p.m. Any changes to a scheduled conference time can be done through the schools after that time.

In an effort to improve communication with all parents and guardians, the District will be collecting second e-mail addresses next week during parent-teacher conferences. Teachers will provide parents/guardians the opportunity to make changes to current e-mail addresses or add additional e-mail addresses to our system. Any changes or additions will be added to the District 7 Student Information System and will be used for various communications.

Update on District 7 Finances

2015-16 State Funding Update

The District is currently owed over \$1.3 million from the State for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Amounts due from the Illinois State Board of Education:

• Special Education – Private Facility Tuition	\$67,189.71
• Special Education – Extraordinary	227,311.75
• Special Education – Personnel	244,717.14
• Special Education – Orphanage	57,158.79
• Bilingual Education	2,415.00
• State Free Lunch and Breakfast	1,539.38
• Regular Transportation	295,664.68
• Special Education Transportation	296,734.58
• Orphanage Tuition - 18.3	110,104.61

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE FROM 2015-16 \$1,302,835.64

The fourth quarter categorical payments for Special Education and Transportation are approximately one-hundred, fifty (150) days past due.

2016-17 State Funding Update

The District is currently owed over \$1.2 million from the State for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Amounts due from the Illinois State Board of Education:

• Special Education – Private Facility Tuition	\$86,140.81
• Special Education – Extraordinary	229,504.54
• Special Education – Personnel	293,900.87
• Special Education – Orphanage	20,761.06
• State Free Lunch and Breakfast	930.06
• Regular Transportation	278,390.05
• Special Education Transportation	268,493.10
• Orphanage Tuition - 18.3	32,375.00

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$1,210,495.49

As of November 8, 2016, the total backlog of all State bills is over \$9.2 billion.

District 7 2016 Tax Levy Estimate for the 2017-2018 School Year

On Monday night, the Board approved the 2016 Tax Levy Estimate for the 2017-2018 school year. As discussed at the last Finance Committee meeting, the District's preliminary 2016 EAV shows a small increase of approximately 2.8% before the State's (Illinois Department of Revenue) multiplier is finalized and the Board of Review issues final rulings on pending tax appeals. Assuming a 2.5% growth rate in the 2016 EAV, the District's 2016 tax levy would be estimated at \$4.19, a decrease from the current year levy of \$4.22.

The Board will approve the Final 2016 Tax Levy at its regular meeting on Monday, December 19, 2016.

Weekend Events

I want to thank the numerous parent volunteers from the EHS Band Booster Club for their many hours of volunteer service in hosting another successful and well-run Craft Fair last weekend at Edwardsville High School. It is dedication of parents such as the Band Boosters that allows this District to offer students a high quality marching band program.

In addition, our sincerest appreciation to the many District 7 employees who worked hard to prepare and showcase Edwardsville High School for thousands of community members and visitors over the weekend.

Last weekend, EHS hosted the Fall Craft Fair, the Edwardsville Wrestling Club's 5K Fall Face Off and Fun Run, the Class 8A third round IHSA football playoff game between Edwardsville and Glenbard West High School, and the EHS fall play production of Almost, Maine. It is estimated that approximately 9,000 people were on campus over the three day weekend.

We have received numerous e-mails of appreciation and compliments from visitors about their very positive experience at Edwardsville High School and in the community.

Student Attendance

As a result of parent-teacher conferences next week and the upcoming Thanksgiving Break, there will be no school Tuesday, November 22 through Friday, November 25. Classes resume on Monday, November 28, 2016.