



FRANKLIN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administration Office

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Sharon A. McDermott, Superintendent • Robert N. Walden, Assistant Superintendent • Scott M. Paul, Treasurer

March 18, 2015

Dear House Finance Committee:

As a poor rural (ODE typology) district, Franklin Local School District has made gains despite cuts in staff and flat state funding. We have 57% on free and reduced lunch.

- Our report card ratings have increased and we have maintained an “A” in Progress as the Overall group has made value added gains.
- We have consolidated grades 7 and 8 into one building, closed an elementary school, and consolidated K-6 into one school.
- We’ve eliminated over 20 employees.
- We’ve eliminated programs – OWA, Family and Consumer Sciences, one foreign language, full time library personnel.
- We have consolidated bus routes – 200 square miles (2600 miles per day).

At a School Treasurers’ Meeting, our Treasurer had previously been told by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Richard Ross (ODE) that our funding will remain on the guarantee and that forecasting should be based on this. Now, with the new formula, the guarantee is out. How are we supposed to appropriately forecast and budget if unrealistic funding advice is being given? Phasing out the guarantee will be devastating to the Franklin Local School District.

The proposed formula utilizes factors (median income or average valuation divided by enrollment) that doesn’t accurately portray a District’s need for State Funding. Therefore you have poorer Districts receiving cuts and richer Districts receiving increases. Based on the ODE typology, Franklin Local is a rural poor district. Yet, in the new formula, we are designated as having “average capacity.”

The proposed formula also calls for and depends on unrealistic increases in local share through additional levied mills. Many Districts in our area have a hard time passing levies that are greatly needed to survive, let alone additional levies to offset cuts from State Funding.

Lastly, the Governor and his Budget Director are calling for District’s to utilize current General Fund balances to offset the State Funding cuts. This premise does not take into consideration the full picture as is represented in our Five Year Forecast. If we would utilize current General Fund Balances, then how would they suggest for us to operate in future years especially with an unstable State Funding system?

Sincerely,

Sharon A. McDermott, Superintendent

Scott M. Paul, Treasurer

Mission: Building an Academic Foundation for Future Success

Vision: An Academic Community Preparing All Students to be College or Career ready.