



# Duncan Public Schools

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Duncan Public Schools Families, Students, Faculty, and Staff:

We have had many conversations since February about state budget cuts to Common Education. This letter is to inform you of the specific cuts Duncan Public Schools will experience in fiscal year 2016-17.

Although we hear from legislators that cuts to state aid for education will be no more than five percent, we must prepare for the possibility that those proposals underestimate the economic realities to come. At the end of last year's legislative session, education was held to flat funding, meaning our state aid allocation was not to be cut. Yet by December, a state revenue failure resulted in cuts to our state aid allocations this spring. The state revenue shortfall, estimated at \$1.3 billion, translates to a \$1.8 million loss for our district since last year. Although Duncan Public Schools has been able to plan for and absorb cuts which began in January, we will not be able to absorb future cuts. In this unstable economic climate, we are projecting an additional \$2 million loss for FY 2016-17.

Any cut to our General Fund budget is a devastating setback for our students and teachers. We are now approaching a \$3.8 million total loss in resources since 2015. In order to balance our budget for next year, we will reduce our expenditures by implementing the following measures:

- Reducing administrative, certified, and support staff through attrition
- Capping the cost of substitutes for FY 2016-17
- Restructuring supplements to any activity funds which rely on General Fund revenue
- Reducing the amount of extra-duty stipends which includes restructuring contract coaching payments and summer work stipends
- Shifting facility insurance and utilities costs to the Building Fund
- Reducing transportation costs
- Reducing facility energy costs
- Shifting professional development costs to federal funds or grants
- Shifting instructional costs to federal funds or grants
- Reducing discretionary funds at the site level

It troubles me to deliver news that our resources will be limited for next year. I stand firm in saying that Duncan Public Schools will continue to deliver excellent services to students and

families. All programs, except 6<sup>th</sup> grade athletics, will continue for the 2016-17 school year although with some reductions in budget or staff. In addition, next year's school calendar remains as it was approved and published in January, but we are preparing to implement changes as needed depending on next year's information about the state budget.

We are committed to maximizing learning experiences for each child. The dedication of our teachers, staff, and community members to quality education is unparalleled to other communities I have experienced. This community is strong, our district is resourceful, and I am confident that locally we will be able to support one another. However, without action we cannot experience additional cuts without deeper sacrifices.

Many of you have asked me how you can help. I encourage you to speak with legislators and ask them to pass budget solutions which increase revenue for our state. You may find your legislator here: <http://www.oklegislature.gov/findmylegislature.aspx>. Our best hope for salary increases for teachers and bringing more money to classrooms is supporting solutions which generate additional state revenue.

What we need for Duncan Public Schools now is your continued engagement. Conversations are ongoing. Please reach out to school board members, administrators, or me if you have additional concerns or questions.

Through our strategic planning efforts, we have set a clear vision for the future of Duncan Public Schools. In spite of these obstacles, we will keep fighting for the excellent education our children deserve.

Sincerely,



Melonie Hau