



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

207 STATE HOUSE  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

**BRUCE RAUNER**  
GOVERNOR

July 12, 2016

Hon. Michael J. Madigan  
Speaker, House of Representatives

Hon. John J. Cullerton  
President, Illinois Senate

Hon. Jim Durkin  
Minority Leader, Illinois House of Representatives

Hon. Christine Radogno  
Minority Leader, Illinois Senate

Re: Illinois School Funding Reform

As articulated by the Illinois Constitution, the fundamental goal of the People of Illinois is the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capacities, and to that end the State must provide for a free and efficient public education system.

Our current school funding system needs reform. School districts are funded through a combination of federal, State, and local resources; and working together in a bipartisan manner, the State increased school funding for Fiscal Year 2017. But there is broad acknowledgment that the State can do more to support our schools and that the formula by which funds are allocated among school districts needs reform. We must also confront challenges to the long-term solvency of our teacher pension systems.

Several reform proposals were put forward during the 99<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. I appreciate the hard work of those legislators and State officials in moving the conversation forward. As leaders, it is now incumbent upon us to convene the leading voices and work collaboratively to develop a bipartisan reform plan.

I have asked Secretary Beth Purvis to convene an advisory group, to be called the Illinois School Funding Reform Commission, to make recommendations to the General Assembly to reform the current school funding formula. The Commission will be asked to complete its work by February 1, 2017.

The Commission will be composed of 25 members. I invite each of you to designate five members of your respective caucuses to serve as members of the Commission. Secretary Purvis will serve as a member and chairperson, and the remaining members will be public officials or employees responsible for or knowledgeable of education policies. Rev. James Meeks, Chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education, has agreed to participate in meetings and to facilitate the Commission's work through the support of his staff. The Commission will also invite representatives of school districts and local

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governments, educators, education policy advocates, and other interested groups to offer information or to participate in meetings as appropriate.

I appreciate your cooperation in developing a bipartisan, comprehensive plan to reform our school funding formula. Our children are depending on us to succeed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Rauner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce Rauner  
Governor

cc: Dr. Beth Purvis, Secretary of Education  
Rev. James Meeks, Chairman, Illinois State Board of Education