



April 25, 2017

Keep our Schools Open!

I support our public schools and I will continue to fight for better funding for public education in Illinois. I recently filed House Bill 4036 which provides that the State Comptroller shall direct and the State Treasurer shall transfer, from such funds and in such amounts as the State Comptroller shall determine, the total sum of \$215,000,000 into the General Revenue Fund. Furthermore, the bill provides that the sum transferred shall not require the direction of or notification from the Governor. Effective upon becoming law, it does not take effect unless an Act of the 100th General Assembly appropriating the sum of \$215,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund to Chicago Public Schools becomes law. In December 2016, Governor Rauner vetoed a \$215 million education funding package for Chicago Public Schools.

The Chicago Board of Education says if it cannot get \$215 million from the state, it would have to consider ending school three weeks early on June 1, 2017. We have to keep our children in school and prevent them from dropping out. According to a report from Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, dropouts are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested than high school graduates and more than eight times as likely to be incarcerated. The nonprofit organization is made up of more than 3,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders.

HB 4306 is a crucial bill related to the ongoing issue of our children's education in the Chicago Public Schools, and it will help keep the Chicago Public Schools open for the full school year. The battle for adequate public school funding continues, but HB 4036 sweeps funds from a \$9.8 billion system of money that is just sitting there. We must not allow Chicago school children to lose out.

It is imperative that we avoid a shortened school year in Chicago. We are only hurting the education of our children if the school year is shortened. We cannot close the doors on families in Chicago when they need the state's support now more than ever. Keeping our children in school and educating them will keep them safe and less likely to drop out. Let's work together to fund our public schools in Chicago.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Ford'.

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District