



# School District of Osceola

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**Mark Luebker, Superintendent of Schools**

P. O. Box 128  
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**Board of Education**

Timm Johnson, President  
Craig Brundlik, Vice President  
Rosanne Anderson, Treasurer  
Pete Kammerud, Clerk  
Keri Uzpen, Director

April 19, 2017

Dear Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Finance:

Our system of support for education from the state has changed. Many schools have, are, or will be asking for more local support. As of 2016, over 68% of Wisconsin schools have gone to override referendums to support the general budget. There were 36 override questions on the ballot for April 4, 2017. The Osceola School District asked local taxpayers to support a levy override that would put District funding levels back to what we received in 2010-11. Unfortunately, the referendum failed and the District will need to reduce staffing and programs, defer maintenance and transportation needs to balance the budget for 17-18 and beyond.

Until 2011, the State of Wisconsin would allow school districts to increase their revenue at the same rate of the cost of living. In 2011, Wisconsin schools experienced a reduction in their revenue limit authority. The state imposed revenue limit makes up nearly 90% of the District's total budget. Osceola's reduction of state revenue in 2011 was \$946,201. Since 2012 there have been limited, if any, increases to the revenue limit; \$0 in 2015 and \$0 in 2016.

Over the past 7 years, the state cost of living increase was 13.55%, however the District's state imposed revenue limit has only increased by .2% or \$49,973. During this time the Board of Education has acted to reduce and slow the rate of rising expenses in an environment of limited revenue growth. We have reduced staffing, hired part time help, deferred purchasing, reduced benefit costs by over 30% which has meant less take home pay for employees. Our toolbox has been utilized.

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**Home of the  
Chieftains**

Osceola High School – 1111 Oak Ridge Drive – 715-294-2127  
Osceola Middle School – 1029 Oak Ridge Drive – 715-294-4180  
Osceola Intermediate School – 949 Education Avenue – 715-294-2800  
Osceola Elementary School – 250 Tenth Avenue East – 715-294-3457  
Transportation – 501 Simmon Drive – 715-294-3456  
[www.osceola.k12.wi.us](http://www.osceola.k12.wi.us)



*The Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability ("Protected Classes") in any of its student program and activities.*



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The Osceola School District strongly supports the governor's proposal to increase each district's per pupil categorical aid from the current \$250 per pupil by adding \$200 per pupil in 2017-18 and an additional \$204 in 2018-19. In consideration for our projected deficit, the increase of categorical aid will help minimize asking local taxpayers for support. It will keep us from falling farther behind in revenues and puts us closer to 2010-11 levels.

I encourage you to also consider funding the state imposed revenue limit as it was designed. Please consider per pupil increases on a cost per living increase.

Please consider increasing the low revenue ceiling to support schools similar to Osceola that are well below the state average on revenue per member. In 2016 the state average was \$10,025 while Osceola was at \$9,364.

We also strongly support dollars towards school mental health initiatives. \$3 million would be a great start. \$30 million would have a major impact.

Thank you for listening and serving the citizens of Wisconsin.

Mark Luebker

Superintendent

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