

Classes Temporarily Suspended: Contact Your Legislator

The state budget is now 119 days overdue, passing Rendell's mark of 101 days in 2009. Without a General Fund Budget for fiscal year 2015-2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has not reimbursed Center for Literacy for any of the services rendered under various contracts since July 1, 2015.

More than 80 percent of our \$2.4 million budget comes from the state. The hardship is felt by Center for Literacy and many other nonprofits. In early October, United Way of Pennsylvania conducted a survey of 282 organizations normally funded by state or federal dollars.

Forty-seven (47) organizations reported to United Way that they have laid off or furloughed staff, or reduced hours and/or staff benefits:

- 45 individuals have been laid off or furloughed from full-time employment
- 50 individuals have been laid off or furloughed from part-time employment
- 522 employees had hours reduced
- 73 people are working without pay
- 510 people lost access to employee benefits

Another 48 organizations report they will have to make similar decisions through the end of this calendar year. Seventy-three (73) percent of respondents are now utilizing their reserves.

Center for Literacy has used our cash reserves and drawn on a line-of-credit from our bank. While our need climbs - we now have 200 on a waiting list for classes – an October 21 board of trustees meeting decided it was best for the organization to temporarily suspend classes until the budget passes.

The last day of classes for Center for Literacy will be October 29. All students have been notified. Instructors will be furloughed on November 6. A skeleton crew of clerical, administrative, and volunteer tutor program staff will be working reduced hours for a few additional weeks. We anticipate calling back our students and staff, but we do not know when.

We ask you to contact your legislators to urge them to support the governor's proposal for increased funding for Adult and Family Literacy – and to pass the budget with this item intact. To find your state legislators go to <http://guide.seventy.org/#stateOfficials>.

Photo credit: Nabil K. Mark, Centre Daily Times via AP