

# News

## from the Illinois Board of Higher Education

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Statement from Dr. James Applegate, Executive Director

“Chicago State University’s announcement notifying the community of possible widespread staff layoffs is tragic evidence of what the current budget impasse is exacting from all of our public colleges and universities: an unprecedented crisis mode for college students, their families, professors, and staff. Please bear in mind that the notice is precautionary. The University is fully committed to completing this semester and is not planning to close, and, in fact, is planning for summer classes and preparing for the fall semester. President Calhoun is rightly preparing for the worst, just in case drastic measures must be taken after this semester ends if no relief has come in the form of State funds.

Without a single dollar of state appropriation for the campus operations and for the Illinois students eligible to receive financial assistance through the Monetary Award Program (MAP) during the last eight months of fiscal year 2016, CSU President Calhoun, University trustees, and staff are taking the necessary steps to prepare for maintaining the campus’ operations after the spring semester has ended with very limited financial resources left.

I have spoken with President Calhoun and offered him IBHE’s assistance, including calling together a state level crisis management team to determine what steps are necessary to preserve Chicago State’s existence as one of Illinois’ twelve public universities. Chicago State’s unique mission on the south side of Chicago as a majority African American-serving public university requires us to act. Keeping a public college from closing due to no state budget is a situation for which we have no playbook. We intend to do whatever is necessary to support the students whose dreams for a college education are linked inextricably to not only the survival, but also the reputation of Chicago State.

Illinois has never closed a State university, much less through failure brought on by unexpected and full withdrawal of all appropriations. With increasing numbers of quality jobs requiring postsecondary education and strong State commitment to Illinois’ 60x25 goal, the plan that 60% of working-age Illinoisans have a meaningful college degree by the year 2025, now is not the time to shut a public university. CSU students deserve the opportunities a college education provides, and all of Illinois deserves the economic development associated with an educated citizenry.

IBHE continues to call upon the State’s leaders to pass a budget for fiscal year 2016 as soon as possible, with funding for all of the state’s community colleges and public universities. Chicago State University’s announcement today details drastic measures for uncertain times. We don’t want to see this repeated on other Illinois college campuses. Illinois’ college students deserve our complete attention to keep our colleges open.”