

PROCLAMATIONS

2008-314

SPECIAL SESSION PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in the past six years, the State of Illinois has made the largest investment under any administration in Illinois history in elementary and secondary education, investing approximately \$8.4 billion in new money for elementary and secondary schools;

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Year 2009 budget contains an increase of \$360 million in education funding over the last fiscal year, including a \$32.5 million increase to expand early childhood education;

WHEREAS, since 2003, the State has increased the foundation level from \$4,560 to \$5,959 per student;

WHEREAS, despite these measures, there still exists vast inequities among school districts in the amount of per-pupil spending provided, with a disparity of more than \$17,879 in per-pupil operational spending between the highest and lowest spending elementary school districts in Illinois, \$14,005 in per-pupil operational spending between the highest and lowest spending high school districts in Illinois, and \$18,240 in per-pupil operational spending between the highest and lowest spending unit school districts in Illinois;

WHEREAS, these inequities are, in part, due to a reliance on property tax revenues as the primary source of school funding;

WHEREAS, these inequities require that alternatives to the State's reliance on property tax revenues as the primary source of school funding be considered;

WHEREAS, various proposals have been introduced through the years to alter the manner in which school districts receive funding in order to alleviate these inequities and ensure that every child in every school district receives the same high quality education;

WHEREAS, it is imperative that all necessary measures are taken to promote equity and equality in the State's education system; and

THEREFORE, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5(b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby call and convene the 95th General Assembly, in duly constituted quorums capable of conducting business, in a special session to commence on August 12, 2008, at 3:00 p.m., to consider measures aimed at increasing school funding, improving the school funding structure, and eliminating any current inequities.

Dated: August 5, 2008

Filed: August 5, 2008