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Headteacher:
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Dear Parent/Carer

Educ8%

Headteachers campaign to fund the
8% cuts to school budgets

Fund the 8%

All Essex secondary Headteachers wish to make you aware of the funding situation Essex schools are facing. In recent weeks, the TV, radio, newspapers and internet have given a lot of coverage to the proposed National Funding Formula (NFF) consultation and the implications of underfunding for schools. School leaders across Essex are saddened by the fact that for many schools the financial situation does not look like it is improving either in the short or longer terms. Key headlines are as follows:

- The NFF will begin in April 2018 – the new proposals allocate funding with greater fairness and transparency as all schools across England will be funded via the same methodology.
- These new arrangements are, however, being severely undermined by:
 - The ongoing introduction of unfunded costs being placed upon schools, such as increasing employer National Insurance and pension contributions as well as Educational Service Grant costs. These costs lie outside the NFF.
 - Schools not receiving adequate "core funding" to meet basic staffing and equipment costs.
 - The government's decision to make £3 billion of "efficiency savings" from school budgets.

Using data from the DFE's own database, under the current NFF proposals the following will occur:

- In 2018 Essex secondary schools (as a whole) will still be in the bottom third of the funding levels for 150 Local Authorities in England. The lowest third gain, on average, a further £79 per pupil rising to £144 in April 2020.
- After the introduction of NFF (2018), unfunded cost burdens will, however, mean that such gains are offset to the point where the clear majority of schools in Essex will be no better off (or even worse off) than the current dire financial situation.

Headteachers in all Essex schools (including our primary colleagues with whom we are working closely) are dismayed that our financial situation looks so bleak. Consequently, our fears about reduced staffing levels, increased class sizes and reductions in curricular and pastoral provision are likely to become a reality in either the short term, medium term or both.

School leaders are united in their belief that the current situation is both unfair and unsustainable. We are asking government, in the strongest possible terms, to "fund the 8% cuts to school budgets".

The 8% figure derives from independent research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies which you can see here <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/8027>

Our first step has been to raise important questions with ministers from the DFE and our own local MPs. We are happy to share these questions with you and would urge you to raise similar concerns with your local representatives. We have already arranged a meeting next week with James Cleverly, our local MP, to discuss these issues.

We will continue to do everything in our power to maintain standards of care and provision but also feel that it is important to let you know just how bad matters are at present. Your support as we continue with our campaign will be vital.

Yours sincerely

Rob James

Headteacher and on behalf of Primary, Secondary and Special School Headteacher Executives