

ACTION ALERT

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Governor Fallin and top legislators are seeking to further reduce and eliminate Oklahoma's income tax. The next few months are crucial in this debate with huge implications for public education.

WHY SAVING THE INCOME TAX IS CRITICAL FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA

- 1. Income tax is essential to school funding.** This year, Oklahoma's public schools received \$743.4 million from the personal income tax, which represents the equivalent of salary and benefits for almost 17,000 public school teachers.
- 2. Public education is already suffering from budget cuts.** In the past three years, funding to school districts through the state aid formula has been slashed by \$222 million, while public schools enrollment has grown by 22,000 students. With fewer teachers and support staff, class sizes are rising and students have fewer course options and services.
- 3. Tax cuts do not make public education a priority.** While there is no additional money to support public schools, the Governor's budget allocates \$111 million to partially fund her plan to cut the income tax – a plan that will cost at least \$340 million, and perhaps much more, in lost revenue in its first full year.
- 4. If we don't fund education properly, Oklahoma will not prosper.** Economic developers and businesses continually rank a well-educated workforce as the number one factor they look at for recruiting new businesses or expanding. How are we going to equip our children with the skills and education they need, if we continue to cut education funding and push Oklahoma to 50th in the nation in per pupil investments?

WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY

- 1. Get Informed.** Resources to learn more about the income tax debate are freely available at <http://okpolicy.org/take-action>.
- 2. Spread the word in your community.** Please speak out in your community at public forums and with your friends and colleagues. Write a letter to the editor voicing your concerns. Let us know of any groups who we might reach out to about this issue.
- 3. Contact your legislator.** Legislators do listen to their constituents. Let your voice be heard! Find your legislators' contact information at <http://okpolicy.org/find-your-legislator>. You can also reach the House switchboard at (405) 521-2711 and the Senate switchboard at (405)524-0126.

Questions or suggestions? Contact OK Policy at (918) 794-3944 or info@okpolicy.org.