

Class of 2017 test results reflect the quality of students and staff we have throughout the district. The Class of 2017 ACT average composite score was 20.8, surpassing the state average of 19.4. The Class of 2017 was the first in which all students took the ACT test, which was paid for by the State Department of Education. In previous years, the students who received an ACT score paid for their test and took the test on a Saturday. The state will be using ACT results to replace many of the end-of-instruction tests it formerly required.



We are proud of the students who were honored on Sunday, August 20 for earning the equivalent of a high school diploma by passing General Educational Development (GED) exams. Overall, 36 people passed their GED exams between August 14, 2016 and August 20, 2017. Of those, 27 were students who passed the exams thanks to the support of our Adult Education program.

The biggest threat to the quality of education we can offer is inadequate state funding both for district operations and for teacher salaries. Oklahoma's per pupil state aid has dropped 27% since 2008, a much larger decrease than any other state in the union. Locally we have cut staffing, consolidated schools and administrative positions, and outsourced various operations to reduce our costs. Our voters have supported bond issues to help shift costs and save teaching positions. However, those efforts cannot solve the teacher shortage we face. The number of emergency certified teachers in the state has skyrocketed from 32 five years ago to 1,160 in 2016-2017 and will be even higher this school year.

Soon the state legislature will be called into special session to address another revenue shortfall. If it fails to raise revenue and simply cuts budgets, our district could lose hundreds of thousands of additional dollars in state funding. We cannot maintain the quality of our schools, let alone improve them, if the state's leaders cannot agree to adequately fund state services.

The 2017 Homecoming Parade will be downtown on September 28 at 6:30 p.m. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend as we Wipe out the Wildcats. Bartlesville High School's homecoming game against Ponca City is set for September 29 at 7:00 p.m. on the Lyon Field at Custer Stadium.

Next month will bring Fall Break on October 19 and 20.

Go Bruins!

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This column is online at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SaxkGSX9REjjJuB6qDE4ITcFz_KG0_-aa7nw5bn8LUM/edit