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January 29, 2018 - From the President's Desk

Cheryl B. Schrader
Wright State University - Main Campus

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Dear Campus Community,

I want to thank everyone who participated in our Let's Talk community forum on the university's finances. Hundreds either attended in person or watched online. The information shared by our panelists was important, and the audience's many insightful questions led to an informed discussion. Your passion and commitment to your university and its future were evident.

We will continue to offer opportunities to discuss issues of importance at Wright State.

As you know, over the last year, Wright State representatives, including the Board of Trustees, have been discussing a new contract with the AAUP-WSU. The parties have reached tentative agreements on more than two dozen items, and several issues remain unresolved and are still being discussed.

Although the university is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of negotiations, I want to provide a brief update on the process.

This week, negotiators will meet with an independent fact finder who will hear proposals from both the university and the faculty union on any outstanding contract issues. After spring break, we expect that the fact finder will issue a report making recommendations for every unresolved issue.

If both parties accept the fact finder's recommendations, the contract is ratified. However, if either party rejects the report, we return to final negotiations. If the final negotiations reach an impasse, the university can make its final best contract offer. At that point the faculty union could determine whether to accept the contract or vote to strike.

The process provided for in state statute does not allow a strike at this point in the negotiation process. Classes and other university activities are expected to proceed as normally scheduled. I want to assure our students that maintaining the quality of our academic programs has been and will continue to be our highest priority. No degree programs have been eliminated due to budget realignment, although several tracks or offerings have been stopped or slowed, while new academic programs and offerings have begun.

Although the last few years have been challenging, the fact remains that Wright State University continues to offer an excellent education for our students—thanks to our dedicated faculty and staff. Our collective efforts to stabilize our finances are paying off, and it appears the university may avoid state fiscal watch if we continue to reduce spending. To do this requires additional reductions for the current and coming year that involve all of us working toward fiscal sustainability.

We are also launching a collective effort to create a bold, comprehensive strategic plan that will guide Wright State into the future. This effort will provide a vision and focus that directly links resources to our values and strategic priorities.

I hope all of us can work cooperatively to ensure our university can continue to help students realize their dreams. We are all in this together.

Warmest regards,

Cheryl B. Schrader, Ph.D. President

[Return to the previous page](#)

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