

what's up doc?

by Dr. Mary Livers, PH.D, MSW, Deputy Secretary

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Hello, Everyone:

Well, it is a little hard to believe, but we are already at the end of January. So far, 2015 has proven to be pretty busy for me. And, it seems like my calendar is already getting booked for the next few months.

Preparations for our annual legislative session have begun. The session does not officially start until April 13, but there has been a lot of activity at the Capitol concerning the state budget. You all may have noticed the state budget has been getting mentioned in the newspaper and on the news. Earlier this week, the Revenue Estimating Committee met to announce revenue projections. The projections are not good. It looks like the state is going to face a deficit of \$1.6 billion next fiscal year. Based on those numbers, a new budget will be proposed to the legislature next month.

We will not know our final budget until the budget process is completed sometime in June, but we do know that we are facing budget reductions. As in the past, we are going to be strategic with our resources to assure that the youth we serve are able to succeed. As I have stated repeatedly in WUD, you, our staff are our greatest resource in meeting the mission. Therefore, the possibility that we may have to reduce staff is especially disheartening.

This morning, you all received a memorandum serving as an official Notice of Impending Layoff Avoidance Measure. This is the first step in a process to offer retirement eligible employees an incentive to retire. It is being done to avoid the need for layoffs due to budget cuts. If you are eligible for this incentive, I encourage you to explore the details of the incentive to see if it is something that you would like to pursue. It is a big decision, and staff (including myself and the executive team) are on hand to answer any questions that you might have.

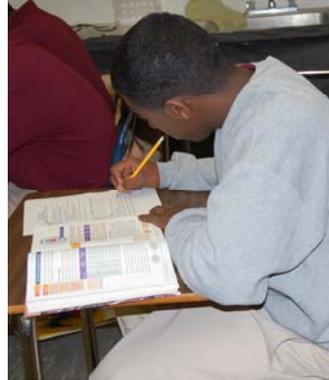
Moving on to lighter topics (pardon the pun), let's talk about the Super Bowl. My normal enthusiasm for the game is a little "deflated" this year. The attention being given to the investigation into the weight of balls used by the New England Patriots during the playoffs has provided another blow to the credibility of the NFL.

The whole controversy brings me back to our guiding principles, which remind us to "Have Faith". I recognize that the world of professional sports is highly competitive, but that does not excuse the obligation to be ethical. It seems that maybe someone in the Patriots organization should have stood up and objected to this practice. Perhaps it would have saved the reputation of the organization and Super Bowl which will forever be linked with cheating.

Well, there I go getting all serious and heavy on you again. Maybe that is my cue to wrap this up. Have a great weekend and enjoy the Super Bowl commercials, if not the game.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*



Comments?
Send them to
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