After six years in a row of the taxpayers of the Cornell School District seeing a lower school mill rate, this year that mill rate and school taxes went up. However, we still have the lowest mill rate of all the 29 schools within the CESA 10 region at 6.74384! Please remember that your property tax amount is based on your property assessment, so while the school levy amount went up 12.47%, your school portion of property taxes could have increased more or less depending upon what your property was assessed at this year. Also, please remember that there are other governmental entities that assess property taxes besides the school district to make up your entire property tax bill.

What does a 6.74384 mill rate mean for your school property taxes? It is $6.74384/$1,000. If you have a $100K home, your school property taxes are $674.384. Just multiply your assessed value by .00674384 to get your school district tax amount. Now just imagine if we had the highest school mill rate in the CESA 10 region of 13.93388 which is over twice our rate!

So why was there an increase this year? State aid is based on property value/student. Our property values went up some, and our number of students is declining, so our property value/student went up, which means our state aid went down. The other reason is that the state allowed “low revenue districts” to increase their levies a little more than other districts this year to try to narrow the gap in revenue/student. There are area school districts that have a revenue limit $2,000+ more per student than we do and other school districts that have passed referenda to get even more money/student.

Your board of education has been able to keep Cornell School District property taxes as one of the lowest, if not the lowest, in the area for several years now. So while that “Christmas gift” of a property tax bill can be hard to swallow, it’s easier to swallow in Cornell than many districts.

Merry Christmas and have a safe and healthy holiday season.