

If you are paying attention to the state budget preparation process, you have already heard that the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) is proposing no increase to the revenue limit, no increase in school equalization aid and only a slight increase in special education reimbursement. What this ultimately means for taxpayers is that property taxes for the school's will go up this fall, and they will go up much more for "property poor" than for "property rich" school districts.

So what do I mean by property poor? In calculating state aid to schools, the assessed value of all property within the school district is divided by the number of students in the public school. With the Cornell School District having a fairly small geographically sized district, not many large or expensive homes, and few waterfront homes, the assessed value of the district is low. This means that the tax increase will be spread over a smaller tax base, thus increasing the mill rate much more than a district with a higher assessed value.

While the JFC proposal is what will go to the house and senate, legislators could still change what will actually be sent to the Governor for approval. Now is a great time to ask your state legislators to push for an increase to state aid for schools, if for no other reason, to lessen the tax impact you will see this fall.