

What I wrote about last month has come to fruition. The legislature approved and the Governor signed a biennial budget bill that provides no new state equalization aid for public schools. This means taxpayers will pay more for property taxes this fall, and mill rates will go up much more for “property poor” than for “property rich” school districts.

Public schools will be able to increase revenues by \$325/student, which doesn't cover the cost of inflation, so it is going to be a tighter financial year. The state low revenue ceiling for public schools is set at \$11,000/student.

I can normally understand the state tightening its belt, but they did not do the same for private school vouchers. This year private schools will receive vouchers of \$10,877/K-8 student & \$13,371/high school student!! This is an increase of \$640/student!! In addition to the frustration, private voucher schools are not required to transport students or provide special education services, yet they are getting more state money per student than we are getting! This past year we spent an additional \$726,906.32 providing special education services above what we are reimbursed for, which was less than the prior year. Not providing these and other services saves private schools a lot of money compared to public schools.

