

East Troy Community Schools Finalizes 11-12 Budget and Adopts Tax Levy

East Troy Community School District property taxpayers will see an average tax rate of \$8.88 per \$1,000 equalized value on their tax bills this year. At a school board meeting October 24th, 2011, the Board of Education set the levy at a decrease of -2.77% from the previous year.

“With the state budget cuts translating to a record almost \$2 million in reductions we needed this year to balance the budget, at least the tax levy decreased,” stated Business Manager Kathy Zwirgzdas. “Many past years we have cut to balance the budget but taxes still increased because of declining state aid dollars.”

According to the 11-12 annual meeting booklet for the East Troy Schools, those past cuts included in 10-11 \$1.4 million, in 09-10 \$455,750 and in 08-09 \$355,000.

“We still lost state aid dollars (10%), but with the massive amount that had to be reduced in the revenue limit formula (a loss of over 7%), we retained enough state aid to offset any needed tax increases. Since East Troy is heavily funded with property taxes already and less reliant on state aid than many districts, the way the state formula components broke down this year benefitted our resident taxpayers. Other districts where state aid is the majority of revenues, losing 10% hurt those districts and taxpayers more,” added Zwirgzdas.

Although the overall levy decrease is 2.77%, where a resident lives and his/her own assessment situation will determine the amount they see on the school’s tax line in December. For example, the average tax levy decrease for the Township of Lafayette in East Troy Schools calculates to -9.52%, whereas the Village of East Troy will see -0.27%. This is because of changes in property values within those areas, which affects how much of the levy each municipality carries from one year to the next.

“The Board knew this going in, and had discussions in August that at least at the average levy decrease amount of 2.77%, the worst case scenarios for people without added value to their homes would likely be a flat property tax year from the school,” Zwirgzdas commented.

Superintendent of East Troy Schools Dr. Hibner pointed out to the board at the October 24th meeting that the changes at the state level this year translated to a revenue limit amount for East Troy Schools nearly equal to the amount in 2008-09. “This means no additional revenues for the two components that primarily make up the revenues in our budget – property taxes and state aid,” stated Hibner.