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Pottstown school budget facts

Next month, the Pottstown School Board is expected to increase real estate taxes 3.5 percent. That means Pottstown property owners will be asked to pay \$996,045 more in taxes in 2018 than they paid last year.

On Tuesday, we discussed the Fair Funding formula for state subsidies to school districts that the legislature adopted two years ago but will not be fully implemented for perhaps 25 years or more. If the formula was fully implemented today, Pottstown would receive \$13.2 million more in state subsidies.

But as the chart (below) shows, the current state subsidies to Pottstown have already increased at more

than triple the rate of inflation over the last 15 years.

The school district budget has increased at nearly twice the rate of inflation during that same time period, even though our student population has remained about the same.

It's great that our superintendent and school board members are making every effort to obtain more state funding.

But life is unfair. The district can't simply blame the state for underfunding Pottstown and just raise taxes.

With a declining tax base, Pottstown cannot afford to levy higher taxes than 95 percent of the school districts in the state, as we've been doing for years.

High taxes are ruinous to our town.



Commentary by
Tom Hylton

Pottstown School District budgets, state subsidies, tax increases				
Year	School budget	State subsidies	Tax increase	Additional tax dollars raised over previous year
2004-2005	\$39,406,262	\$12,054,573	4.8%	\$985,527
2005-2006	\$41,476,706	\$12,399,969	4%	\$855,089
2006-2007	\$43,795,538	\$12,888,148	5.3%	\$1,191,697
2007-2008	\$46,736,459	\$15,782,628	4.5%	\$1,071,956
2008-2009	\$50,407,795	\$18,228,346	6.1%	\$1,484,129
2009-2010	\$53,401,543	\$18,459,566	5.7%	\$1,394,292
2010-2011	\$54,553,223	\$19,274,881	4%	\$1,136,662
2011-2012	\$51,108,049	\$16,887,723	1.9%	\$537,710
2012-2013	\$52,034,797	\$17,621,862	1.2%	\$276,979
2013-2014	\$52,947,845	\$17,979,352	2.4%	\$678,251
2014-2015	\$55,929,737	\$19,505,000	2.9%	\$856,059
2015-2016	\$57,136,928	\$20,848,212	0%	\$(117,995)
2016-2017	\$59,553,150	\$23,128,334	0%	\$11,503
2017-2018	\$61,882,242	\$24,691,399	0%	\$395,969
2018-2019	\$62,677,927	\$25,991,873	3.5%	\$996,045
Increase in school budget over 15 years				59%
Increase in state subsidies over 15 years				115%
Cumulative increase in inflation over 15 years				32.6%