

# **FOCUS ON FINANCE: School tax rate explanation and comparison**

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EDWARDSVILLE -Last week's Focus on Finance outlined the three school funding proposals under consideration in the State of Illinois. Regardless of which plan is implemented, District 7 still receives a far smaller share of General State Aid funds than other Madison and St. Clair County school districts that have far fewer students, a higher poverty rate, and a lower wealth factor based on the state's consideration of each district's Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV).

This week, I will outline the individual funds that determine the amount of a school district’s total school tax rate, which may vary according to individual differences by fund, voter- approved education or construction referenda, number of employees, number of school buildings, etc.

# Funds that Comprise a School’s Total Budget and School Tax Rate

- Education
- Operations and Maintenance
- Working Cash
- Tort Immunity
- Transportation
- Municipal Retirement/Social Security (IMRF)
- Debt Service
- Capital Projects
- Fire Prevention and Safety

Following is a list of Metro-East school districts and their current tax rates.

# 2015/16 School Year Current School Tax Rates

School District	Total School Tax Rate	Education Fund Tax Rate (included within the Total School Tax Rate)	Deficit Spending
Belleville District 118 and Belleville District 201*	\$5.6030	\$2.385	Yes/No
O’Fallon District 90 and O’Fallon District 203*	\$5.3965	\$2.32	Yes/Yes

Bethalto	\$5.0527	\$1.84	No
Alton CUSD #11	\$4.7933	\$2.15	Yes
Highland CUSD #5	\$4.7452	\$2.35	Yes
Triad CUSD #2	\$4.5946**	\$1.84**	Yes
Collinsville CUSD #10	\$4.4817	\$2.55	Yes
Granite City CUSD #9	\$4.3802	\$2.55	No
<b>Edwardsville CUSD #7</b>	<b>\$4.1497</b>	<b>\$2.15</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**\*Belleville and O’Fallon are comprised of separate elementary and high school districts as opposed to K-12 unit school districts in Madison County that encompass both. For the purposes of this chart, the tax rates are combined to arrive at a comparable figure for taxpayers in each school district.**

**\*\*Triad’s Education Fund tax rate will increase by \$0.50 to \$2.34 in 2016-2017 as the result of a successful Education Fund referendum in April 2015.**

**Conclusion:** Despite the significant disparity in state funding as outlined in last week’s Focus on Finance, one of the lowest tax rates in the Metro-East, and higher student enrollment, District 7 schools outperform other local school districts academically by a variety of measures (state assessments, graduation rate, and percent of students attending college).

If we are to continue the District’s academic excellence, we must pursue permanent additional revenue sources to restore financial stability to the school district, as none of the proposals under consideration by the State would begin to address the projected deficits the District continues to face.

