**Fiscal Facts: Wisconsin school tax levies see largest increase in a decade**

School property taxes across Wisconsin rose by more than $220 million on December 2019 tax bills, which suggests — when combined with increases in county and technical college district levies — that Wisconsin residents could see their largest property tax increase in a decade.

On tax bills sent out this month, Wisconsin’s school districts together are raising property tax levies by 4.5% the largest year-over-year increase in a decade. This comes after state limits on school revenues were raised for the first time since 2014-15, and recent referenda passed by voters in many individual districts to exceed the state-imposed revenue limits.

New data show annual growth in levies for counties at 2.2% and technical colleges at 3.1%. Statewide figures were not available for municipalities, special districts, and tax increment districts, which make up the remaining share of property taxes. Tax bills for individual properties around the state will vary according to local factors and property assessments.

This level of increase in school levies, though absent in recent years, is not new to Wisconsin. School district levies increased by more than 4.5% in eight out of the 10 years from 2000 to 2009.

After a decade of relatively tight funding, education advocates may cheer the 2019-20 increase in resources for schools and point out that recent economic gains mean Wisconsin residents are better able to pay for it. Critics may see the increase as contributing to higher taxes overall and Wisconsin’s reliance on property taxes to fund local services.

*This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state’s leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education. Learn more at wispolicyforum.org.*