

Legislative Updates

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Record year for school referenda impacts local property taxes in response to lagging state funding

The property tax levies for K-12 schools in Wisconsin are set to rise by 5.7% in December, marking the highest increase since 2009. This increase is due to a record number of school referendum questions posed and passed in 2024, with nearly two-thirds of public school districts having approved at least one referendum since the beginning of 2021. K-12 schools account for just under half of all local property tax levies in Wisconsin, and this year, districts will levy \$6.10 billion, an increase of 5.7% from \$5.77 billion last year. The increase is driven by the state's per pupil revenue limit increase, which governs how much revenue schools can raise from state general school aids and property taxes combined. The data shows that in the 275 districts that have passed at least one referendum since the beginning of 2021, K-12 property taxes will rise by 7.6% in 2024.