

# From the Assessor

**Fairness - it's what we all want.** The primary goal of our office is to distribute the collective tax burden (the levies) created by our local taxing bodies in a fair and equitable manner. We understand that our local services cost money. We know that we must pay for them. But we also want the process to be fair. Fortunately, layers of protection are built into the property tax system to ensure this. While assessments are determined by our office, they are subject to revision and review by the Chief County Assessment Office, the Lake County Board of Review and ultimately the Illinois Department of Revenue. This is a good thing. Assessments perform a distribution function, not a taxing function. For that reason, Assessors must have a policy of absolute fairness – anything less is unacceptable, because ultimately it is unfair. Uniformity should always take precedence, because if one area or even one property within an area is underassessed, everyone else makes up the difference and pays more than they should. *For the first time in 12 years, Grant Township has achieved a Coefficient of Dispersion (COD) less than 15%.* That may sound like gibberish to you, but it means we are doing our job. The coefficient of dispersion (COD) equals the mean difference between a group of numbers and the median. It means more uniformity within Grant Township.

**The 2023 Quadrennial:** We are required by the Illinois Property Tax Code to physically inspect each property in the township once every four years to verify information used to determine property value. Although 2023 is the quadrennial year, inspections have already started and will continue throughout 2023. There are over 14,000 properties in Grant Township. If you see us on your street photographing your house or taking measurements, it is because we want to make sure the data we have on file is accurate and we are meeting the requirements of the law. Our field inspectors will only be out Monday – Friday between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. They will always have identification on them. If a field inspector from our office comes to your door and requests access on your property, please allow them to do their job. Feel free to ask questions about what they are doing and how it affects your assessment. If there is ever a question or concern, please call our office at 847-546-8880.

**Our 2023 values will be determined by sales from 2020, 2021, and 2022.** The sales ratio studies show whether assessments within a given area actually average 33 1/3 percent of the market value. If the studies result in something other than 33 1/3 percent, a blanket percentage change (increase or decrease), called an “equalization factor” or “multiplier”, is applied to bring the level of assessments to 33 1/3 percent. These sales are entered at the county level, reviewed in our office, and reviewed again by The Illinois Department of Revenue. We comb through these sales to make sure the data is correct. You can view these at [www.lakecountyil.gov/411/Sales-Ratio-Studies](http://www.lakecountyil.gov/411/Sales-Ratio-Studies) The first quarter of 2022 saw home sales at an all-time high. And while we've seen some price drops and the market starting to slow, those 2022 sales are still much higher than the 2019 sales that are dropping out of the ratio studies. According to the Illinois Property Tax Code, we must value real property by what is known using closed sales transactions. To avoid drastic up and down swings in value every year, we must value based on a 3-year period. It does not look like 2023 assessment values will come down. But when we do our job with uniformity, the tax burden will be distributed fairly and equitably.



If you received the Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze Exemption, the Disabled Person's Homestead Exemption, or the Standard Homestead Exemption for Veteran's with Disabilities in 2022, you will receive a reminder letter in early March 2023. **These exemptions need to be applied for annually.** Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze Exemptions will require proof of income to be uploaded to the county. Applications must be submitted online through the Lake County Smartfile E-Filing Portal. If you do not have computer access, we will continue to help you fill out paperwork here in our office and then file online on your behalf. Our office is always available to answer your questions and concerns.



**DATA CLEANSING:  
WHAT IS IT AND WHY  
IS IT IMPORTANT?**

**Spring Cleaning!** Data cleansing is the process of removing incorrect, duplicate, or otherwise erroneous data from a dataset. In this case, our dataset is the information we collect about each property. We have been working diligently at cleaning all of our data. As the saying goes, “What goes in, is what comes out.” The better data we have going in, the more accurate our numbers will be coming out. This means your assessment will be more accurate. All land values and influence factors are being reviewed and new standards are being put in place moving forward.

# Taxes and Taxing Bodies...

Property taxes in Illinois are the second highest in the nation. Within Illinois, Lake County is the highest. I don't like paying high taxes any more than all of you. But here in the Assessor's office, we do not set the tax rate. We value your property according to the Illinois Property Tax Code. When you get your tax bill in May, you will see columns listing out each taxing body and the increase or decrease from last year. If you have questions about where your money is going, I encourage you to reach out to these taxing bodies for explanation. To be proactive in this, I have asked Grant Community High School to provide some background information to you (below.) I am happy to sit down and talk to anyone that has questions or concerns. But ultimately, the best information will come directly from the source.

- Lisa LaMantia, CIAO

Dear Grant Township Residents,

We are very pleased to provide information regarding Grant Community High School District 124. School funding is a very complex matter, but we will attempt to highlight some important aspects here and welcome any questions that residents may have. Above all, please know that the Board of Education and administration of District 124 remain committed to providing a quality education for students while being respectful of the needs of Grant taxpayers.

With the State of Illinois providing one of the lowest levels of financial support to districts across the nation, the majority of costs to educate the children in our community falls to local taxpayers. Things are looking up with Evidence-Based Funding, which has changed the way that school districts receive the bulk of state funds. Since its passage in 2017, more resources have been sent to under-resourced schools, of which Grant is one. The District currently receives 67% of the resources, both local and all other revenue sources, needed to adequately educate students as determined by the State of Illinois. Regardless, we are very proud of the educational, extracurricular and co-curricular programs we provide, with the resources we have, while maintaining one of the lowest tax rates in Lake County.

Lake County High School Adequacy Comparison			
High School District	% Adequacy Per State	Adequacy Funding Gap	Resources per student
Highland Park/Deerfield #113	195.10%	\$ (46,193,918)	\$ 27,418
Lake Forest HSD #115	191.10%	\$ (18,759,461)	\$ 25,876
Libertyville/Vernon Hills HSD #128	171.60%	\$ (33,222,307)	\$ 23,681
Stevenson HSD #125	155.40%	\$ (33,770,234)	\$ 21,579
Antioch/Lakes CHSD #117	83.20%	\$ 6,300,921	\$ 12,029
Grayslake HSD #127	77.40%	\$ 9,107,597	\$ 11,355
Mundelein HSD #120	76.90%	\$ 7,897,797	\$ 12,087
Zion-Benton HSD #126	76.10%	\$ 10,038,751	\$ 12,542
Warren Township HSD #121	71.80%	\$ 16,603,537	\$ 10,949
Grant CHSD #124	67.90%	\$ 8,823,902	\$ 10,301

Additionally, in an attempt to lighten the tax burden for community members, the Board of Education has returned funds to taxpayers through multiple tax abatements. The administration and Board of Education remain dedicated to abating, or

Lake County High School Comparison Tax Year 2021 (paid in 2022)		
High School District	Tax Rate	-/+ from Grant
Zion-Benton HSD #126	3.853099	1.52
Grayslake HSD #127	3.738228	1.41
Stevenson HSD #125	3.092308	0.76
Antioch/Lakes CHSD #117	3.057432	0.73
Libertyville/Vernon Hills HSD #128	2.673749	0.34
Highland Park/Deerfield #113	2.485954	0.15
Mundelein HSD #120	2.482870	0.15
Warren Township HSD #121	2.356874	0.02
Grant CHSD #124	2.332392	
Lake Forest HSD #115	1.493935	(0.84)

returning money to the taxpayers, as often as is fiscally possible. The District applies each year to the Illinois State Board of Education for a Property Tax Relief Grant, which would allow us to further abate property taxes. The District has applied for the grant each year that it has been available.

Historical Abatements	
Levy Year	Refund to Taxpayers
2015	\$ 650,000
2014	\$ 650,000
2013	\$ 1,065,000
2011	\$ 142,921
2009	\$ 544,000

Grant Community High School offers a comprehensive curriculum with the goal to prepare students with the skills necessary for success in college and/or a professional career. With more than 200 instructional offerings, including honors, Advanced Placement, and dual credit courses, combined with internship opportunities, students have many opportunities to explore areas of interest. Students also expand leadership and teamwork skills through the broad extracurricular and co-curricular activities offered, along with an array of student clubs. We thank the community for their support in helping to provide these exceptional opportunities for our students!