

Most Area SE Neb. Schools to see State Aid Drop

The State of Nebraska has certified state aid to school districts for the next year. The numbers released Tuesday show most area school districts will receive less state aid next year than they received this past year.

The biggest hit, on a percentage basis, will be felt by the Johnson County Central School District, which will see a nearly 50-percent drop in its state aid – a loss of more than \$423,000 compared to last year's state aid of \$907,000.

Johnson County Superintendent Jack Moles attributes the loss largely to an 11-percent increase in property valuations, combined with a small increase in the district's budget. (play audio :30)

Moles says he was expecting to lose a significant amount of state aid, but the actual amount is more than he anticipated. He says the drop in state aid will mean a tighter budget going forward. (play audio :39)

One thing that will help the district, Moles says, is that they have a two-year contract in place with the district's certified staff.

Also taking a big hit in state aid is Syracuse, which will receive \$664,000 in state aid – a loss of \$443,000 from last year.

The Falls City School District will see a loss in state aid – though not as severe as that. District 56 will lose approximately \$65,000 in state aid, to just under \$1.7 million. Superintendent Tim Heckenlively says increasing property valuations lead to the loss of state equalization aid, what's become a trend for Falls City and other rural school districts. (play audio :26)

Heckenlively says the state legislature will have to do something soon to address the school funding formula, as more small school districts lose state aid. (play audio :23)

Nine of 13 area school districts will lose state aid in the next year. HTRS will lose just over \$15,000; Johnson-Brock will see a reduction of nearly \$28,000; Pawnee City will see a slight reduction of \$3,100; Nebraska City will lose just over \$122,000; Sterling's state aid will drop by more than \$22,000; and Lewiston will see a \$492 reduction in state equalization aid.

Schools that will see an increase in state aid in the next year include the Auburn School District, which will get state aid totaling just over \$2.8 million, an increase of more than \$325,000.

The Wymore Southern School District will receive approximately \$269,000 more in state aid; the Freeman School District will gain \$126,000; and Diller-Odell will receive an increase in state aid of eight dollars for the next school year.