



LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT 158 T. F. TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 215 JOINT STATEMENT – AUGUST 30, 2024



This joint statement regarding property taxes is being provided on behalf of Lansing School District 158 and Thornton Fractional Township High School District 215. Our taxpayers and others in Cook County – particularly the South Cook area – are currently seeing significant increases in residential property taxes. Cook County Assessor Fitz Kaegi has communicated to school districts in the region that this is due to:

- An increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and home values;
- Elimination of reductions and discounts to property taxes provided during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- A triennial reassessment of Cook County property values; and
- A high level of success for the appeals of commercial property taxes.

Concerning the last point above, the Cook County Board of Review has significantly reduced increases to the property taxes of commercial business despite the increases for residential properties remaining high. This is shown in the graph below. Because of this, residential taxpayers are having to pay a larger portion of the overall Cook County assessment that was increased in 2023 compared to Cook County businesses.



Red = Residential Property Tax Increase (2022 to 2023 Assessment)
Orange = Business Property Tax Increase (2022 to 2023 Assessment)

An analysis of the Cook County property tax increase was completed by a research team for Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas. Their analysis shows that 74% of homeowners in South Cook owe more in taxes this year, while nearly 70% of commercial property owners owe less. The full analysis can be found at:

[Cook County Treasurer 2023 Tax Bill Analysis \(English\)](#)
[Cook County Treasurer 2023 Tax Bill Analysis \(Spanish\)](#)

We would like to help our residents appeal and contest the increases in your property taxes. Property owners may appeal the initial assessment of their property by the Cook County Assessor. The Assessor’s



**LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT 158
T. F. TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 215
JOINT STATEMENT – AUGUST 30, 2024**



website includes much useful information on this process, which can be accomplished online by the owner and without an attorney. These appeals must be filed within a limited time period after notice of the initial assessment is issued. You can start the appeal process at this link: www.cookcountyassessor.com/appeals.

Although the online process is easy enough, success on the appeal depends on whether the taxpayer has good evidence in support of the appeal. Most commonly, that means finding the assessments of comparable residential properties showing a relative overvaluation of the property of the person filing the appeal.

Alternatively, a property owner may engage an attorney to file an appeal. Generally, these attorneys will accept this work on a contingency fee basis. That is, they do not charge for their time but rather take a percentage of whatever refund they are able to obtain for their clients. Engaging an attorney is especially recommended in cases where the property has a very high value, where it is difficult to obtain supporting evidence for the appeal, or where you wish to pursue the appeal to the next levels at the Cook County Board of Review or the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board. Please keep in mind that a reduction in a property assessment may not result in the same percentage reduction in taxes. The amount taxed also depends on the assessment of other people’s properties and other factors. Please reach out to either of the school business officials below with any questions, for more information, or for help with your property tax bill.

Mr. Mark D. Crotty, CSBO
Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations
Lansing School District 158
mcrotty@d158.net
(708) 474-6700

Mrs. Teresa A. Bishop, CSBO, CPA
Executive Director of Finance
Thornton Fractional Twp. High School District 215
tbishop@tfd215.org
(708) 585-2303

We hope our taxpayers find this joint statement useful and hope to share additional information regarding property taxes in the future. Our school districts are here for you during this unexpected, challenging time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nathan S. Schilling, CSBO
Superintendent of Schools
Lansing School District 158

Mr. John M. Robinzine
Superintendent of Schools
Thornton Fractional Twp. High School District 215

A Note To Our Taxpayers:

For the sake of this joint statement, “assessment” means the legal value assigned to real property (land and buildings) by the tax officials. In Cook County, single-family homes are supposed to have an assessment equal to 10% of the fair market value of the home. Thus, the factual issue in an appeal of an assessment is the actual value the home would have on the market. This has increased with the 2023 tax assessment.