



Statement by Timothy M. Allwein Pennsylvania School Boards Association

There are 89 school districts that cross county boundaries. One district is located in parts of 4 counties (Allegheny-Clarion Valley). Ten districts cover parts of three counties with the balance covering parts of two counties.

The school code provides several options for equalizing the tax levy between various parts of the school district based on the State Tax Equalization Boards estimate of market value. While the process for equalizing works, it is cumbersome to use, not easily understood by nor easily explained to district taxpayers

The process also conflicts with provisions of Act 1 of 2006 (Tax Reform). In the case of Act 1, districts that overlap county boundaries are limited to the prior year index when the county reassesses. Thus, districts located in two or more counties are limited when either county reassesses. Another problem is that under Act 1, the method for equalizing adopted by PDE as part of the annual filing and verifications of the index limits causes districts located in more than one county to lose the benefit of growth in the tax base. The loss of this growth forces districts to levy higher taxes to offset the loss of the growth and consume more of the index limits.