

Frequently Asked Questions About Changes to School Board Elections and Budget Votes

Q. What is the law that allows a board of education or a municipal governing body to move the April annual school election?

A. P.L., c202, was signed into law on January 17, 2012 and permits the board to choose to move the election.

Q. What procedure is required by the school board to move the election?

A. The law requires the passage of a resolution by the board. The resolution was passed by the Rutherford board on February 11, 2013.

Q. How will this affect the school budget?

A. Under this law, a tax levy that does not exceed 2% does not have to be submitted to the voters. This is the figure that the Governor and legislature deemed acceptable for the continued operation of school districts. However, there is still the same budget process in place as in prior years, and there is a budget hearing for the public scheduled for March 25. As in the past, the Rutherford school board and administrators are committed to providing the best possible educational program while remaining fiscally responsible. This does not change the Board's focus on the efficient running of the school district.

Q. How does this change affect school board members?

School board members currently serving will all remain in place until November. Those whose term is up and who seek re-election will be on the ballot in November.

Q. If the election is moved to November, can it revert back to April at a later date?

A. Yes, but once a school election is moved to November, no action can be taken to move the election back to April for four years.

Q. What happens if the proposed tax levy is above the 2%?

A. Any amount above the 2% would have to be approved by the voters during the November election. However, the Rutherford budget for 2013-2014 is not above the 2% cap.

Q. What is the benefit of moving the election?

A. Conducting a school board election costs approximately \$31,000 each year. This cost would be eliminated because there is virtually no cost in running the election concurrently with the general election. This is money that can go back into the budget to fund educational programs for students.

Q. How many school districts have moved the election from April to November?

A. More than 85% of districts have moved the election to November and that number is expected to go higher.