

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 0962S.01I
Bill No.: SB 234
Subject: Elections; Education, Elementary and Secondary
Type: Original
Date: March 3, 2023

Bill Summary: This proposal moves school board elections to the November General Election.

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
General Revenue*	\$0	(Unknown) to Unknown	\$0
Total estimated net effect on General Revenue Fund	\$0	(Unknown) to Unknown	\$0

*School districts would be required to share in the proportional cost for general elections (savings (positive unknown) to the state) in odd numbered fiscal years; however, adding school board elections to the November ballot may increase costs of those elections overall (costs (negative unknown, could exceed \$250,000) to the state).

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE			

- Estimated Net Effect (expenditures or reduced revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.
- Estimated Net Effect (savings or increased revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Local Government	(Unknown) to Unknown	(Unknown) to Unknown	(Unknown) to Unknown

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

In response to a similar proposal, HCS HB 2306 (2022), officials from the **Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)** assumed this proposal would move school board elections from April to November each year. In odd-numbered calendar years, this would have no impact on the Secretary of State's Office. However, in even-numbered calendar years (odd-numbered fiscal years), school board elections will now be held on the same day as the statewide general election. As a result, school districts who previously held elections in April will be required to share proportional costs of the November general election.

Proportional costs are calculated by each local election authority based on the number of political subdivisions and their respective amounts of registered voters. The state's proportional share is expected to decrease in all or nearly all jurisdictions, but this may not directly equate to a cost savings as the overall cost of the election may increase. In particular, local jurisdictions may experience increasing costs for publishing election notices in local newspapers, ballot printing/coding due to an increased number of ballot styles, and, as an indirect result, there may also be a need to split polling places or hire additional election judges to help avoid voter confusion at the polls. Therefore, the exact amount of fiscal impact to the State of Missouri (of either costs or savings) is unknown and depends on local election authority decisions.

Oversight notes the proportional costs of the November elections could increase in part due to an increase in the number of ballot issues and ballot pages. Due to the proposal shifting the elections from April to November and limiting the elections to even numbered calendar years school districts who previously held elections in April will be required to share proportional costs of the November general election. Therefore, Oversight will show a potential unknown cost that could exceed \$250,000 and potential unknown savings beginning in November 2024 (FY 2026) and recurring in even numbered calendar years (odd numbered fiscal years).

Officials from the **SOS** also assume many bills considered by the General Assembly include provisions allowing or requiring agencies to submit rules and regulations to implement the act. The SOS is provided with core funding to handle a certain amount of normal activity resulting from each year's legislative session. The fiscal impact for this fiscal note to the SOS for Administrative Rules is less than \$5,000. The SOS recognizes that this is a small amount and does not expect that additional funding would be required to meet these costs. However, the SOS also recognizes that many such bills may be passed by the General Assembly in a given year and that collectively the costs may be in excess of what the office can sustain with the core budget. Therefore, the SOS reserves the right to request funding for the cost of supporting administrative rules requirements should the need arise based on a review of the finally approved bills signed by the governor.

Oversight assumes the SOS could absorb the costs of printing and distributing regulations related to this proposal. If multiple bills pass which require the printing and distribution of regulations at substantial costs, the SOS could require additional resources.

Officials from the **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Health and Senior Services, Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, Office of the State Courts Administrator, and Office of Administration** each assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their respective organizations. **Oversight** does not have any information to the contrary. Therefore, Oversight will reflect a zero impact in the fiscal note for these agencies.

Officials from the **Jackson County Board of Elections** assume adding school board elections to the November General Election will substantially increase the cost of each General Election. Below are cost estimates for each election. The majority of election costs are carried by each county. The state recently appropriated funds for 2020 and 2022 primary and general elections but it is not a given and this could substantially increase costs for the counties.

- School District boundaries cross congressional, senate and house districts lines. These districts must be kept separated in their own polling locations. This bill would significantly increase the number of polling locations needed, increasing poll rental costs for the entities and the increase of costs of judges to staff the additional polls.

Estimate

50 additional polling locations	-	\$ 9,000
6 judges per polling location	-	\$60,000
Training for additional judges	-	\$11,200

- General Elections in Eastern Jackson County generally fill the front and back of an 8 ½” x 14” ballot. If school board races and school district questions are added to a General Election ballot, it could move the ballot to a third page.

This would be incredibly confusing for the judges and voters to introduce a second sheet of paper to track. The room for error increases with an additional page and there is a greater likelihood of voters not completing the second page of the ballot and leaving it behind in the voting booth.

In addition, it would double the ballot cost for their jurisdictions.

Estimate

Additional ballot cost	-	\$65,000
------------------------	---	----------

- Election Authorities are required to conduct a 5% manual recount following each election. If a second ballot page is introduced, it would make balancing the polling

locations and the manual recount process cumbersome and extend the time and part-time staff needed to complete the process.

Estimate	-	\$10,000
TOTAL COST PER GENERAL ELECTION	-	\$155,200

Officials from the **Platte County Board of Elections** assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their organization. This legislation would add significant complexity to the general election ballot. It would more than double the number of ballot styles required for each election and introduce non-partisan races with multiple open seats (i.e. “vote for 3”) and many candidates. General Election ballots are also very full already with races, judges, State and local questions. They have found themselves at the limits of space on an 18 inch (the maximum) ballot printed front and back the last two general elections. Adding another race that will take up 4-6 inches of a column could likely be the tipping point to require a ballot that is two sheets of paper.

Officials from the **St. Louis City Board of Elections** assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their organization. The only way this would generate an impact is if it either added/subtracted as a stand-alone election. St. Louis City has never had a stand-alone Board of Education Election. The cost of a city wide election ranges between \$300 and \$400,000.

Officials from the **St. Louis County Board of Elections** assumed if this legislation pushes the ballot to two pages, this would cost \$100,000 per election (that has a two-page ballot).

In response to similar legislation, HB 361 from 2021, officials from the **St. Louis County Board of Elections** assumed, because school board elections currently take place in April municipal elections, the Election Board pays more to cover costs to administer the election. If changed to taking place in November elections, this would save the Election Board about \$350,000.

In response to similar legislation, SB 740 from 2022, officials from the **Kansas City Board of Election** stated if this legislation becomes law, the cost of printing will increase \$50,000 per election for the printing a second page to the ballot. Also, training of election judges would be needed at a cost of \$35,000 (1000 judges at \$35 each).

In response to similar legislation, HCS for HB 1424 (2018), officials from the **Kansas City Election Board** assumed there would be a substantial savings in election costs. By moving the School Board elections to November, entities having elections would share costs and save in excess of \$100,000 or more per year. This election would be more expensive, but costs would be pro-rated among several entities, with everyone paying a smaller share. Another benefit would be a better turnouts, since historically November elections have the highest turnouts. However, not all races can fit on one ballot, therefore more than one ballot may be needed.

In response to similar legislation, SB 740 from 2022, officials from the **Kansas City Board of Elections** assumed if this legislation were to become law, the November ballot would be a multipage document. Ballot printing costs would increase by \$50,000 and postage by \$15,000. Judges would need to be trained costing \$35,000 (1000 judges times \$35). Legal Notices would increase by \$30,000 due to the larger size. Public notices would need to be placed in all the newspapers in the jurisdiction twice for \$60,000 (\$30,000 times 2).

In response to a similar proposal HCS for HB 1424 (2018), officials from **Buchanan County** assumed, having the school districts run their elections in November, would help alleviate election costs on the county level, but assumed small entities, like fire, water, ambulance districts, the trustee members of villages, etc. would not be able to afford an April election alone without a larger entity there to help divvy up the costs.

Oversight assumes, beginning in 2024 (FY 2025), this proposal requires school board elections to be held during the November election of even-number years instead of annual April municipal elections.

Oversight assumes this proposal would result in savings to school districts as this would reduce the number of school board elections. Oversight assumes no school board election shall be held in April 2024 (FY 2024); therefore, Oversight will show an unknown savings occurring in FY 2024.

Oversight notes due to the proposal shifting the elections from April to November and limiting the elections to even numbered calendar years, school board elections costs will only be incurred in odd numbered fiscal years; therefore, the savings generated from elections will occur in even numbered fiscal years. For example, no longer holding the April 2024 school board election will result in savings occurring in FY 2024 as there is no offsetting cost occurring in even numbered fiscal years. Instead the elections will occur in November 2024 (FY 2025) and will be offset by the savings generated from the school board election that would otherwise have been held in April 2024 (FY 2024). Oversight will show an unknown savings beginning in April 2024 (FY 2024) and recurring in even numbered fiscal years.

Oversight notes, as indicated by some of the election authorities, the cost of the November elections could increase in part due to an increase in the number of ballot issues and ballot pages. Oversight will show a potential unknown cost beginning in November 2024 (FY 2025) and recurring in even numbered calendar years (odd numbered fiscal years).

Oversight assumes some local political subdivisions may face increased costs beginning in the April 2024 election (FY 2024) as school districts would no longer share in the proportional cost. Oversight will show a potential unknown cost to some local political subdivisions beginning in FY 2024 and recurring annually for each municipal election held.

Beginning in November of 2024 (FY 2025), Oversight assumes some local political subdivisions may see proportional cost savings as school districts would now share in the cost of the

November elections occurring on even numbered calendar years (odd numbered fiscal years). Oversight will show a potential unknown savings to some local political subdivisions beginning in FY 2025 and recurring in odd numbered fiscal years.

HYPERLINK "<https://www.mshsaa.org/resources/pdf/Official%20Handbook.pdf>" [MSHSAA](#)

Oversight only reflects the responses received from state agencies and political subdivisions; however, Attorney General’s Office, Missouri Office of Prosecution Services, school districts, county clerks, and other local election authorities were requested to respond to this proposed legislation but did not. A listing of political subdivisions included in the Missouri Legislative Information System (MOLIS) database is available upon request.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2024 (6 Mo.)	FY 2025	FY 2026
GENERAL REVENUE			
<u>Cost</u> – SOS - School Board Elections - increase in proportional cost for ballot issues for November Elections p. 6	\$0	\$0 to (Unknown)	\$0
<u>Savings</u> – SOS - School Board Elections - school districts now required to share in proportional cost for November election p. 6	\$0	<u>Unknown</u>	\$0
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE	<u>\$0</u>	(Unknown) to <u>Unknown</u>	<u>\$0</u>

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2024 (6 Mo.)	FY 2025	FY 2026
LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS			
<u>Cost</u> - School Board Elections - increase in proportional cost for April election to locals other than schools	(Unknown)	(Unknown)	(Unknown)
<u>Cost</u> - School Board Elections - increase in ballot issues for November Elections	\$0	\$0 to (Unknown)	\$0
<u>Savings</u> - School Board Elections - decrease in proportional cost for November election to locals including school districts	\$0	\$0 to Unknown	\$0
<u>Savings</u> - School Board Elections - reduced election costs for school districts (annual to biennial)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS	(Unknown) to <u>Unknown</u>	(Unknown) to <u>Unknown</u>	(Unknown) to <u>Unknown</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

No direct fiscal impact to small businesses would be expected as a result of this proposal.

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

Under current law, elections for school board members are held on either the general municipal Election Day or such day as is specified in the county charter. Furthermore such offices are for terms ranging from three years to six years, depending on the district. This act requires such elections to be held at the November general election and makes all such terms four years.

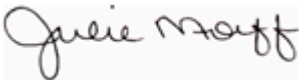
The act additionally allows any candidate for school board to file for and hold any other office for which he or she is qualified, notwithstanding prohibitions in current law prohibiting persons from filing as a candidate for multiple offices.

This act has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2024.

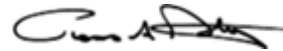
This legislation is not federally mandated, would not duplicate any other program and would not require additional capital improvements or rental space.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Department of Health and Senior Services
Office of Administration
Office of the State Courts Administrator
Office of the Secretary of State
Joint Committee on Administrative Rules
Jackson County Board of Elections
Platte County Board of Elections
St. Louis County Board of Elections
St. Louis City Board of Elections
Kansas City Board of Elections
Buchanan County



Julie Morff
Director
March 3, 2023



Ross Strobe
Assistant Director
March 3, 2023