

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 1556S.01I
 Bill No.: SB 485
 Subject: Elections; Education, Elementary and Secondary
 Type: Original
 Date: March 3, 2025

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 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
General Revenue*	\$0	(Unknown) to Unknown	\$0
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue	\$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 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
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 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	0	0	0

- 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 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Local Government	(Unknown) to Unknown	(Unknown) to Unknown	(Unknown) to Unknown

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

Sections - 162.082, 162.083, 162.221, 162.223, 162.241, 162.261, 162.291, 162.301, 162.341, 162.431, 162.459, 162.471, 162.481, 162.492, 162.601, 162.821, 162.825, 162.865, 162.867, and 162.910 – Moves school board elections to the November General Election

Officials from the **Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)** state this bill would require school board members to be elected on the November general election day. As a result, the cost of conducting the general election may increase somewhat, but the state's proportional share will decrease, resulting in a potential cost savings to the state.

The estimated cost of conducting a statewide election is \$8 million, based on previous primary and general election cost share disbursements. Since each jurisdiction at a minimum also conducts elections for countywide offices at the same time, the state's normal cost share is 50% or slightly less. Since all (or nearly all) voters would now be voting for school board members at the same time as well, this reduces the state's anticipated cost share to an approximate maximum of 33%, which would result in a cost savings of up to \$1,333,333 in FY 2027.

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 2026 (FY 2027) 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** assume this proposal will have no fiscal impact on their organization.

Officials from the **Platte County Board of Elections** state this legislation would add significant complexity to the general election ballot. It could more than double the number of ballot styles required for each election and by including political subdivisions not otherwise included on Primary or General ballots, introducing new district lines and splits. 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 district that will take inches of a column could likely be the tipping point to require a ballot that is two sheets of paper.

In response to a similar proposal, SB 234 (2023), officials from the **Jackson County Election Board** assumed 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
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- 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 **St. Louis County Board of Elections** state this legislation would cost an additional \$100,000 per election because the ballot would go to two pages.

Officials from the **St. Louis City Board of Elections** assume this proposal will have no fiscal impact to their organization.

Oversight assumes, beginning in 2026 (FY 2027), 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 2026 (FY 2026); therefore, Oversight will show an unknown savings occurring in FY 2026.

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 2026 school board election will result in savings occurring in FY 2026 as there is no offsetting cost occurring in even numbered fiscal years. Instead the elections will occur in November 2026 (FY 2027) and will be offset by the savings generated from the school board election that would otherwise have been held in April 2026 (FY 2026). Oversight will show an unknown savings beginning in April 2026 (FY 2026) 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 2026 (FY 2027) 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 2026 election (FY 2026) 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 2026 and recurring annually for each municipal election held.

Beginning in November of 2026 (FY 2027), 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 2026 and recurring in odd numbered fiscal years.

Oversight only reflects the responses received from political subdivisions; however, school districts and other 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 2026 (10 Mo.)	FY 2027	FY 2028
GENERAL REVENUE			
<u>Cost</u> – SOS – School Board Elections – increase in proportional cost for ballot issues for November Elections	\$0	\$0 to (Unknown)	\$0
<u>Savings</u> – SOS – School Board Elections – school districts now required to share in proportional cost for November Elections	\$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 2026 (10 Mo.)	FY 2027	FY 2028
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	<u>(Unknown) to Unknown</u>	<u>(Unknown) to Unknown</u>	<u>(Unknown) to Unknown</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

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

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

This legislation moves schools board elections to the November General Election. 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, with terms of office ranging from three years to six years, depending on the district. This act requires all such elections to be held at the November general election and makes all such terms four years.

This act has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2026.

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

L.R. No. 1556S.011

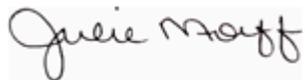
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SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Office of the Secretary of State
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Platte County Board of Elections
St. Louis City Board of Elections
St. Louis County Board of Elections
Kansas City Election Board



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March 3, 2025



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