



# BUDGET VOTE / APRIL ELECTION



Dr. Raymond González, Superintendent  
Dana Sullivan, Business Administrator

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# Presentation Overview

1. History of District Budget/Elections
2. Why move to April Election?
3. Process / Procedures
4. Timeline
5. Reorganization Meeting

# History of District Budgets & Elections

## Before 2010

- District budget voted on annually by Westfield community
- Average tax levy increase was 4.9%

## 2011

- State of New Jersey reduces aid by 65%
- Reductions in excess of \$4-million made to District operating budget

## 2012 - 2021

- State places 2% cap, with eligible waivers, on tax levy increases for districts opting out of community vote on district budget
- District able to submit budgets at cap with minimal reductions due to changes in state-mandated employee contributions for health insurance, as well as proactive changes made by the District

## 2022 - 2023

- District not eligible for waivers
- No additional efficiencies available
- Expenditures outpacing revenues

# Potential Scenarios

2023-2024

	Scenario with flat State Aid and 7% increase in Health Insurance	Scenario with flat State Aid and 12% increase in Health Insurance
<b>Estimated Revenue</b>	<b>\$119 million</b>	<b>\$119 million</b>
<b>Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b><u>\$122.1 million</u></b>	<b><u>\$123.3 million</u></b>
<b>Over Cap Amount</b>	<b>\$3.1 million</b>	<b>\$4.3 million</b>
<b>Tax Levy Increase from 4.9% to 6%</b>		

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# Why move to an April Vote?

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## NOVEMBER ELECTION

- No public vote on the budget
- Tax levy limited to 2% increase
- Annual expenditure increases outpace revenue
- Maintaining existing programs are at risk
- Expanding programs are only possible by eliminating others

## APRIL ELECTION

- Creates opportunities to maintain and expand programs
  - Allows a public vote on the budget
  - With approval, budget can exceed 2% cap to keep pace with rising costs without impacting programs
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# N.J.S.A. 19:60-1.1(b)(1)

## **Procedure for moving the date of school elections**

*The date of the annual school election may be moved to the third Tuesday in April without voter approval, upon the adoption of a resolution by the board of education of a local or regional school district, other than a Type II district with a board of school estimate, or the governing body or bodies of the municipality or municipalities constituting the district.*



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## N.J.S.A. 19:60-1.1(b)(2)

### **Procedure for moving the date of school elections**

*In the event that the date of the annual school election is moved to the third Tuesday in April, a **vote shall be held on the district's general fund tax levy for the budget year including any proposal for additional funds** pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection d. of section 5 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-5), **the election of members of the board of education**, and for any other purpose authorized by law.*

# Moving the Date of School Elections

## Governing Case Law:

- Board member terms cannot be shortened
- Effectively prevents an election from moving up to April from November in same year.

November 2022 election will be moved to April 18, 2023. County Clerk must be notified 85 days prior to election.

In April, the Community will vote on:

- Approval of Budget
- Three new Board members



# Moving November 2022 Election to April 2023 Election

## Board Member Term Extensions

Original Term Expiration

Extended to:

December 2022

April 2023 Reorganization

December 2023

April 2024 Reorganization

December 2024

April 2025 Reorganization

Moving the  
Date of  
School  
Elections

# Moving the Date of School Elections

## Other Considerations:

- Cost of April Election to be born by Board of Education
  - Estimated to be approximately \$40,000
- Nominating petitions for elections due February 27, 2023 (no longer July 25)
- The Annual reorganization of the Board will be reduced from two meetings (January / June) to one on any day of the first or second week following the annual school election.
  - Monday, April 24, 2023 – Sunday, May 7, 2023

# Budget Process

Approximate Timeline; Official Dates Not Yet Announced



## MARCH

Public Hearing on Budget and Board Vote

## APRIL

School Election and Budget Vote

## MAY

If the budget is defeated, the Town Council determines final tax levy.

If the Board of Education objects to reductions made by Town Council, they can appeal to the Commissioner of Education.



# BOARD RESOLUTION

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*WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 19:60-1.1(b)(1) sets forth the procedure for moving the date of school elections; and*

*WHEREAS, the election for members of the Westfield Board of Education was held on the first Tuesday in November for more than four years; and*

*WHEREAS, the date of the annual school election may be moved to the third Tuesday in April without voter approval, upon the adoption of a resolution by the board of education of a local or regional school district, and*

*WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 19:60-1.1(b)(2) provides that **in the event that the date of the annual school election is moved to the third Tuesday in April, a vote shall be held on the district's general fund tax levy for the budget year including any proposal for additional funds** pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection d. of section 5 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-5), the election of members of the board of education, and for any other purpose authorized by law; and*

# BOARD RESOLUTION

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*WHEREAS, the case law interpreting N.J.S.A. 19:60-1.1 precludes the shortening of board members terms when moving the school elections from November to April and provides for extending board members with terms expiring in December to serve an additional four months; and*

*WHEREAS, the Board wishes to make its decision before the nominating petition filing deadline for the November election of July 25, 2022.*

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Westfield Board of Education approves the date of the annual school election be moved from the first Tuesday in November to the third Tuesday in April, beginning with moving the November 8, 2022 annual school election to the third Tuesday in April 2023; and***



# BOARD RESOLUTION

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*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:13-12, the annual organization meeting of the Westfield Board of Education appropriately take place following the April election; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Board members' terms be extended as follows: original terms expiring December 2022 be extended to the April 2023 reorganization; original terms expiring December 2023 be extended to the April 2024 reorganization; and original terms expiring December 2024 be extended to the April 2025 reorganization; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the administration is to effectuate written notice of the change in the date of school election from November to April to the Union County Clerk accordingly; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be transmitted to the Union County Board of Elections; the Union County Superintendent of Elections; the Westfield Municipal Clerk and School Board Secretary; the Department of State, Division of Elections; the Department of Education's Executive County Superintendent; and the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services.*



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# Westfield Public Schools

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

