



Iowa School Board Election Change to November in 2019

HF 566, passed by the 2017 Legislature, changes Iowa school board elections from September to November, effective July 1, 2019.

HF 692 passed by the 2019 Legislature made further changes to the dates special elections can be held.

Election Timelines Comparison

School Board Election Process	2017 Code	2017 Actual	2019 Code	2019 Actual
First day to file nomination papers with board secretary	Not more than 64 days before election	July 10	Not more than 71 days before election	Aug. 26
Last day to file nominations papers	Not less than 40 days before election	Aug. 3	Not less than 47 days before election	Sept. 19
Last day candidates may withdraw; last day to file objections	At least 35 days before election	Aug. 8	At least 42 days before election	Sept. 24
Election Day	Second Tuesday in September of odd-numbered years	Sept. 12	First Tuesday after the first Monday in November of odd-numbered years	Nov. 5
Election canvass – Tier I For school districts whose boundary lines are within one county.	Friday following the election	Sept. 15	First Monday or first Tuesday after the election, unless these fall on a legal holiday, then it pushes back a day.	Nov. 12 or 13* *First Monday after is a legal holiday, which pushes this back by one day.
Election canvass – Tier II For school districts whose boundary lines are within multiple counties.			Second Monday or Tuesday following Tier I canvass.	Nov. 18 or 19
Organizational meeting		First regular meeting following election and canvass		First regular meeting following election and canvass

Additional Factors and Implications for Members

Holdover/Transition: The law has provisions that clarify that terms of people elected in September 2015 expire in November 2019; people elected in September 2017 expire in November 2021. Board officers elected at the board annual meetings in September 2018 serve until their successors are elected at organizational meetings in 2019.

City Elections & Joint Office: School board members will now be elected on the same ballot as city offices. Previous provision that a person shall not be a candidate for more than one office to be filled at the same election, was amended to allow the exception that a person may be a candidate for a city office and school board office at the same election.

Polling/Election Procedures: The bill provides additional direction to County Auditors on polling, balloting and canvassing responsibilities. County auditors have asserted that the differing boundaries can be addressed using a technology solution.

Voter Turnout Snapshot: According to the Secretary of State's Office, in the last four school elections, the voter turnout average was 6.5 percent. In contrast, the average voter turnout for city elections in that same time frame was 21.3 percent. (As reported by Des Moines Register, April 2017). School board members will want to consider implications of campaigning in a combined election process.

Election Costs: Combining school board and city elections has been projected to save taxpayers money by eliminating the costs of elections in September. This may be true, however school districts will want to locally assess the impact on their own budgets, as they will now pay a portion of the combined election vs. solely for the school board election costs.

Special School Elections: HF 566 in 2017 and HF 692 in 2019 also made changes to the months for other school elections. Dates of special school elections are projected on the following page.

Special School Election Dates - Based on Enactment of HF 692

2019 - Odd Year	2020 – Even Year	2021 - Odd Year	2022 - Even Year	2023 - Odd Year
February – 1st Tuesday Feb. 5, 2019	March – 1st Tuesday March 3, 2020	March – 1st Tuesday March 2, 2021	March – 1st Tuesday March 1, 2022	March – 1st Tuesday March 7, 2023
April – 1st Tuesday April 2, 2019				
June - last Tuesday June 25, 2019				
September – 2nd Tuesday Sept. 10, 2019	September – 2nd Tuesday Sept. 8, 2020	September – 2nd Tuesday Sept. 14, 2021	September – 2nd Tuesday Sept. 13, 2022	September – 2nd Tuesday Sept. 12, 2023
November - 1st Tuesday after 1st Monday November 5, 2019		November - 1st Tuesday after 1st Monday November 2, 2021		November - 1st Tuesday after 1st Monday November 7, 2023