

Ohio School Boards Association

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Sixty percent of school tax issues approved Tuesday

COLUMBUS — Voters across Ohio approved 116 of 192 school tax issues during the Nov. 5 general election.

“The overall results for this election are positive, with a 60% passage rate,” said Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) Director of Legislative Services Damon Asbury. “It appears that our voting public understands that local support is a critical part of the school-funding equation.”

The passage rate for school issues on the ballot Tuesday is largely consistent with previous years. Ohio voters approved 105 of 192 school tax issues in November 2012, a passage rate of 55%. Fifty-one percent of school tax issues were approved in November 2011 and 62% were approved in November 2009, the last two off-year general elections.

Forty-two of 116 new school tax issues were approved on Tuesday, a passage rate of 36%. Seventy-four of 76 school tax renewal issues were approved, a passage rate of 97%.

Faced with funding challenges, declining revenues and a difficult economy, many school districts are forced to turn to their local communities for support. Ohio schools that struggled on the ballot will likely be forced to make difficult budget decisions, including new rounds of cuts.

“While there are signs the economy is improving in Ohio, many school districts in the state continue to experience funding challenges,” said OSBA Executive Director Richard Lewis. “In many cases, school districts have no choice but to turn to their communities to help maintain the high-quality instruction and services residents have come to expect.”

Some school tax issues approved on Tuesday will not qualify for the 10% and 2.5% rollback property taxpayers have experienced for decades. The state budget approved by lawmakers this summer eliminated the rollback for new and replacement levies beginning in November. The rollback was adopted in conjunction with the implementation of the income tax in the 1970s; some school leaders worry its elimination will make ballot issues harder to pass. The elimination of the rollback means more of the tax burden will be shifted from the state to local residents.

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Tuesday's election results are complete, but have not been officially certified by the Ohio secretary of state; recounts may be necessary in some cases. OSBA maintains a comprehensive online database on the outcome of school tax issues across the state. To access it, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/80621>.

For more information, contact OSBA.

In its 58th year, OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.