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Levy planning 2012 — no surprises here

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With everything that is happening in the state legislature, collective bargaining and Ohio's budget, it is more important than ever to carefully plan for the financial needs of your district. The superintendent, treasurer, school board and community must react to the state budget at the local level.

Next year (2012) is a presidential election year. Every four years, when there is a presidential primary, the timing for Ohio elections in the spring changes. There will not be February or May elections in 2012. Instead, there will be an election in March, at the same time as the presidential primary.

This is because Ohio Revised Code Section 3501.01(D) states: "A special election may be held only on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in February, May, August or November,

or on the day authorized by a particular municipal or county charter for the holding of a primary election, except that in any year in which a presidential primary election is held, no special election shall be held in February or May, except as authorized by a municipal or county charter, but may be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March."

For those of you looking ahead, it's very important to factor this into forecasting and planning for possible levy requests. The 2012 August and November elections will be held as usual. You may wish to ensure board members receive this information soon, and include it in community newsletters as appropriate.

The OSBA pocket calendar is in production now, and all the relevant dates are noted for you. Remember, election submission deadlines changed with Amended Substitute House Bill 48 (128th Gen. Assembly), effective July 2,

2010, making the dates to submit ballot issues to the county boards of elections earlier. At the federal level, changes were made to election deadlines to ensure that absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters had a genuine opportunity to register to vote and have their absentee ballots cast and counted. States were required to modify deadlines to comply with the new federal requirements.

This includes emergency, conversion, income tax, bond, continuing, replacement, permanent improvement, operating and phased-in levies. This bill changed the time to submit nominating petitions for boards of education to the board of elections to an earlier date as well.

Plan ahead and ensure no one in your district, especially you, is surprised by one less election and the earlier time frames for submitting ballot issues to the board of elections.