



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
TERRI LYNN LAND, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

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**Special Elections Conducted Under Michigan Election Law,  
MCL 168.641(4):  
Report to Senate Government Operations Committee and  
House Oversight, Elections and Ethics Committee**

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**STATUTORY REQUIREMENT**

This report is provided pursuant to Michigan election law, MCL 168.641(5):

“The secretary of state shall make a report to the house and senate committees that consider election issues by December 1, 2006. The secretary of state shall report about the special elections held under this subsection, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- “(a) The number of times a special election has been held.
- “(b) Which school districts have held special elections.
- “(c) Information about the success rate of the ballot question submitted at the special elections.
- “(d) Information about voter turnout, including the percentage and number of registered voters who voted in each special election.”

**BACKGROUND**

Michigan election law, MCL 168.641(4) as amended under PA 298 of 2003, provides that a local school district, intermediate school district or community college district may call a special election to submit a ballot question to “borrow money, increase a millage or establish a bond” if an initiative petition is filed with the county clerk. The special election may be conducted on one of the four “regular” election dates established under MCL 168.641(1) or on any Tuesday that falls more than 30 days before or 35 days after one of the four “regular” election dates. (Michigan’s four “regular” election dates fall on the fourth Tuesday in February and the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May, August and November.) The petitioning procedure became effective on January 1, 2005. MCL 168.641(4) further provides that the above referenced initiative petition must bear the signatures of at least 3,000 voters who reside within the district or, if a lesser amount, 10 percent of the district’s electors who voted in the last gubernatorial election. Any signatures dated more than 60 days prior to the date the petition is filed with the county clerk are invalid.

PA 71 of 2005 amended MCL 168.641 to modify the petitioning procedure as noted below. The new requirements became effective on September 22, 2005.

- The initiative petition must “clearly state the amount of the millage increase or the amount of the loan or bond sought and the purpose for the millage increase or the purpose for the loan or bond.”
- The proposed date of the special election must appear beneath the petition heading.
- The petition must be filed with the county clerk no later than 4:00 p.m. on the twelfth Tuesday prior to the proposed date of the special election. (Formerly, the petition-filing deadline elapsed on the tenth Tuesday prior to the proposed date of the special election.)

A school district may schedule no more than one special election under the initiative petitioning process each calendar year.

The creation of the initiative petitioning process did not affect the authority of school boards to place bond and millage proposals on the ballot by resolution when desired.

<b>SPECIAL ELECTION DATA</b>
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A total of 12 initiative petitions were filed under MCL 168.641(4) during the period commencing January 1, 2005 and ending December 1, 2006. As a result of the petition filings, a total of 12 bonding and millage proposals were presented on the ballot in 10 different school districts. Of the 12 proposals which were presented, 6 were adopted and 6 were defeated. (See detail below.)

**I. PARADISE – Whitefish Township Schools (Chippewa County)**

*Date of special election:* September 27, 2005.

*Nature of proposal:* Bonding proposal (see attachment A).

*Result of election:* Proposal defeated (122 “Yes”; 216”No”).

*Turnout:* 62.0% (545 registered voters; 338 participants).

**II. NORTH BRANCH Area School (Lapeer County)**

*Date of special election:* September 20, 2005

*Nature of proposal:* Bonding proposal (see attachment B).

*Result of special election:* Proposal adopted (1,229 “Yes”; 600 ”No”).

*Turnout:* 22.0% (8,303 registered voters; 1,829 participants).

**III. ADRIAN – Madison School District (Lenawee County)**

***Date of special election:*** September 26, 2006 (two proposals presented).

***Nature of proposal:*** Millage proposals (see attachments C and D).

***Result of special election:*** Proposal 1 adopted (136 "Yes"; 100 "No");  
Proposal 2 defeated (114 "Yes"; 121 "No").

***Turnout:*** 6.3% (3,749 registered voters; 236 participants).

#### **IV. ADDISON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (Lenawee County)**

***Date of special election:*** September 26, 2006.

***Nature of proposal:*** Millage proposal (see attachment E).

***Result of special election:*** Proposal adopted (417 "Yes"; 323 "No").

***Turnout:*** 21.3% (3,480 registered voters; 740 participants).

#### **V. BRITTON-MACON Area Schools (Lenawee County)**

***Date of special election:*** September 26, 2006.

***Nature of proposal:*** Bonding proposal (see attachment F).

***Result of special election:*** Proposal adopted (289 "Yes"; 252 "No").

***Turnout:*** 31.9% (1,695 registered voters; 541 participants).

#### **VI. BIG RAPIDS Public Schools (Mecosta County)**

***Date of special election:*** September 27, 2005 (two proposals presented).

***Nature of proposal:*** Bonding proposals (see attachments G and H).

***Result of special election:*** Proposal 1 defeated (1,136 "Yes"; 1,767 "No");  
Proposal 2 defeated (1,112 "Yes"; 1,920 "No").

***Turnout:*** 30.6% (9,909 registered voters; 3,032 participants).

#### **VII. SANFORD – Meridian Public Schools (Midland County)**

***Date of special election:*** September 26, 2006.

***Nature of proposal:*** Bonding proposal (see attachment I).

***Result of special election:*** Proposal adopted (1,010 "Yes"; 949 "No").

**Turnout:** 23.4% (8,388 registered voters; 1,959 participants).

**VIII. MONROE – Jefferson Schools (Monroe County)**

**Date of special election:** February 28, 2006.

**Nature of proposal:** Millage proposal (see attachment J).

**Result of special election:** Proposal defeated (590 “Yes”; 1,925 “No”).

**Turnout:** 27.0% (9,320 registered voters; 2,515 participants).

**IX. CARROLLTON Public Schools (Saginaw County)**

**Date of special election:** September 27, 2005.

**Nature of proposal:** Bonding proposal (see attachment K).

**Result of special election:** Proposal adopted (393 “Yes”; 297 “No”).

**Turnout:** 15.6% (4,410 registered voters; 690 participants).

**X. MARLETTE Community Schools (Sanilac County)**

**Date of special election:** September 19, 2006.

**Nature of proposal:** Bonding proposal (see attachment L).

**Result of special election:** Proposal adopted (466 “Yes”; 801 “No”).

**Turnout:** 26.4% (4,791 registered voters; 1,267 participants).