

NEWS RELEASE

Wayne Township Board of Education

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For Immediate Release

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Wayne Township Board of Education Moves Forward With Full-Day Kindergarten Public Vote and Supports Return of Public School Budget and Board of Education Election to Traditional April Date

(WAYNE,NJ)—The Wayne Township Board of Education passed a resolution to move forward with a plan to bring full-day kindergarten into the district for the 2016-2017 school year. With the same resolution, the trustees also supported returning the budget vote and election of school board members back to the traditional time period in April.

In January of 2012, Governor Christie signed [A-4394/S-3148](#), a law that gives school districts the right to bypass school budget votes if districts opt to move school board elections to November. There are over 500 New Jersey school districts that moved their school board elections to November. Although moving the election to November saves taxpayer's money by eliminating the cost of a separate April election, the law also eliminates the public budget vote provided that the school budget remains under the 2 percent tax levy cap. The elimination of the public school budget vote has been a constant criticism of this law.

School districts that moved their elections from April are required to maintain November elections for a minimum of four years. The Wayne Township Public Schools will complete this required four year cycle at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

In Wayne, the change to a November election eliminates the ability of the community to vote for a special question at this late point in the school year, thus making full-day kindergarten impossible for the upcoming school year with voter approval. Wayne Township Board Members voted unanimously to allow the

public two opportunities to decide on full-day Kindergarten during the 2015-2016 school year.

Wayne voters will have opportunities to bring full-day kindergarten into the district with a special question in November and again in the following April as a part of a public vote on the district budget, which will include full-day kindergarten. A successful vote at either election will allow the district to start a full-day program at no cost to parents starting in September of the 2016-2017 school year.

Superintendent Mark Toback and Business Administrator Juanita Petty shared a variety of financial limitations preventing the district from moving forward with an immediate plan to start full-day kindergarten in September of 2015 while staying within the two percent budget cap.

Approval of Full-Day Kindergarten Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: that the Board approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Wayne Township Board of Education (“Board”) recognizes the desire of a number of residents to establish a full-day kindergarten program for all eligible students;

WHEREAS, the Board conducted a feasibility study on a full-day kindergarten program and considered the report presented by Good2Great Educational Consultants, LLC at its meeting of February 19, 2015;

WHEREAS, the Board finds full-day kindergarten can offer more opportunities for child centered creative activities, opportunities for developing social skills and can help increase academic achievement, while reducing the probability that children will be retained in the early elementary grades;

WHEREAS, the cost associated with a full-day kindergarten program is estimated to exceed \$2.6 million dollars;

WHEREAS, the Board finds it is unable to fund the full-day kindergarten program within the 2% budget cap, without significant staff reductions, elimination of educational programs, increased class sizes, and reduction in extracurricular student activities, which collectively would greatly compromise the quality of education in Wayne Public Schools and negatively impact our students;

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that allowing the public to decide about the establishment of a full-day kindergarten program through a special question will allow for the greatest amount of public involvement in the decision making process;

RESOLVED, the Wayne Township Board of Education will place a question on the November 2015 ballot, asking voters to approve the additional funding for full-day kindergarten outside 2% tax levy cap; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wayne Township Board of Education directs the administration to notice the Wayne Township Municipal Clerk and Passaic County Board of Elections and take all action required to facilitate placing such Special Question on the November 2015 ballot, in accordance with law.

And, WHEREAS, should the Special Question fail to be approved, the Board will recommend to the new Board to be seated in January to move the school election back to April with voter approval for the budget to include the full-day Kindergarten program for the District.

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