

Keep School Board elections nonpartisan!

Amendment 1 in the 2024 General Election would "require members of a district school board to be elected in a partisan election rather than a nonpartisan election"



After careful study, the League of Women Voters recommends a **"NO"** vote to Amendment 1, so that school board elections remain nonpartisan.*

Should School Board Elections in Florida become Partisan or should they remain Nonpartisan?

Reasons given by advocates and sponsors to create partisan school board elections in Florida (A “YES” vote):

- **Transparency:** Some advocates say that school board races are already partisan, as a candidate's party affiliation is easily accessible. They believe that voters want to know, up front, a candidate's party affiliation and ideology.
- **Politicization of Education:** Some say that since education has already become highly politicized, partisan school board elections are a necessary outgrowth.
- **Alignment with Other Partisan Races:** Many other local offices are already partisan. Advocates question why school board races should be any different.

The League of Women Voters was founded more than 100 years ago to educate voters and to defend democracy. The League is nonpartisan and does not endorse or oppose any candidate for public office. However, after in-depth research, the League does take positions on issues of importance to voters.

Reasons for school boards to remain nonpartisan (A “NO” vote):

- **All registered voters, regardless of party affiliation can vote in nonpartisan elections.** Nearly 4,000,000 NPA voters in Florida would be excluded from voting for school board candidates in primaries if school board elections become partisan. In some circumstances, only voters of one party would be able to vote.
- **In nonpartisan elections, a candidate must obtain more than 50% to win. In partisan elections, a candidate can win with less than 50%.** Currently, if no candidate obtains more than 50% of the vote in the primary, there is a run-off in the general election with the top two candidates. If the elections are partisan, the candidate with the most votes in the primary, wins the primary, whether or not it is above 50%.
- **Nonpartisan boards may have more incentives for collaboration and compromise.** An effective school board requires collaboration and compromise for the greater good of the district and its students. Partisan members may make decisions based on the ‘party line’ and could increase political polarization, resulting in problems not solved and needs not met.
- **Nonpartisan elections maintain local control.** Partisan candidates may support their party’s agenda rather than using first-hand knowledge and experience of the local district’s needs, issues, and best interests to provide the appropriate guidance and leadership.
- **Partisan elections may create a politically charged school environment.** This may reduce applications from potentially exemplary board members, highly qualified teachers, effective school administrators, and community volunteers.

Local school board elections in Florida are currently nonpartisan. All registered voters regardless of party can vote in the primary and general election for the candidates of their choice.

Floridians will vote on an amendment to the State Constitution requiring district school board elections to be partisan. If passed by 60% of the voters, future ballots would list each candidate's political party. This would make school board elections part of Florida's closed primary system

For more detailed information, use this QR code or go to the website to read the LWVFL's White Paper on partisan school board elections. <https://tinyurl.com/LWVnonpartisan>



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