

Special Elections - Validation Demystified

The passage of Engrossed House Joint Resolution 4204 in November of 2007 changes the constitutional requirement as it relates to **school district** levy elections. A school district levy now requires a simple majority to pass. School District Bond issues still require a 60% majority to pass.

Understanding “Validation” or How Levies and Bonds Pass or Fail

Passing a levy or bond issue is a two step process. First the issue must validate (step 1) and secondly, must receive at least a 60% favorable majority (step 2). Validation requirements are different for Levy issues and Bond issues.

Validation is based on a percentage of the number of voters who voted within the district, school, fire, etc., in the previous November General Election. For example, the City of XYZ intends to put two issues on the May, 2008 special election ballot: A Maintenance and Operation Levy and a General Obligation Bond.

Requirements for Passing a Levy

Step 1:

A total of 48,812 people voted in the City of XYZ in the preceding General election; the amount required to validate the levy is 11,715 YES votes. This validation figure is calculated as follows: $48,812 \times .40$ (40% of total votes cast the previous General Election) $\times .60$ (60% of the 40%) = 11,715. In this election at least 11,715 of the people casting ballots in the special election must vote YES to validate. For example, if 11,626 vote YES, the Levy issue would fail because it did not validate. Do not proceed to Step 2.

Step 2:

If the Levy issue has validated, the next step is to determine if at least 60% of the votes cast for Proposition No. 1 are favorable. The City of XYZ voters approved Proposition No. 1 with 66.94% voting YES.

(Reference Washington State Constitution Article 7, Section 2) Note: For information on 106% Levy Lid Lifts and Benefit Charges refer to RCW 84.55.050 (Levy Lid Lifts) and RCW 51.18.050 (Benefit Charges).

Requirements for Passing a Bond

Step 1:

48,812 voters in the City of XYZ cast ballots in the preceding General election; the amount required to validate a bond is 19,525 TOTAL votes (Total of yes and no votes). This validation figure is calculated as follows: $48,812 \times .40$ (40% of total votes cast the previous General Election) = 19,525. If the total votes cast are 19,230 the Bond issue would fail because it did not validate. Do not proceed to Step 2.

Step 2:

If the Bond issue has validated, the next step is to determine if at least 60% of the votes cast for Bond Proposition No. 2 are favorable. Bonanza School District voters approved Bond Proposition No. 2 with 60.90% voting YES.

The Gold Rush County May 20th special election results for the City of XYZ are shown below. Both Propositions passed; Proposition No. 1, the M & O Levy and Proposition No. 2, the Bond issue.

May 20, 2008
Summary Report
Gold Rush County
Final Official Results

City of XYZ – Proposition No. 1

YES	14,622	66.94%
NO	7,220	33.06%

City of XYZ – Proposition No. 2

YES	13,289	60.90%
NO	8,533	39.10%