



Texas Association of School Boards

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Serving Texas Schools Since 1949

Timeline for Budget/Tax Rate Adoption and Voter-Approval Tax Rate Elections

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The dates below apply to school districts adopting their budgets and tax rates and conducting voter-approval tax rate elections (VATRE) in 2020. The year is included if the date changes each year. Bracketed dates are provided for reference only because the efficiency audit requirements do not apply given Governor Abbott’s March 13, 2020 disaster declaration.¹ For more information on the budget and tax rate adoption process and VATRE requirements, see TASB Legal Services’ [School District Budget and Tax Rate Adoption in 2020](#) and [School District Voter-Approval Tax Rate Elections in 2020](#).

- **April 30:** Deadline for chief appraiser to certify estimate of district’s taxable property values²
- **June 19:** Deadline for districts with July 1 fiscal year to prepare a proposed budget³
- **June 20:** Latest date for districts with July 1 fiscal year to publish Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and Proposed Tax Rate (Texas Comptroller’s Form 50-280)⁴
- **June 30:** Deadline to adopt budget for district with July 1 fiscal year
- **[July 3, 2020 (no later than 4 months before Election Day):** Select auditor for efficiency audit⁵]
- **July 18-August 1:** TEA data collection from districts regarding taxable property values and local exemption amounts for the preceding and current tax years⁶
- **July 25:** Deadline for chief appraiser to provide certified appraisal roll to district’s tax assessor; if by July 20 the appraisal review board has not approved the appraisal records, the chief appraiser must prepare and certify an *estimate* of taxable property value by July 25⁷
- **August 1:** Deadline for tax assessor to determine district property values and submit appraisal roll to the board⁸
- **August 5:** Deadline for TEA to issue preliminary maximum compressed tax rate (MCR) for each district⁹
- **10 Calendar Days after TEA approves preliminary MCR:**
 - Deadline to appeal preliminary MCR¹⁰
 - If not appealed, preliminary MCR becomes final¹¹
- **August 7, 2020:** Latest date to publish Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and Proposed Tax Rate (Texas Comptroller’s Form 50-280) *if conducting a VATRE*¹²

- **August 17, 2020 (78th day before Election Day):** Deadline to order an election on the November uniform election date; a district must adopt its budget and tax rate before ordering an election.¹³
- **August 20:** Deadline for district with September 1 fiscal year to prepare a proposed budget¹⁴
- **August 21:** Latest date for district with September 1 fiscal year to publish Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and Proposed Tax Rate (Texas Comptroller’s Form 50-280) *if not conducting a VATRE*¹⁵
- **August 31:**
 - Deadline to adopt budget for district with September 1 fiscal year
 - Deadline for TEA to issue final determination of MCR appeal¹⁶
- **September 30 or 60 days after receiving certified appraisal roll (whichever is later):** Deadline to adopt tax rate if not conducting a VATRE¹⁷
- **[October 3, 2020 (no later than three months after auditor appointment):** Efficiency audit completed¹⁸
- **[October 4, 2020 (no later than thirty days before Election Day):** Efficiency audit results posted on district website; before the VATRE, the board must hold an open meeting to discuss the results¹⁹
- **November 3, 2020 (First Tuesday after first Monday in November):** Uniform election date for VATRE²⁰

This document is continually updated, and references to online resources are hyperlinked, at tasb.org/services/legal-services/tasb-school-law-esource/business/documents/timeline-for-budget-tax-rate-adoption-and-vatre.pdf. For more information on this and other school law topics, visit TASB School Law eSource at schoollawesource.tasb.org.

This document is provided for educational purposes only and contains information to facilitate a general understanding of the law. It is not an exhaustive treatment of the law on this subject nor is it intended to substitute for the advice of an attorney. Consult with your own attorneys to apply these legal principles to specific fact situations.

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¹ Although Texas Education Code section 11.184(b) requires a board to conduct an efficiency audit before holding a VATRE, the board of a district located in an area declared a disaster area by the governor under Texas Government Code Chapter 418 may hold a VATRE during the two-year period following the date of the declaration *without* conducting an efficiency audit. Tex. Educ. Code § 11.184(b-1). On March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott [declared](#) a state of disaster for all counties in Texas as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Thus, during the two-year period following the March 13, 2020 disaster declaration,

districts are not required to conduct an efficiency audit prior to conducting a VATRE. When required, the efficiency audit must be conducted in accordance with [Legislative Budget Board guidelines](#).

2 Tex. Tax Code § 26.01(e).

3 Tex. Educ. Agency, [Financial Accountability System Resource Guide](#), (FASRG), *Module 1, Financial Accounting and Reporting*, section 1.1.3, p. 14, and *Module 4, Auditing*, section 4.6.4, Exhibit 1, p. 54 (2019).

4 Because a district likely will not have its maximum compressed tax rate (MCR) from TEA by this date, a district can use the statewide compression rate to calculate a maximum tier one tax rate and add the desired number of tier two pennies for purposes of publishing the required Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and Proposed Tax Rate. 45 Tex. Reg. 2410, 2412 (2020) (preamble to adoption of 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 61.1000) (Tex. Educ. Agency); see also Tex. Educ. Code § 44.004(h)-(i) (allowing a district with a July 1 fiscal year to publish notice based on the certified estimate of property values). According to TEA, the state compression rate for 2020 is 0.9164. Tex. Educ. Agency, *To the Administrator Addressed Letter Re: House Bill 3 (HB 3) Implementation: 2020 Tax Rate Changes* (Jan. 9, 2020).

5 Tex. Educ. Code § 11.184(d).

6 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 61.1000(c). TEA issued [correspondence](#) on June 18, 2020, regarding tax rate compression for the 2020-2021 school year. TEA's Tax Rate and MCR Template is available on its [State Funding webpage](#).

7 Tex. Tax Code § 26.01(a)-(a-1); see also Tex. Tax Code § 26.04(c-2) (if the assessor received a certified estimate, the taxing unit's designated officer or employee shall calculate the no-new-revenue tax rate and voter-approval tax rate using the certified estimate).

8 Tex. Tax Code § 26.04(a)-(b).

9 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 61.1000(d).

10 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 61.1000(g)(1).

11 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 61.1000(f).

12 Tex. Educ. Code § 44.004. A district with a July 1 fiscal year must, after receipt of the certified appraisal roll, publish a revised notice and hold another public meeting before the district may adopt a tax rate that exceeds the proposed rate or the district's voter-approval rate using the certified appraisal roll. Tex. Educ. Code § 44.004(i)(1)-(2).

13 Tex. Elec. Code § 3.005; Tex. Tax Code § 26.08. See TASB Legal Services' eSource [Elections Website](#) and the Secretary of State [Elections Division Website](#) for more information regarding election procedures and deadlines.

14 Tex. Educ. Agency, [Financial Accountability System Resource Guide](#), (FASRG), *Module 1, Financial Accounting and Reporting*, section 1.1.3, p. 14, and *Module 4, Auditing*, section 4.6.4, Exhibit 1, p. 54 (2019).

15 Tex. Educ. Code § 44.004.

16 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 61.1000(e).

17 Tex. Tax Code § 26.05(a).

18 Tex. Educ. Code § 11.184(g).

19 Tex. Educ. Code § 11.184(h).

20 Tex. Tax Code § 26.08(a); Tex. Elec. Code § 41.001.