

**DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE
100 NORTH SENATE AVENUE
IGC-N, ROOM N1058
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE REVIEW OF)
PROPOSED LANGUAGE AND ESTIMATED)
RATE CERTIFICATION FOR A BALLOT) No. 17-006-REF
QUESTION REGARDING WESTFIELD-)
WASHINGTON SCHOOL CORPORATION)**

**FINDINGS AND FINAL DETERMINATION ON PROPOSED QUESTION SUBMITTED
JANUARY 30, 2017**

1. Westfield-Washington School Corporation (“Corporation”) proposes to issue bonds or enter into a lease to finance the 2017 Capacity, Safety, Efficiency, Renovation and Technology Project, which includes the renovation of and improvements to Westfield Elementary Schools, Intermediate School, Middle School and High School, and which is estimated to cost not more than \$90,000,000 and is estimated to increase the property tax rate for debt service by a maximum of thirty and seventy-nine thousandths cents (\$0.3079) per \$100 of assessed valuation.
2. Under Indiana law, the voters in the area served by the Corporation will vote in a referendum to approve or deny borrowing for the project and raise property taxes to support it.
3. Indiana law governs the format and wording of the ballot question for the referendum. Indiana Code 6-1.1-20-3.6(c).
4. Under Indiana law, “the **following question shall** be submitted to the eligible voters at the election”:

“Shall _____ (insert the name of the political subdivision) issue bonds or enter into a lease to finance _____ (insert a brief description of the controlled project), which is estimated to cost not more than _____ (insert the total cost of the project) and is estimated to increase the property tax rate for debt service by _____ (insert increase in tax rate as determined by the department of local government finance)?”

Indiana Code 6-1.1-20-3.6(c) (emphasis added).

5. The ballot question then must contain three parts:

- a brief description of the project;
 - the estimated total project cost; and
 - the estimated tax rate increase for the project.
6. The law requires the Department of Local Government Finance (“Department”) to determine the estimate of the tax rate increase.
 7. The law also requires the Department to either approve the ballot language or recommend that it be modified to ensure that the description of the controlled project is accurate and not biased.
 8. On January 30, 2017, the Department received an e-mail from the Hamilton County Election Board containing the Corporation’s proposed question.
 9. The Board requested that the Department review this proposed question:

“Shall Westfield Washington Schools issue bonds or enter into a lease to finance the 2017 Capacity, Safety, Efficiency, Renovation and Technology Project which includes the renovation of and improvements to Westfield Elementary Schools, Intermediate School, Middle School and High School, which is estimated to cost not more than \$90,000,000 and is estimated to increase the property tax rate for debt service by a maximum of \$0.3079 per \$100 of assessed valuation?”

Determination of Tax Rate Increase

10. The Department estimates the tax rate increase in reliance on the Corporation’s proposed debt from the project, assessed valuation of the property in the area served by the Corporation, an amortization schedule submitted by the Corporation, and estimated miscellaneous revenues of approximately 6.3%. The Department certifies a rate of \$0.3079 per \$100 of assessed valuation, but notes that the actual rate will likely be closer to \$0.2808 per \$100 of assessed valuation after taking into account tax increment financing (“TIF”) assessed value, which would be subject to this referendum rate.

Accuracy and Bias

11. The Department must review the language of the public question to evaluate whether the description of the controlled project is accurate and is not biased against either a vote in favor of or a vote against the controlled project. The Department concludes that the description of the controlled project is not inaccurate and not biased against either a vote in favor of or a vote against the controlled project.

Final Determination

WHEREFORE, based on the above findings and applicable law, the Department finds that the proposed language is in compliance with 6-1.1-20-3.6(c) and approves the language as proposed. The Department certifies a rate of \$0.3079 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

Dated this 3rd day of February, 2017.

STATE OF INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

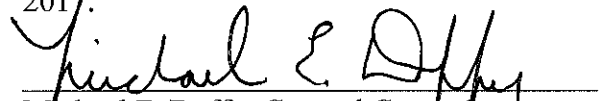


Courtney L. Schaafsma, Commissioner
Department of Local Government Finance

STATE OF INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

I, Michael E. Duffy, General Counsel for the Department of Local Government Finance, hereby certify that the above is an order of the Commissioner of the Department of Local Government Finance made this date in the above-entitled matter and that the Commissioner has personally signed the same under her statutory authority.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL of the Commissioner on this the 3rd day of February, 2017.



Michael E. Duffy, General Counsel
Department of Local Government Finance