

Information on **LOCAL AMENDMENT**

1 *Nov. 5, 2024 Referendum
that Attempts to Resolve
Longstanding Representation
Issues for Boards of Education
in St. Clair County*

Created and distributed for the purposes of informing the general public on a Nov. 5 referendum that could impact the governance of Pell City Schools' Board of Education



01.

Introduction

On Feb. 20, 2024, during the 2024 Session of the Alabama State Senate, District 11 Senator Lance Bell (R-Pell City) introduced **a bill that would correct both the governance of the Pell City School System and the voting population for the St. Clair County School System: SB 141**



State. Sen Lance Bell

02.

Overview

Enrolled as Alabama Act 2024-111, Local Amendment 1 establishes the process for **appointing ALL members of the Pell City Board of Education**. At least **two members** must be appointed **from the** county portion of the **Pell City Schools Attendance Zone**.



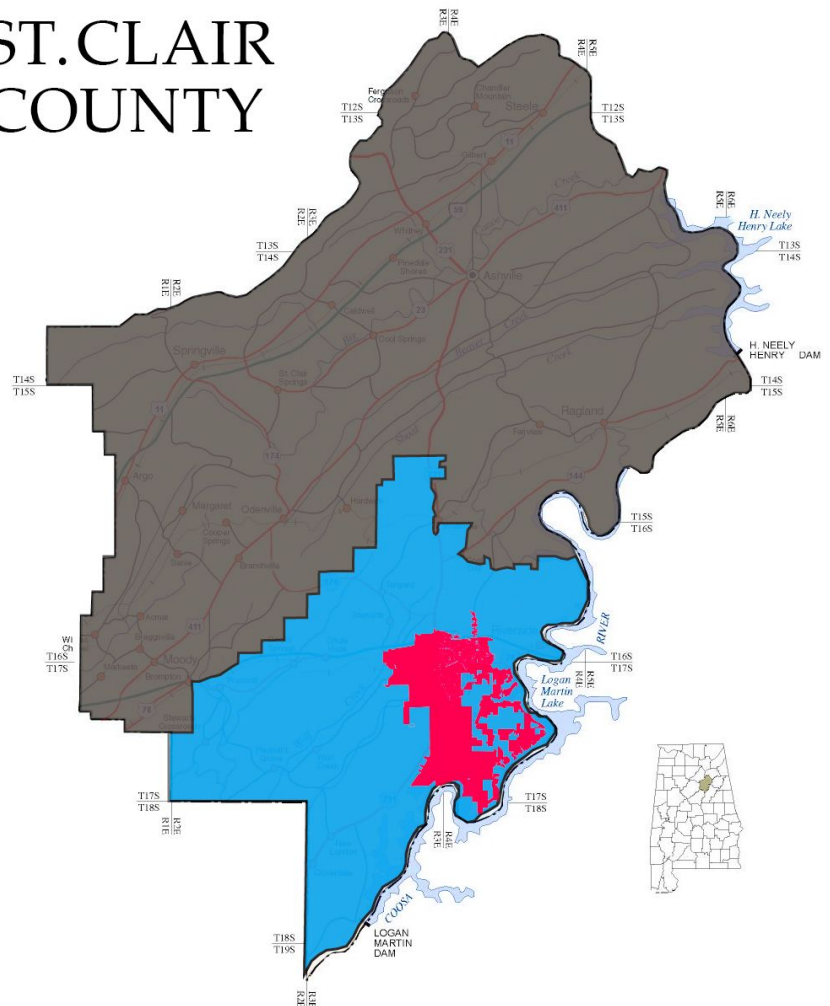
Overview

If the referendum passes, it sets out that St. Clair residents who live in the county portion of the **Pell City Schools Attendance Zone** **can no longer impact elections for the Superintendent and Board of Education for St. Clair County Schools.**

The area in **BLUE** represents the population whose children attend Pell City Schools but are able to vote in St. Clair County Schools elections.

The area in **RED** represents the population that selects the Board of Education for the Pell City School System.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY



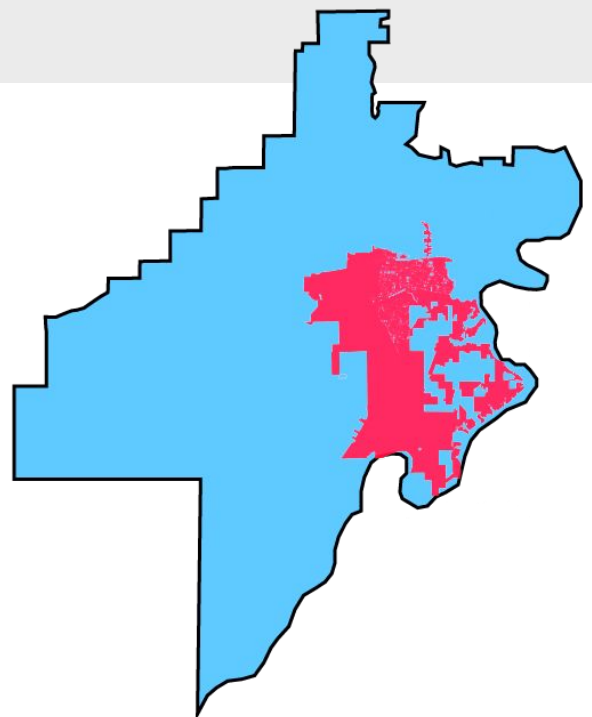
ST. CLAIR COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
PELL CITY SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE ZONE
CITY LIMITS, CITY OF PELL CITY

03.

Analysis

Approximately 53 percent of the students who attend Pell City Schools live outside the City Limits of Pell City. Since its formation in 1982, **these residents have never had voting representation on the Pell City Board of Education.**

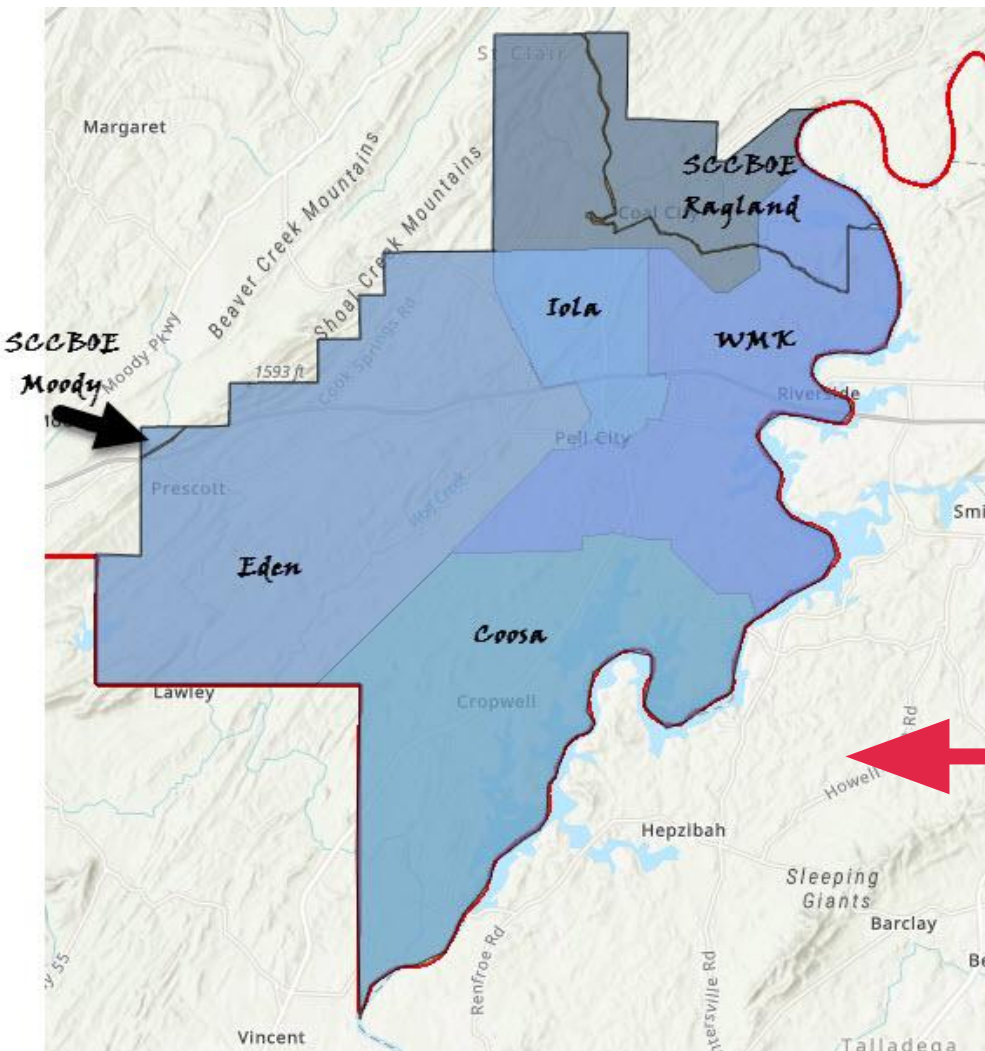
The approximately **14,000 residents of the Pell City Attendance Zone** who live outside City Limits cannot attend county schools, yet they are tasked with electing the Superintendent and Board of Education Members for SCCS.



Analysis

Residents of the Attendance Zone voted to approve a property tax increase in 2022. **These residents now pay property tax directly to Pell City Schools.**

Prior to the vote, the Board of Education promised representation to these residents. There are presently two Advisory Board members from the Attendance Zone



The **Pell City Board of Education** adopted this Attendance Zone and Tax District through Legislative action in 2022



Analysis

Also, for many years, the County Board has requested that residents of the Pell City Attendance Zone be given representation in Pell City - where their children attend school - and be excluded from voting in County School elections.

Local Amendment 1 was developed jointly by Sen. Bell, the Pell City Board of Education, the City of Pell City, and St. Clair County Schools to uphold these promises.



04.

Appointed

The Pell City Board of Education engaged the **Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham** to review and recommend a solution for fair representation for the Attendance Zone. RPC **recommended an appointed Board of Education.**



The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPC) is a long-standing organization (founded in 1963) with a proven track record of helping municipalities in the region thrive.

Appointed

In 2023, 12 Alabama systems had all schools earn an “A” on their State Report Cards. 10 are governed by **appointed Boards of Education** (*Alabama State Department of Education, alphabetical*)

1. **Arab City**
2. Cullman City
3. **Gulf Shores City**
4. Hartselle City
5. **Homewood City**
6. **Madison City**
7. **Mountain Brook City**
8. **Piedmont City**
9. **Satsuma City**
10. **Trussville City**
11. **Vestavia Hills City**
12. **Winfield City**

9 of the top-10 public high schools in Alabama are governed by **appointed Boards of Education** (*U.S. News & World Report*)

1. **Homewood**
2. **Mountain Brook**
3. **Vestavia**
4. **James Clemens**
5. **Spain Park**
6. **Hewitt-Trussville**
7. Oak Mountain
8. **Hoover**
9. **Bob Jones**
10. **Arab**

05.

Ballot Language

**Local Amendment 1 will read
as follows on ballots in St. Clair County**

“Relating to St. Clair County, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 2022, to specify that only the qualified electors of St. Clair County who are served by the St. Clair County Board of Education may vote for the county superintendent of education and the members of the county board of education; to change the Pell City Board of Education from an elected to an appointed board; to specify that the appointed members of the Pell City Board of Education shall be qualified electors who reside within the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District; and to specify that at least two members of the Pell City Board of Education shall reside within the county portion of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District.”

Proposed by Act 2024-111.

Yes() No()

Local Amendment 1

Appointing the members of the Pell City Board of Education is a **recommended solution to the 42-year-old problem of taxation without representation for residents of the Pell City Attendance Zone**, as it gives these residents the right to serve the schools their children attend.

