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St. Paul To Weigh 'Ranked Choice' Voting Option

MINNEAPOLIS (WCCO) — Saint Paul voters go to the polls Wednesday. On the ballot they'll decide a mayor, school board members and an "instant runoff voting" amendment.

It's a [lengthy question](#) on the ballot asking about a new method of elections. It would eliminate primaries. Minneapolis voters already approved the new system in 2006 and will be using it Wednesday.

In the system, voters instead rank candidates by choice: first, second, third and so on. If a candidate gets more than 50 percent of "first choice" votes, they win. If nobody reaches that number, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and ballots cast for them are instead counted using that voter's second choice.

A "yes" vote Wednesday will change the system, but only if it gets a majority.

"We're probably not going to have a high turnout for this election because the incumbent mayor looks pretty comfortable," said [Larry Jacobs](#) of the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota, "And I also think we'll see a drop-off in those voting for this amendment."

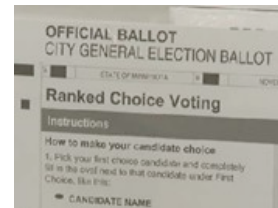
If a voter leaves the question blank, the question will not be counted. It will not be an automatic "no" vote, as was the case with a state constitution amendment approved in 2008 to fund the arts and environmental causes with a sales tax increase of 0.375 percent.

To learn more about the amendment, visit websites by the [Better Ballot Campaign](#) and the [No Bad Ballots](#) group.



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