

PRESS RELEASE

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County OKs Pomona Unified Shift to Five Trustee Voting Areas from At-large Election System

POMONA – The Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization on April 8 approved the Pomona Unified School District’s shift to a trustee-area voting system, adopting a map that divides the District into five voting areas each responsible for electing a single board member.

The shift mirrors efforts to drop at-large election systems in other California communities as a way of ensuring racial and ethnic minorities possess a voice in local government, as required under the 2001 California Voting Rights Act.

“We are extraordinarily pleased with the County Committee’s decision,” said PUSD Superintendent Richard Martinez. “Pomona Unified has a rich tradition of representing our diverse community; these trustee voting areas will ensure the voices of our entire community continue to play a role in governing our District.”

The County Committee decision comes on the heels of a series of public meetings in which residents were able to share their perspectives about the switch. The county held a public hearing in Pomona on March 18. Pomona Unified held five outreach meetings and a student meeting before taking action on March 10.

“It was critical that we hear as much as possible from the community as we approached this change,” PUSD Board President Andrew Wong said. “We were heartened to hear from so many residents who praised how well our board represents Pomona. We believe these new trustee areas will ensure the best possible future for our students and our community.”

Those community comments helped shape four draft voting maps drawn by professional demographer Doug Johnson and submitted by Pomona Unified to the county for consideration.

The County Committee chose Draft Plan 1, which splits the community into five areas of about 33,000 residents each. Citizen voting age populations range from 30 to 62 percent Latinos and 8 to 28 percent Asian Americans. The areas also range in size based on population density, with the smallest lying in east-central Pomona and the largest encompassing parts of southwest Pomona and Diamond Bar.

The final map will be delivered to the Los Angeles County Registrar's Office by the beginning of May for full implementation.

Meanwhile, the District is seeking permission from the California Department of Education to hold its first trustee-area election in November – when it would have held its next at-large election. The CDE is expected to make its decision next month.

Two trustee area seats will likely come up for vote at that time; the remaining seats will come before voters in November 2017.

PHOTO CAPTION:

VOTINGMAP: The Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization on April 8 adopted Pomona Unified School District's Draft Plan 1, which divides the district into five voting areas each with roughly 33,000 residents. The voting areas, each responsible for electing a single member of the board, range in size based on population density.

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