

VENTURA COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION
SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, April 4, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Link: <https://zoom.us/j/94213374020>
Call in: US: +1 669 900 6833

Briggs Elementary School District, 12465 Foothill Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060
Mesa Union School District, 3901 Mesa School Road, Somis, CA 93066
Pleasant Valley School District, 600 Temple Ave., Camarillo, CA 93010

MINUTES

The Secretary to the Ventura County Committee on School District Organization will preside over the meeting until the Chair has been elected.

1. Call to order

The meeting of the Ventura County Committee on School District Organization was called to order by Chairperson Charles Weis, at 4:01 p.m.

2. Roll call and acknowledgement of guests

The following members of the Ventura County Committee on School District Organization were in attendance:

Kathi Smith, representing Supervisorial District # 1
Pat Phelps, representing Supervisorial District # 2
Denise Helfstein, representing Supervisorial District # 2
Barbara Wagner, representing Supervisorial District # 3
Terri Lisagor, representing Supervisorial District # 3
Robin Freeman, representing Supervisorial District # 5
Charles Weis, representing Supervisorial District # 5
Ramon Flores, Member-at-Large

Also in attendance:

*Misty Key, Secretary to the VCCSDO, and Deputy Superintendent,
Fiscal and Administrative Services, Ventura County Office of Education*
Debbie Cuevas, Superintendent, Briggs School District
Dr. Raul Ramirez, Superintendent, Mesa Union Elementary School District
Dr. Danielle Cortes, Superintendent, Pleasant Valley School District
Tami Peterson, Chief Business Official, Ventura County Schools Business Services Authority
Chris Johnston, Chief Business Official, Pleasant Valley School District
David Lopez, Cooperative Strategies, LLC
David Soldani, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Rudd and Romo
Todd Robbins, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Rudd and Romo
Julie Judd, Chief Technology Officer, Ventura County Office of Education
Cathy Samuel, Executive Assistant, Ventura County Office of Education

3. **Approval of Resolution 22-07, Holding Virtual Board Meetings in accordance with Assembly Bill 361**

Chairperson Charles Weis stated the next item on the agenda is the approval of Resolution 22-07, holding virtual Board meetings in accordance with Assembly Bill 361. Resolution 22-07 says that any meetings held via teleconference pursuant to this Resolution shall comply with all requirements of Government Code section 54953(e)(2), including, but not limited to, Government Code 54953(e)(2)(E), which provides: "The legislative body shall not require public comments to be submitted in advance of the meeting and must provide an opportunity for the public to address the legislative body and offer comment in real time. This will exist for no more than thirty (30) days from the date of this Resolution.

Pat Phelps made a motion to approve Resolution No 22-07 holding virtual meetings in accordance with Assembly Bill 361. The motion was seconded by Terri Lisagor.

No discussion by members of the County Committee or by members of the audience.

Chairperson Charles Weis took roll call vote to approve Resolution 22-07. Motion passed unanimously.

	AYES	ABSTAIN	NOES	ABSENT
<i>Kathi Smith</i>	X			
<i>Mindee Stekkinger</i>				X
<i>Patricia Phelps</i>	X			
<i>Denise Helfstein</i>	X			
<i>Barbara Wagner</i>	X			
<i>Terri Lisagor</i>	X			
<i>Arleigh Kidd</i>				X
<i>Robert Perez</i>				X
<i>Robin Freeman</i>	X			
<i>Charles Weis</i>	X			
<i>Ramon Flores</i>	X			

3.a **Review and Approval of February 10, 2022, minutes**

Terri Lisagor made a motion to approve the February 10, 2022, minutes. The motion was seconded by Barbara Wagner.

No discussion by members of the County Committee or by members of the audience.

Chairperson Charles Weis took roll call vote to approve the County Committee February 10, 2022, minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

	AYES	ABSTAIN	NOES	ABSENT
<i>Kathi Smith</i>	X			
<i>Mindee Stekkinger</i>				X
<i>Patricia Phelps</i>	X			
<i>Denise Helfstein</i>	X			
<i>Barbara Wagner</i>	X			
<i>Terri Lisagor</i>	X			
<i>Arleigh Kidd</i>				X
<i>Robert Perez</i>				X
<i>Robin Freeman</i>	X			
<i>Charles Weis</i>	X			
<i>Ramon Flores</i>	X			

4. **Public Comments**

Chairperson Charles Weis read the process for making comments online or by phone.

There were no public comments.

5. **Information about Briggs School District's Desired Change in Election**

Misty Key welcomed and introduced the vendor partners, District Superintendents and Chief Business Officials. She thanked them for their time and energy put forth into preparing the presentations for the meeting.

David Lopez from Cooperative Strategies said that Briggs is a school district with about 500 students. This district took the transition from an at large election system to a by-trustee area election system voluntary and engaged in an open process throughout. He showed the District Demographics – 2020 Census map which shows a total population of 3,092 people and a map of the Citizen Voting Age Population Estimates indicates the largest minority group is Hispanic/Latino.

Mr. Lopez gave an overview of the trustee area process:

- November 10, 2021, Board meeting: First pre-map public hearing and presentation
- November 17, 2021, Special Board meeting: Second pre-map public hearing and presentation
- December 13, 2021, Board meeting: First public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- January 12, 2022, Board meeting: Second public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- February 9, 2022, Board meeting: Third public hearing on trustee area scenarios
 - Board selection of trustee area map
 - Board consideration of change in election method
- March 9, 2022, Board meeting: Fourth public hearing on trustee area scenarios
 - Board selection of trustee area map
 - Board consideration of change in election method
- April 4, 2022, County Committee on School District Organization holds a public hearing and considers approval of change in election method and trustee area map
- November 8, 2022, first election held utilizing trustee areas

Mr. Lopez explained the considerations in creating the trustee areas:

- Each area shall contain nearly equal number of inhabitants
- Drawn to comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act
- Compact and contiguous, as much as possible
- Respect communities of interest, as much as possible
- Follow man-made and natural geographic features, as much as possible
- Respect incumbency, if possible
- Other local considerations (i.e., school boundaries, locations of school sites)

The district posted public notices as required. The electronic communication posted on their website was user friendly.

There were a number of maps discussed over the process. Briggs School District settled on four maps. The Board selected Scenario 4. Each trustee has their own area except for Area 2 which will be up for election in 2022.

There are 2 trustees in Area 1 with one falling off and the other one remaining at large until 2024. The demographics of Scenario 4 has a 7.1% variance which is well within the legal limits. There are five Hispanic CVAP majorities created in this process which balanced the population with an ideal size of 618.

Mr. Lopez said the Briggs School District pursued a very deliberate, methodical process. They were very transparent. Ample opportunities were provided for the community's input. Many factors were considered.

David Soldani explained SB 442 allows County Committee to make the determination not hold a local election to change methodology.

Terri Lisagor noted there are two trustees currently in Area 1 on the Scenario 4 map. She asked if one will be eliminated. David Lopez said one would fall off in 2022. Ms. Lisagor asked if there was any problem with that trustee accepting this. The answer was no.

Chairperson Charles Weis said the CVAP that sets the number of voters is dramatically different among the five trustee areas. Mr. Lopez said that total population is the key for the balance. The variance cannot be more than 10%. There are sometimes very diverse variances in the estimated voting age population. This is typical across California and various counties and complies with the law.

6. Public Hearing

Chairperson Charles Weis opened the public hearing at 4:19 p.m. on the Briggs School District's desired change in election process from an at-large electoral process to a by-trustee area election process, pursuant to Education Code Section §5019(c)(1). Chairperson Charles Weis asked if there were any public comments. There were none. He closed the public hearing at 4:20 p.m.

7. Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Kathi Smith to adopt County Committee resolution 22-08 approving the establishment of trustee areas and changing the method of election to trustee area in the Briggs School District. Motion was seconded by Terri Lisagor.

Chairperson Charles Weis took roll call vote to approve the County Committee Resolution 22-08. Motion passed unanimously.

	AYES	ABSTAIN	NOES	ABSENT
<i>Kathi Smith</i>	X			
<i>Mindee Stekkinger</i>				X
<i>Patricia Phelps</i>	X			
<i>Denise Helfstein</i>	X			
<i>Barbara Wagner</i>	X			
<i>Terri Lisagor</i>	X			
<i>Arleigh Kidd</i>				X
<i>Robert Perez</i>				X
<i>Robin Freeman</i>	X			
<i>Charles Weis</i>	X			
<i>Ramon Flores</i>	X			

8. Information regarding Mesa Union School District's Desired Change in Election

David Lopez said Mesa Union Elementary School District has been in operation since 1939 and serves TK-8. The school district undertook the transition from an at-large election system to a by-trustee area election system voluntarily and engaged in an open process to create voting areas that ensured fair representation for all residents. He presented District Demographics – 2020 Census map which shows a

total population of 3,628 people and a map of the Citizen Voting Age Population Estimates that indicates the largest minority group is Hispanic/Latino. Unlike some surrounding areas that was about 27% of the population and the distribution was primarily along the highway.

Mr. Lopez gave an overview of the trustee area process:

- October 19, 2021, Board meeting: First pre-map public hearing and presentation
- November 16, 2021, Board meeting: Second pre-map public hearing
- November 17, 2021-December 3, 2021, Preparation of draft trustee area scenarios
- December 14, 2021, Board meeting: First public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- January 18, 2022, Board meeting: Second public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- February 15, 2022, Board meeting Third public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- March 15, 2022, Board meeting: Fourth public hearing on trustee area scenarios
 - Board selection of trustee area map
 - Board consideration of change in election method
- April 4, 2022, County Committee on School District Organization holds a public hearing and considers approval of change in election method and trustee area map.
- April 2022, Cooperative Strategies sends final trustee area map to the County Registrar of Voter
- November 8, 2022, first election utilizing trustee area

The Board was compliant with Section 10010 of the elections code. The two pre-map public hearings occurred on October 19, 2021, and November 16, 2021. All the post map hearings occurred after December 14, 2021.

Mr. Lopez explained the considerations in creating the trustee areas:

- Each area shall contain nearly equal number of inhabitants
- Drawn to comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act
- Compact and contiguous, as much as possible
- Respect communities of interest, as much as possible
- Follow man-made and natural geographic features, as much as possible
- Respect incumbency, if possible
- Other local considerations (i.e., school boundaries, locations of school sites)

There were a number of map scenarios initially, Scenarios 1, 2 and 3. They made modifications to Scenarios 4, 5 and 6. These came with public and Board comments. They wanted to ensure their community was represented. There were public notices posted in a timely fashion. There was electronic communication on the school district's website. There was ample information and ample chance for community input. At the March 14, 2022, Board meeting the Board selected Scenario 4. The demographics of Scenario 4 has a 6.9% variance. Trustee Area 1 has a Hispanic majority. The ideal size is 726 persons. They also took a very open, deliberate, transparent, and methodical process.

Chairperson Charles Weis asked for clarification that they still don't need an election waiver? David Lopez said that is correct.

Dr. Ramon Flores inquired about slide 11 and asked if each trustee is going to have their own area? David Lopez said there are two trustees in Area 5, one term expires in 2022 and the other expires in 2024. The trustee whose term will expire in 2022 will fall off. There will be elections in trustee area 1 which has no incumbents.

9. Public Hearing

Chairperson Charles Weis opened the public hearing at 4:26 p.m. on the Mesa Union Elementary School District's desired change in election process from an at-large electoral process to a by-trustee area election process, pursuant to Education Code Section §5019(c)(1). Chairperson Charles Weis asked if there were any public comments. There were none. He closed the public hearing at 4:27 p.m.

10. Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Pat Phelps to adopt County Committee Resolution 22-09 approving the establishment of trustee areas and changing the method of election to a by-trustee area election process in the Mesa Union Elementary School District. Motion was seconded by Terri Lisagor.

Dr. Raul Ramirez said he was very thankful for the partners who worked very diligently with the Mesa Union Elementary School District and took the trustees input into account. Dr. Ramirez feels the representation on the Board will be balanced moving forward. He is very grateful to the Board. He also thanked the County Committee.

Chairperson Charles Weis took roll call vote to approve the County Committee Resolution 22-09. Motion passed unanimously.

	AYES	ABSTAIN	NOES	ABSENT
<i>Kathi Smith</i>	X			
<i>Mindee Stekkinger</i>				X
<i>Patricia Phelps</i>	X			
<i>Denise Helfstein</i>	X			
<i>Barbara Wagner</i>	X			
<i>Terri Lisagor</i>	X			
<i>Arleigh Kidd</i>				X
<i>Robert Perez</i>				X
<i>Robin Freeman</i>	X			
<i>Charles Weis</i>	X			
<i>Ramon Flores</i>	X			

11. Information regarding Pleasant Valley School District's Desired Change in Election

David Lopez said the Pleasant Valley School District dates back to 1868. The district serves grades TK-8 with eleven school sites. The school district undertook the transition from an at-large election system to a by-trustee area election system in response to a demand letter received and subsequently engaged in an open process to create voting areas that ensured fair representation for all residents. They had more than the four required meetings. They used a software program which allowed members of their community to draw maps. Mr. Lopez showed the District Demographics – 2020 Census map which shows a total population of 80,882. Pleasant Valley School District serves large portions of Camarillo and unincorporated portions of Ventura County. The largest distribution of the protected class is Hispanic/Latino with about 22.5% of the Citizen Voting Age Population Estimate. There wasn't a particularly concentrated portion where one can potentially draw an area that is a majority. Rather, they were spread throughout the district much like their other residents were. The Board and community were very engaging. Staff was very helpful and engaging.

They had five meetings. One meeting became an introductory meeting to go over the conceptual maps that were drawn up.

Mr. Lopez gave an overview of the trustee area process:

- October 21, 2021, Board meeting: First pre-map public hearing and presentation
- November 18, 2021, Board meeting: Second pre-map public hearing

- December 13, 2021, Board meeting: Introduction of conceptual maps
- January 20, 2022, Board meeting; First public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- February 10, 2022, Board meeting: Second public hearing on trustee area scenarios
- April 4, 2022, County Committee on School District Organization holds a public hearing and considers approval of change in election method and trustee area map
- November 8, 2022, first election held utilizing trustee areas

The Board was compliant with Section 10010 of the elections code. The two pre-map public hearings occurred on October 21, 2021, and November 18, 2021. The other three meetings were from December 2021 through February 2022. Notices were posted in advance for all the hearings that were held, and the maps were posted on a timely basis.

Mr. Lopez explained the considerations in creating the trustee areas:

- Each area shall contain nearly equal number of inhabitants
- Drawn to comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act
- Compact and contiguous, as much as possible
- Respect communities of interest, as much as possible
- Follow man-made and natural geographic features, as much as possible
- Respect incumbency, if possible
- Other local considerations (i.e., school boundaries, locations of school sites)

There were a number of map scenarios over the process. The Board wanted to see some other city boundary designations and where parks were located to get a sense of the community. Scenarios 1, 2 and 3 were the first initial scenarios that played out. The number of school sites was a big consideration. The school sites are listed on the maps as well. Next were Scenario 3a and 3b. There was also a public submission as a result of the software tool the district engaged in. They had one scenario where the public drew a map. They felt it was compliant with CVRA, so they put it up for adoption. All of these scenarios were drawn up and discussed. There was ample community outreach as well as public notices in newspaper articles. The school district website had multiple maps and presentations on the process. The website was very immaculate with the different postings and information that was accessible. On February 10, 2022, the Board chose Scenario 3b. The demographics of Scenario 3b has a 4.6% variance. Each trustee's area is pretty balanced. An ideal size of 16,176. The highest Hispanic/Latino areas is Trustee Area 5. Overall, a very good distribution of the population.

The school district took a very transparent, methodical and deliberate process. There were a number of opportunities for the community to offer feedback.

Chairperson Charles Weis commented that there are two trustees in Area 1, one trustee's term expires in 2022 and the other one expires in 2024. He asked if the trustee whose term expires in 2024 will prevail and the trustee whose term expires in 2022 will have to step off of the Board. Chairperson Charles Weis commented there will be no trustee in Area 5 until 2024.

Todd Robbins explained that Trustee Areas 1, 2 and 3 will be up for election in 2022. Trustee Areas 4 and 5 will be up for election in 2024. Trustee Area 1 will have two Board members until 2024. Area 5 will remain vacant until 2024.

12. **Public Hearing**

Chairperson Charles Weis opened the public hearing at 4:47 p.m. on the Pleasant Valley School District's desired change in election process from an at-large electoral process to a by-trustee area election process,

pursuant to Education Code Section §5019(c)(1). Chairperson Charles Weis asked if there were any public comments. There were none. He closed the public hearing at 4:48 p.m.

13. Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Kathi Smith to adopt County Committee Resolution 22-10 approving the establishment of trustee areas and changing the method of election to a by-trustee area election process in the Pleasant Valley School District. Motion was seconded by Terri Lisagor.

Dr. Danielle Cortes said it was a very regal motion made by Trustee Fitzgerald and unanimous Board vote to vote himself off of the Board out of that seat in 2024. There are two at-large seats on the Board through 2024. Dr. Cortes said Area 5 will be well cared for.

Chairperson Charles Weis took roll call vote to approve the County Committee Resolution 22-10. Motion passed Unanimously.

	AYES	ABSTAIN	NOES	ABSENT
<i>Kathi Smith</i>	X			
<i>Mindee Stekkinger</i>				X
<i>Patricia Phelps</i>	X			
<i>Denise Helfstein</i>	X			
<i>Barbara Wagner</i>	X			
<i>Terri Lisagor</i>	X			
<i>Arleigh Kidd</i>				X
<i>Robert Perez</i>				X
<i>Robin Freeman</i>	X			
<i>Charles Weis</i>	X			
<i>Ramon Flores</i>	X			

14. Information on future meetings

Misty Key thanked everyone for their time. Ms. Key said the Rio School District is in the process of changing election methodologies and expect to be completed by the end of April 2022. They are requesting a County Committee meeting in May 2022.

15. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.