



Election Process for GUHSD School Board

GUHSD Trustee Election Areas Being Drawn



Members of the Board of Trustees of the Grossmont Union High School District are currently elected in “at-large” elections in which “each member of the Governing Board is elected by the registered voters of the entire district . . . ,” At-large electoral systems are subject to challenge under the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 (CVRA).

On November 18, 2015, the District received a letter contending that the District’s at-large electoral system violates the CVRA, threatening litigation if the District declined to adopt by-trustee area elections for use in November 2016 and thereafter. Though the letter was not accompanied by any evidence to support the claim of a violation, and though the District disputes the idea that its electoral system violates the Act, the Board of Trustees nevertheless concluded that the public interest would be better served by avoiding the expense of unnecessary litigation.

- At its regular meeting on December 10, 2015, the Board unanimously adopted a motion to initiate the process of moving to trustee areas, instructing the Superintendent to submit a resolution to the Board to formalize that process, and authorizing the Superintendent to retain an experienced demographer to assist the District in developing trustee areas.
- At its regular meeting on January 14, 2016, the Board heard presentations from its independent special counsel and demographic consultant regarding CVRA and the districting process, and then adopted resolutions to initiate the process of adopting trustee area elections; and adopting a series of criteria to guide the drawing of the trustee area plan.
- On January 22, 2016, the District made public on its website the demographic consultant’s three possible trustee area maps. On January 26 and February 11, the Board conducted duly-noticed public hearings on the three draft trustee area plans. It will hold a third public hearing on February 25, 2016, at 4:00 p.m. Following the February 25 public hearing, the Board anticipates taking action to adopt a preferred trustee area plan.
- On February 25, the Board of Trustees will also hold a public hearing on a proposal to seek a waiver from the State Board of Education of the formal requirement that the change of a school district’s electoral system be submitted to the voters for approval before it may be implemented. The election requirement, if not waived, would prevent GUHSD from implementing its new trustee areas for November 2016, thereby subjecting the District to the very litigation it seeks to avoid. For this reason, the State Board has granted hundreds of waivers of this requirement over the past few years.

Additional information regarding this process, including the demographer’s proposed maps and accompanying demographics, is available on the GUHSD website at:

<https://goo.gl/WVfKrX>