Committee almost ready to redraw supervisor districts in San Mateo County

By Bonnie Eslinger

Daily News Staff Writer

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A committee formed to review the boundaries of San Mateo County's five supervisorial districts next month will consider redrawing them to ensure the districts represent roughly the same number of people and don't weaken the voting power of any ethnic or racial group.

The redistricting effort is driven by a lawsuit settlement reached in February with a group of Asian and Latino voters who claimed the county's at-large system for electing supervisors marginalizes them. In November, 58.7 percent of voters approved ditching that system in favor of one that elects supervisors by district and is used by every other county in California.

To educate the public about redistricting and solicit comments, the county held four public meetings this month in four of the five districts. About 15 to 20 people showed up for the first two meetings, in San Mateo and Half Moon Bay, and about 60 people attended the session in Daly City, according to county spokesman Marshall Wilson.

About 35 people went to Tuesday's redistricting meeting in East Palo Alto. Julio Garcia, an East Palo Alto resident, said he has seen only one flier in the community about the meetings.

"We're very concerned about the lack of outreach to the community," Garcia said. "This is very serious for us."

Annie Loya, an East Palo Alto resident and an alternate on the nine-member committee that includes elected representatives as well as residents from each district, said the stakes are high.
"What happens if the community doesn’t get involved in this process, what happens if the lines are drawn badly, and what does badly mean?" Loya asked.

Douglas Johnson, president of the county-commissioned National Demographics Corp., said boundary lines determine voting power.

"Ninety-five percent of the time a community wants to be kept together so it has as much voting power in the election for that one supervisor as possible and thus, theoretically, as much influence with that one supervisor as possible," he said.

At the start of Tuesday’s meeting, Robert Rubin, one of the attorneys who sued the county on the basis that its at-large system violated the California Voting Rights Act, said he is disturbed that the county was introducing the redistricting process at the meetings without mentioning the lawsuit.

"The county was brought kicking and screaming to the table only because of the lawsuit," Rubin said.

The county has insisted that the at-large system does not discriminate against minority voters and argued that it's preferable because it forces the supervisors to be accountable to all county residents, not just those in their districts.

Near the end of the 90-minute meeting, Supervisor Adrienne Tissier encouraged attendees to spread the word about the redistricting effort.

She warned that those who "scream louder than others" tend to have more influence. "If you squeeze the balloon here, it's got to come out somewhere else," she said.

At the meeting in Daly City, residents pleaded for the committee not to divide the city. "We don't even know where they got that rumor," Tissier said. "We have drawn no maps."

Ultimately, Tissier said, the committee doesn't "have to change a thing if we don't want to." She said the Board of Supervisors will have final say after receiving the committee’s recommendations.

Suggested boundary changes will be presented to the board in early fall and the district maps could be adopted by October or November, according to Johnson.

The next Supervisorial District Lines Advisory Committee meeting will be Thursday, July 11, at 6:30 p.m. in the Millbrae Community Center, 477 Lincoln Circle.

Email Bonnie Eslinger at beslinger@dailynewsgroup.com; follow her at twitter.com/bonnieeslinger.
Anaheim City Council approves controversial voting plan

By Paloma Esquivel

9:49 PM PDT, July 2, 2013

A sharply divided Anaheim City Council on Tuesday night voted to change the way its members are elected.

Proponents say the new at-large voting proposal with residency requirements will ensure that the city’s diverse population is well-represented. But many who called for reforms contend that the plan falls short of moving toward fair representation for Latinos in city government.

Lack of representation was a focus of protests that rocked the city last year following the officer-involved shooting of two Latino men.

Political representation is also the subject of a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of Latino residents. The suit alleges that the practice of electing council members at large violates the California Voting Rights Act.

Latinos make up nearly 53% of the city’s population but less than half of eligible voters. Only a few Latinos have ever been elected to the City Council. The city was incorporated in 1876.

Anaheim is the largest city in California that still elects leaders at large.

The measure approved in a 3-2 vote Tuesday followed months of study and debate. It maintains at-large voting but imposes residency requirements.

The council also decided to ask voters to permanently ratify the at-large measure and to decide whether to expand the number of council members from four to six, with the mayor elected at large. A measure that would have asked voters to decide whether the city should move toward a voting district system in which each district elects its own members was defeated 2 to 3.

Anaheim Mayor Tom Tait, who has advocated for voting districts, said the at-large change “confuses the issue.”

“I’m very disappointed to see this will be on the ballot,” he said.

Councilwoman Kris Murray, who proposed the successful measure, said voting districts would divide the city.
Murray lives in affluent Anaheim Hills, but added that she takes being an at large representative seriously. She said she focuses much of her attention beyond her own neighborhood, including the area known in Anaheim as the flatlands.

She noted work she has done in the Ponderosa area of Anaheim, in particular. During budget talks, she advocated an infusion of funds to improve and build parks and community spaces in those areas, and has worked with a computer company to build a computer lab for community use.

“I don’t believe we are six or eight Anaheims; I believe we are one city,” she said. “I don’t represent Anaheim Hills. I represent the city of Anaheim.”

Murray and Councilwomen Lucille Kring and Gail Eastman voted in favor of the at-large measure. Mayor Tait and Councilman Jordan Brandman opposed.

paloma.esquivel@latimes.com

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Two local school districts have been hit with civil rights discrimination claims, which say at-large elections have denied Latino voters access, district officials said Friday.

College of the Canyons and the Sulphur Springs were served with nearly identical suits this week, claiming that the lack of district representation in local elections has denied Latino voters access to the political system.

Bruce Fortine, a trustee for the College of the Canyons governing board, called the lawsuit “unfortunate,” and said while districting may make sense in some regions, it wouldn’t benefit the greater good for the Santa Clarita Valley.

“I understand that they have their position and their point,” Fortine said, referring to Jim Soliz and Rosemarie Sanchez-Fraser, who are the plaintiffs in three separate lawsuits. “And in some communities, it’s probably very important that districting happen.

“But in our community, there are no really strong pockets in any race — the folks are spread throughout our valley,” Fortine said. “There are some areas, such as Newhall, that might have a higher percentage (of Latino voters). But, really, that population is valleywide.”

Kevin Shenkman, an attorney for Shenkman & Hughes, said his firm is representing the plaintiffs in all three suits; however, his firm is working with R. Rex Parris’ firm on the matter.

Fortine confirmed that Santa Clarita Community College District officials, who are responsible for the operations of a Canyon Country and Valencia campus, were served with the lawsuit July 3.

The lawsuits were served to the districts at the same time that the city was hit with a lawsuit of the same issue. R. Rex Parris, who runs the law firm listed on all three of the suits, is the mayor of Lancaster.

The papers were filed June 20, according to court documents.

Fortine’s wife, Gloria Mercado-Fortine, who is Hispanic, was board president last year for the William S. Hart Union High School District, and has served as an elected school official for more than 20 years, including her time on the Castaic Union School District board.
The Hart district, which is essentially a valleywide, 23,000-student district for junior highs and high schools, has not been hit with a lawsuit.

Mercado-Fortine is running for City Council next year, and said she doesn’t see access for Latinos or Latinas as a problem.

“I tell you, the way our valley is, it’s becoming very diverse, but that diversity is spread out throughout the valley,” she said. “There’s not huge geogoraphic areas that are populated by Latinos or other groups.

“I do feel that in our valley, having at-large elections, it really gives everybody an opprotunity to vote for anyone that they want.”

Calls to the Sulphur Springs School District office were not immediately returned.

Valleywide, education trustees from the various boards pitched in and conducted research on the logistics of districting, as far as how it would affect voter turnout, Mercado-Fortine said.

“The school districts came together. We really went all out,” Mercado-Fortine said. “We did the analysis that we needed to do. We spent a lot of money on that.”

The various school boards, which included COC’s governing board and Sulphur Springs, hired Redistricting Partners, a firm that specializes in the field of political demographics, among other areas, to conduct studies, said current Hart district board President Joe Messina.

“We did our homework, and we spent six to eight months researching this,” Messina said. “All the districts, including COC, and the results showed that districting would actually make the problem worse.”

The data showed districting essentially would further divide the Hispanic population, Messina said.

The Sulphur Springs School District lawsuit alleges that the district comprises a portion of the city of Santa Clarita with 56,256 residents, and 30.6 percent of the registered voters in that district are Latino.

“The Latino population located within the SSSD is geographically concentrated, particularly in the pockets of the Newhall and Canyon Country neighborhoods,” according to the lawsuit.

Suzan Solomon, a school board member for the Newhall School District, said, to her knowledge, her district has not yet been served with a similar lawsuit.

She declined to comment further on the suits, but acknowledged that, in abidance with the California Voting Rights Act of 2001, local districts hired Redistricting Partners, which came to the conclusions cited by Messina.
The school districts sought to increase valleywide voter turnout by moving the elections to even-numbered years, which coincide with national elections and generally produce more voters.

The county, citing inadequate equipment, voted 2-2 with one abstention on the matter, essentially leaving the elections unchanged.

“This suit should actually be against the county and not us, because we all voted to (move elections),” Messina said, “even though some of us don’t think this will work.”

For county Fifth District Supervisor Michael Antonovich, who supported moving the elections, the issue was a “no-brainer,” said Antonovich spokesman Tony Bell, who added that the supervisor’s vote was indicative of his support for his community.

“This was a common sense request from our local communities,” Bell said. “And the bureaucrats should have figured out a way to make it more cost effective for the county. And it ultimately would have saved more money for the school districts.”

For his part, Messina disagreed behind the ideology of the suits, arguing that, even if the suits are successful, district elections wouldn’t benefit voters or local districts. They also wouldn’t change the representation for other races, which are also represented in the Santa Clarita Valley by local officials.

“Shouldn’t the best person, no matter what race they are, win?” Messina said. “Isn’t that what we want?”
Anaheim votes to have hybrid election model next June

07/10/2013 by Cheryl Getuiza

The city of Anaheim is home to the “Happiest Place on Earth,” but if you ask a majority of its residents they’ll probably tell you it’s far from happy.

A divided city council recently voted, 3-2, to put a hybrid election model on the ballot next June. Right now, the city council has at-large elections, meaning members are elected by the whole city, however those council members must now live in the district they represent.

“I see a lot of problems with this voting system. Number one, it’s clear that at-large elections, which is what Anaheim currently has, has a potential to discriminate,” said Dr. Fernando Guerra, Director of the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles and a professor of Political Science and Chicana/o Studies.

Latinos make up 53 percent of the population, but “they are only about 30 percent of the voters. So if every Latino voted, that is eligible to vote, and has a system that is racially polarized, even though they’re half the population at 30 percent of the vote, they would not win one single seat. So the system, clearly, clearly discriminates.”

“What Anaheim has decided is a hybrid that does exist in other cities where there is a residency requirement where the candidate has to live in that district but yet again everybody in the city gets to vote for that person,” said Dr. Guerra.

There is yet another problem with the current system. Dr. Guerra points out there is “way over representation in some neighborhoods than others. Almost all of the council members come from Anaheim Hills as do most of the candidates.”

The council also voted, 2 to 3, against letting voters decide on district elections.

“There are plenty of cases where Latinos do not vote Latino. In largely Latino districts, overwhelming Latinos voted to elect a non-Latino cause they felt that person was a better representative.”

District elections, according to Dr. Guerra, would be one solution, but there there’s more the city could do.

“Even Disneyland has districts—you have your Tomorrowland, your Frontierland, so if it’s good for Disneyland, it ought to be good for Anaheim.”
“Number one change the at-large system to a district system, number two, you have to have fair drawing of the lines.”

Political misrepresentation in the city is the focus of a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union. The organization, representing the Latino residents, claim the at large violates the California Voting Rights Act.

“This clearly violates the voting rights—it is diluting the votes of Latinos in the city. And the information is overwhelming to show that. From a social science perspective there is no doubt that the Latino vote is being diluted in Anaheim,” said Dr. Guerra.

“To me, the ACLU will win this because it’s a clear violation the problem is it will take time and resources and it continues to create tension amongst the city.

“There’s an old, old political adage, “power is never given, it is taken.” Power either has to be taken by the voters or the court system to say you can’t have this unfair system.”
UPDATE: Santa Clarita to fight Voting Rights Act lawsuit

By Lila Littlejohn, Signal City Editor
lila@signalscv.com, 661-287-5520
July 10, 2013

The Santa Clarita City Council has voted to fight back over a lawsuit alleging the city’s system for electing council members prevents Latino voters from having full access to the political process.

Following a special meeting Tuesday afternoon, City Attorney Joseph Montes said the council had agreed to “undertake defense” against the suit.

The suit, filed June 26, alleges the city’s at-large elections — which allow all voters in the city to select all five council members — dilutes the votes of Latino residents and denies them “effective political participation,” according to the complaint filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court.

The elections thus violate the 2001 California Voting Rights Act, the suit claims.

The lawsuit suggests that district-based elections — in which candidates would be elected to represent specific portions of the city — would better serve the will of Latino voters.

“The city had no prior notice of the allegations of a violation of the California Voting Rights Act, or that the action would be be filed,” Montes said in a statement issued Wednesday.

“The city’s legal team will be undertaking an analysis of the complaint, applicable law and relevant data to prepare a responsive pleading,” Montes said.
“That analysis will be presented to the City Council at a future closed session, so we are not at liberty to make any further statement at this time.”

Similar lawsuits were filed against the Santa Clarita Community College District and the Sulphur Springs School District.

According to the filing, Santa Clarita’s system of citywide balloting for council members effectively silences the Latino vote.

As evidence of this, the Los Angeles County Superior Court filing claims that no Latino candidate has been elected to the City Council, despite almost a third of the city’s population being Latino.

The lawsuit also alleges that City Council elections are “racially polarized,” with Latino voters supporting candidates of their choice and non-Latino candidates voting against them.

“Such polarized voting is legally significant in Santa Clarita’s City Council elections because it dilutes the opportunity of Latino voters to elect candidates of their choice,” the lawsuit states.
Whittier Latino Coalition puts Voting Rights Act lawsuit on hold

Sharon McNary | July 16th, 2013, 6:03pm

Whittier Daily News

The Whittier City Council includes, from left: Joe Vinatieri, Owen Newcomer, Cathy Warner and Mayor Bob Henderson.

The Whittier Latino Coalition is delaying its threatened lawsuit against the city over alleged violation of the California Voting Rights Act lawsuit, a spokesman said Tuesday.

The group had originally set July 17 as its deadline for the city to commit to district elections or face legal action.
Members of the coalition allege that the voting power of Whittier’s Latino majority population is diluted, and that the Latino community has been unable to elect a candidate of its choice because elections are held at-large. They prefer to elect council members from districts in the belief that Latino candidates would have a better chance to win. They also want city elections consolidated with Whittier’s school district and other elections in November.

Mayor Bob Henderson, in a previous interview, said residents of the city are fairly represented by an at-large city council and that there is no barrier to all eligible voters casting ballots on the city’s traditional election dates in April.

Coalition spokesman Louis Reyes says the group has agreed to a delay requested by the city.

In a combative letter to the city, Rod Pacheco — the former assemblyman and Riverside County District Attorney who now represents the Whittier Latino Coalition — accused the city of seeking unnecessary delays and concealing the results of a 2011 study of city voting patterns.

City Manager Jeff Collier said that Whittier will embark on a demographic study of voting patterns in an effort to supply the City Council with information on which they could base a decision.

Collier also retained attorney Marguerite Leone to advise the city, and she addressed the council in closed session last week. Her firm, Nelson Merksamer, represents the city of Anaheim, where the city council is also fighting residents’ challenge of at-large elections.

The coalition filed a Public Records Act request to obtain a study the city says it conducted after a 2011 request to switch to district elections. The coalition wants to see that study before embarking on a lawsuit.

Collier said no study was done. However, the city attorney in 2011 had done some research on the involvement of Whittier’s Latino voters in electing school board and state legislative representatives and sent it in a letter to the coalition.

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Whittier gets more time in voting rights lawsuit threat

By Peter Fullam, Staff Writer
@PeterFullam on Twitter

Posted: 07/18/2013 07:06:05 PM PDT
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WHITTIER - A Latino group has agreed to give the city more time to respond to its request to change the city's at-large voting system to a district representation system.

The lawyer representing the Whittier Latino Coalition in a July 16 letter to Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow said his clients have agreed to delay filing a lawsuit claiming violations of the California Voting Rights Act.

Earlier, the group and the attorney threatened to sue the city if City Council did not act by July 17.

The letter was highly critical of the City Council citing numerous ways the Latino group considered the council was failing Latino voters. It was sent in response to a July 11 letter the city sent requesting the delay.

"You requested a meeting with us to discuss your request to delay," attorney Rod Pacheco wrote, noting the request was "couched" in "an extremely vague and opaque reference to 'resolution.'"

"After having listened to your words, the words of attorney Marguerite Mary Leoni of your newly hired law firm, and the words of the City Manager, Jeffery Collier, it is clear that no such sincere or meaningful resolution was proffered," Pacheco stated. "Instead, your request was simply to delay the matter further for an undefined and extensive period," wrote Pacheco, a former assemblyman and Riverside County district attorney.

The letters stem from a demand made by members of the Whittier Latino Coalition at a June 25 City Council meeting. About 100 people attended the meeting in support of a long line of
speakers who asked City Council to change the timing of elections and the at-large voting system. They said such changes would result in the election of more Latinos to City Council. Since the city was incorporated in 1898, only one Latino has been elected to City Council. According to the 2010 census, 66 percent of Whittier's residents are Latinos.

The coalition and Pacheco, in a letter presented to the council at the meeting, also said the voting rules in Whittier are in violation of state and federal voting rights laws. At-large voting is required by the City Charter, which can only be changed by an election.

Pacheco and the Whittier Latino Coalition gave the city until July 17 to adopt a resolution calling for a vote on the issue or face a lawsuit in state or federal court on behalf of three Whittier Latino residents.

If nothing is done by April 2014, Pacheco said he will seek to halt the elections or prevent them from being certified.

"The Whittier Latino Coalition is seeking to restore voting rights of the citizens of Whittier," said Louis R. Reyes, a spokesman for the coalition. "Our main interest is to fix a process that has disenfranchised voters, and we want the city to fix the process."

Pacheco's letter does not specify how long the Latino coalition will wait before filing a lawsuit.

"In spite of the significant deprivation they and others have suffered at the hands of the system your clients protect, our clients are willing to provide an additional amount of time in the hope that the council will put aside their own interests on behalf of the citizens they have sworn to represent," Pacheco's July 16 letter states. "We will hold our proposed filing of a complaint in abeyance for a reasonable period of time."

However, Reyes said the coalition is not in the mood to wait very long.

City Manager Jeff Collier said a response to Pacheco's letter was sent Wednesday, July 17.

"Despite some of the comments in his letter, our only desire is to provide the City Council with factual information in which to allow them to make a determination regarding the allegations of violations of the California Voting Rights Act," Collier stated in an email response to a Daily News.

"The City Council cannot just receive a demand letter at face value and place a Charter amendment on the ballot to change our election process. Rather, the City Council needs to have the facts in which to base a decision."
He said the city has retained experts to provide analysis of the question. City Council will review the report at their second meeting in August and at that time will be able to respond to the Whittier Latino Coalition's request, he said.

It is the second time in recent years the city has been accused of having election laws that prevent Latinos from being elected. In 2011, an Oakland law firm and a voting rights group threatened to sue the city. In response, Assistant City Attorney Barlow wrote a letter to the National Voting Rights Institute outlining the "steps the City has taken to ensure full participation by Latino and other minority voters."

She said an analysis of elections involving Whittier voters showed that 77 percent of the time at least one Latino candidate was successful.

"We believe these election statistics show that Latino candidates have a high rate of success," Barlow wrote.

Pacheco's four-page letter cited work done by Whittier College professor Eric Lindgren that found racial polarization has occurred in Whittier City Council races.

Lindgren did not respond to telephone inquiries by press time, but a college spokesman said a radio KPCC-FM (89.3) interview with Lindgren on the issue is available on the college's website.

In it he says Whittier is one of dozens of California cities that are "ripe for challenges of their at-large elections."

"There are nine cities I identified that have majority-minority populations with zero representation on city councils, and Whittier is one of those," Lindgren said on KPCC.
Hughson, Empire school districts close to moving to geographic elections

Published: July 18, 2013

By Nan Austin — naustin@modbee.com

The Hughson Unified and Empire Union school districts are one meeting closer to electing school board members by geographic area, a move meant to guarantee representation for minority communities.

In separate meetings Tuesday, both received unanimous votes by the Stanislaus County Committee on School District Organization, making a total of four districts approved within a year.

"We just hit the tip of the iceberg," committee member Judi Luna said after the meeting. The Stanislaus County Office of Education committee also rules on school district mergers and other organizational changes.

Waiting in the wings are other districts that have just begun the process, said Latino Roundtable President Maggie Mejia.

Mejia's group started the process with letters warning of potentially costly legal action under the California Voting Rights Act if districts did not switch.

The boards of Riverbank Unified, Stanislaus Union, Newman-Crows Landing, Salida Union and Waterford also approved splitting their districts. "I think we've come a long way since we sent the letters in February," Mejia said at the Hughson meeting.

Hughson Unified split the district into five areas, with one seat to cover a rural area stretching from Hickman to La Grange and one seat serving roughly a half-mile square in central Hughson. The population is about the same in all five areas, which cover Hughson and all the elementary districts feeding into Hughson High, said Superintendent Brian Beck.

"From our standpoint, we get compliant, give people opportunity (for representation) and potentially save money for the district, so it's a win-win-win," Beck told the committee.

Before the vote, committee member Marsha Waggoner said the splits could cause problems in attracting enough interested residents to fill the board. "It is a concern because a lot of people don't get involved until there's a problem that affects themselves," she said. "Hughson is a community, so hopefully you will draw people in."
Hughson Unified will have time to lay out contingency plans for empty seats, Beck said. A companion board resolution changed the election cycle to even years, lengthening the terms of all sitting trustees by a year. Trustees will run by area starting in 2014.

Empire Union's election will proceed as scheduled, with three at-large seats to be decided in November. In 2015, the first by-area trustees will be elected. Five partitions split the district's 25-square-mile territory.

Dave Garcia, beginning his first year as Empire superintendent, and Empire trustees who came to the meeting said the process went smoothly. The district consulted its bargaining units as well as site councils of its four elementary and one middle school in creating the maps and making the switch.

"We had a lot of questions, a lot of concerns at the beginning," said Board President Loretta Stein.

Board Clerk Carole Dovichi said existing board members live in all the trustee areas. "We're pretty well spread," she said.

District lawyer Nevin Trehan said the point was to avoid costly lawsuits that no agency has won. The city of Modesto agreed to pay a $3 million settlement over by-area elections in 2007. "The board just wanted to get out in front of any potential litigation," Trehan said.

Patterson Unified and Turlock Unified switches to by-area elections were approved in 2012. Both are electing by-area trustees in November. Ceres Unified switched soon after the Modesto lawsuit settled, becoming the first Stanislaus County district to hold by-area elections.

Modesto City Schools has yet to take action. Riverbank Unified and Keyes Union districts are starting the process. Keyes Superintendent Cynthia Schaefer said her board is planning for elections by area in 2015.

Officially, Tuesday's vote was to recommend the state Board of Education grant a waiver to the district allowing it to bypass having voters approve the election change, in essence an election about electing. In 2012 the state board granted waivers to 53 districts — including Turlock Unified and Escalon Unified. In 2011, only six districts sought such waivers.

State board approvals of such waivers have become routine, making Tuesday's decisions the last practical hurdle for districts, said Chet Quaide, attorney for the Stanislaus County Office of Education.

Bee education reporter Nan Austin can be reached at naustin@modbee.com or (209) 578-2339, on Twitter, @NanAustin, www.modbee.com/education.
Alvord Unified School District has divided itself into trustee areas from which all new board members will be elected beginning in November 2014.

The board approved a map from five possibilities in what board President Art Kaspereen called an emotional session Thursday night, July 18.

“In every scenario, someone was pitted against someone else,” Kaspereen said.

Board member Ben Johnson, who lives in southwest Riverside, would run against board member Carolyn Wilson, who lives in east Corona, if both seek re-election in 2016, he said.

Consultants who prepared the maps attempted to balance population and the population of citizens old enough to vote. Where incumbents live was not a primary consideration.

Kaspereen, a retired Alvord High School counselor, had also lived in the new Trustee Area 5 near Johnson until a few months ago. He said his son, who now works for Alvord as a school counselor after being laid off in another district, couldn’t find a place to live for his family. So the son moved into his parents’ house and the board president and his wife found a place to rent in the Riverwalk neighborhood of Riverside, in the new Trustee Area 1.
No current board member lives in Trustee Area 2, which covers the northern part of the Arlanza neighborhood in Riverside.
Trustee Area 1 includes the La Sierra Hills and La Sierra Acres neighborhoods and part of La Sierra in Riverside. Riverwalk Parkway runs through part of Trustee Area 1 and part of Trustee Area 4.

Longtime board member Greg Kraft lives in Trustee Area 4, which covers part of La Sierra and most of the La Sierra South neighborhood in Riverside.

Trustee Area 5 includes the portions of the city of Corona in Alvord, the remainder of La Sierra South and the unincorporated communities of Lake Hills and the part of Home Gardens in Alvord.

The district is dividing itself into trustee areas to comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act and the California Voting Rights Act. The total population between the district’s largest and smallest trustee areas is less than 5 percent.

In two trustee areas, 2 and 3, in the adopted map, a majority of citizens old enough to vote are Latinos, a consideration in the school district where 78 percent of students are Latino.

Follow Dayna Straehley on Twitter: @dstraehley_PE and watch for her posts on the Inland Schools blog: http://blog.pe.com/category/education/