March 24, 2016

TO: Members of the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (County Committee)

FROM: Keith D. Crafton, Secretary, County Committee

SUBJECT: Cancellation of the April 6, 2016, Regular Meeting of the County Committee

The regular meeting of the County Committee scheduled for Wednesday, April 6, 2016, has been CANCELLED. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The following is an update of relevant information as of March 22, 2016.

Staff Activities

Staff has been compiling articles for the County Committee website related to the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).

Staff is working with Los Angeles County Counsel to outline the different processes and Education Code sections that apply to city charter school districts.

Staff is preparing a feasibility study about the Saugus Union School District’s petition to establish trustee areas and trustee area voting.

Staff is preparing a supplemental feasibility study about the petition to transfer territory from the Centinela Valley Union High School District and Lawndale School District, to the Wiseburn Unified School District.
Legislative Updates

Several bills are currently being tracked; updates are attached. (Attachment 1)

School District Organization Proposals

Updated versions of the following two documents are provided for your information.

- “Summary of Los Angeles Unified School District Reorganization Proposals.” (Attachment 2)
- “Summary of Los Angeles Unified School District Reorganization Proposals.” (Excluding those affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District) (Attachment 3)

Please call me at (562) 922-6144 if you have any questions or concerns.

KDC/AD/EH:ah

Attachments
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION (COUNTY COMMITTEE) 
LEGISLATIVE REVIEW – APRIL 2016

BILL NUMBER/AUTHOR:
Assembly Bill 278 / Hernandez

INTRODUCTION DATE:
02/11/15

LAST ACTIVITY/DATE:
02/18/16: Author amended bill; has been resubmitted to Elections Committee for review.

DESCRIPTION OF BILL

This bill would enable the legislative body of any city to adopt an ordinance, without voter approval, for the election of the members of the legislative body to be by district.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BILL ON LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE, SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION PROCESS AND/OR LOS ANGELES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

It is not yet clear how this bill would impact Los Angeles County school districts. It may trigger increased activity related to the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).

RECOMMENDED POSITION

Staff recommends the following position:

☑ Watch   Bill should be monitored by County Committee staff, but no action taken at this time.
☐ Approve County Committee supports the bill’s concept, but will not actively work for passage.
☐ Support County Committee actively supports the bill.
☐ Oppose County Committee actively opposes the bill.
☐ Disapprove County Committee disapproves of the bill’s concept, but will not actively oppose passage.
BILL NUMBER/AUTHOR:  
Senate Bill 415 / Hueso

INTRODUCTION DATE:  
02/25/15

LAST ACTIVITY/DATE:  
09/01/15: Governor signed

DESCRIPTION OF BILL

This bill, commencing January 1, 2018, would prohibit counties, cities, school districts, and community college districts from holding their regular elections on dates other than the statewide election dates if they had low voter turnout in their four previous elections. ‘Low voter turnout’ is defined by this bill as less than 25% of the number of eligible voters who had voted in the previous election.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BILL ON LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE, SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION PROCESS AND/OR LOS ANGELES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

This bill will likely force some municipalities and districts to change their election dates in order to increase voter turnout, comply with the law, and avoid legal action.

RECOMMENDED POSITION

Staff recommends the following position:

☑️ Watch  
Bill should be monitored by County Committee staff, but no action taken at this time.

☐ Approve  
County Committee supports the bill’s concept, but will not actively work for passage.

☐ Support  
County Committee actively supports the bill.

☐ Oppose  
County Committee actively opposes the bill.

☐ Disapprove  
County Committee disapproves of the bill’s concept, but will not actively oppose passage.

AMENDMENTS REQUIRED

If staff’s recommended position is based on the need for amendments to the bill language, suggested alternative language is attached.

CORRESPONDENCE REQUIRED

If staff’s recommended position is based on the need for correspondence to the bill’s author, the Governor or other governmental officials, a draft of suggested language is attached.

Please direct all comments to Mr. Keith D. Crafton, Secretary to the County Committee at (562) 922-6131.
Summary of Los Angeles Unified School District Reorganization Proposals

April 2016

The following is a summary of school district reorganization proposals affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District (USD) that were at various stages in the school district organization process as of March 18, 2016.

RECENT INQUIRIES REGARDING REORGANIZATION (within the last two years)

Formation Proposals/Last Activity Date

- Inner City USD / January 2016

Transfer of Territory Proposals/Last Activity Date

- None
Summary of Los Angeles County School District Reorganization Proposals
(Excluding those affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District)

April 2016

The following is a summary of school district reorganization proposals [exclusive of those affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District (USD)] that are at various stages in the school district reorganization process as of March 18, 2016.

PETITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUSTEE AREAS AND TRUSTEE AREA VOTING, WITHIN THE SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT (SD)

On November 20, 2015, a board resolution was received from the district to implement its trustee area plan. On January 6, 2016, the resolution was presented to the County Committee, which held its public hearing in the district on February 23, 2016. Staff is collecting information, evaluating the proposal, and will present the results of a feasibility study at a future meeting.

*Status: Feasibility study underway
Status Date: March 18, 2016

PETITION TO TRANSFER TERRITORY FROM THE CENTINELA VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT (HSD) AND LAWNDALE SD TO THE WISEBURN USD

On May 15, 2014, LACOE received a request for a petition pursuant to EC §35700, to transfer territory from the Centinela Valley Union HSD and the Lawndale SD to the Wiseburn USD. The request was submitted by chief petitioners Ms. Shavonda Webber-Christmas and Mr. Bill Magoon. The petition was forwarded to County Counsel to determine its legal compliance regarding format and content. On June 20, 2014, County Counsel deemed the petition sufficient. Staff returned the petition to the chief petitioners on June 23, 2014.

On October 15, 2014, the chief petitioners submitted signed petitions for review. On October 15, 2014, staff conveyed the signed petitions to the Registrar-Recorder for signature verification. On November 6, 2014, staff received notice from the Registrar-Recorder that there were insufficient signatures to move the petition forward. Staff notified the chief
petitioners, who elected to gather additional signatures. On December 4, 2014, the chief petitioners submitted additional signatures, which were submitted to the Registrar-Recorder on December 5, 2014 for signature verification. On December 22, 2014, the Registrar Recorder notified staff that the additional signatures were validated, and the petition did have sufficient signatures to move forward.

The petition was presented to the County Committee on January 7, 2015. Two public hearings were held March 2, 2015, one in each of the affected districts. A feasibility study was presented on July 8, 2015, at which time the County Committee preliminarily approved the transfer, pending further collection and review of additional fiscal data, as well as an environmental review. Supplemental requests for information were sent to the impacted districts and to the chief petitioners, with replies received by all parties. A CEQA consultant is currently reviewing the petition’s environmental impact. A supplemental study, including these new materials, will be presented to the County Committee once complete.

Status: Additional review and environmental study to be conducted.
Status Date: March 18, 2016

FORMATION—MALIBU USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SANTA MONICA-MALIBU USD)

On July 23, 2015, LACOE received a request for a petition from chief petitioner Mr. Seth Jacobson, a community member who is a Malibu resident. Mr. Jacobson, along with two other chief petitioners, wants to form a separate Malibu USD from territory within the boundaries of the existing Santa Monica-Malibu USD.

Staff reviewed the request and forwarded a draft petition to County Counsel on July 27, 2015, for a legal compliance review regarding format and content. We received notification on July 30, 2015, from County Counsel informing us that the draft petition was legally acceptable. The petition was mailed to the chief petitioner on July 31, 2015, for circulation within the petition area. Staff is informed that signatures have been gathered, but not yet presented for signature verification, as the petitioners negotiate with the district. Staff is informed that a joint committee appointed by both the district and the City of Malibu is studying the implications of this petition.

Status: Petitioners in negotiation.
Status Date: March 18, 2016
PETITION TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TRUSTEES FROM FIVE TO SEVEN WITHIN THE POMONA USD

On April 8, 2015, LACOE received a request for a petition pursuant to EC §5020 to increase the number of trustees from five to seven within the Pomona USD. The request was submitted by chief petitioner Mr. John Mendoza. The petition was forwarded to County Counsel to determine its legal compliance regarding format and content. On April 27, 2015, County Counsel deemed the petition sufficient. Staff returned the petition to the chief petitioner on April 29, 2015, for circulation.

Please note that this is a separate petition, distinct from the other petitions requested by Mr. Mendoza, and requests some of the same changes within the Pomona Unified School District (the addition of two governing board members). It was submitted under EC §5020(c) and, based on the number of registered voters in the Pomona USD, requires valid signatures from at least 10% of the registered voters within the petition area. If valid and certified by the County Committee, this petition would trigger a vote within the district, before which the County Committee may choose to hold one or more public hearings on the proposal.

Status: Petitioner is gathering signatures.  
Status Date: May 26, 2015

FORMATION—ALTADENA USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PASADENA USD)

On January 17, 2006, LACOE received a request for a petition from chief petitioners Ms. Maurice Morse, Ms. Shirlee Smith, and Mr. Bruce Wasson, three community members who are residents of the area known as Altadena. The chief petitioners want to form an Altadena USD from territory within the boundaries of the Pasadena USD. The petition request was returned to the chief petitioners on January 20, 2006, because it lacked an adequate description of the area pursuant to EC §35700.3.

On February 10, 2006, LACOE received a revised request for a petition. Staff reviewed the request and forwarded a draft petition to County Counsel on February 22, 2006, for a legal compliance review regarding format and content. We received notification on March 6, 2006, from County Counsel informing us that the draft petition was legally acceptable.

On March 7, 2006, staff forwarded the draft petition to the Registrar-Recorder for verification that the description of the proposed boundaries of the Altadena USD was sufficiently clear (so that registered voters residing within the proposed petition area could be identified with specificity). The Registrar-Recorder confirmed that the description was sufficient on March 10, 2006.
The petition was mailed to the chief petitioners on March 14, 2006, for circulation within the petition area. The Registrar-Recorder estimated the chief petitioners will need to collect approximately 7,000 valid signatures in order to meet the criteria set forth in EC §35700(a).

On September 23, 2010, chief petitioners delivered signed petitions to LACOE. Staff submitted the petitions to the Registrar-Recorder on September 27, 2010, for signature verification. On October 22, 2010, the Registrar-Recorder notified staff that there were insufficient valid signatures (less than the required 25 percent of the registered voters within the petition area). Staff notified the chief petitioners of the insufficiency, and at Mr. Wasson’s request, returned the petitions to the Registrar-Recorder for a signature audit. Staff also advised the chief petitioner regarding the collection of additional signatures. Upon notification by the Registrar-Recorder of a sufficient number of valid signatures, staff will present the petition to the County Committee at the next regular meeting.

On January 4, 2011, staff conferred with a representative from the Registrar-Recorder’s office, who informed us that no audit of petition signatures had been done yet, and they clarified the cost of signature verification. On February 15 and March 1, 2011, staff contacted the Registrar-Recorder and were informed that the signature audit had still not been done. On May 12, 2011, staff from the Registrar-Recorder’s office advised LACOE that an audit of the petition’s signatures was underway. On November 28, 2011, the chief petitioner Mr. Wasson notified LACOE of the death of one of the co-chief petitioners, Ms. Morse. Mr. Wasson stated that another chief petitioner would not be named.

In August of 2014, staff confirmed that petitioner is still interested in collecting additional signatures.

Status: Petition insufficient; chief petitioners may gather additional signatures.
Status Date: December 5, 2011

**FORMATION—MALIBU USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SANTA MONICA-MALIBU USD)**

Status: Petition in circulation.
Status Date: February 21, 2008

**FORMATION—LA MIRADA USD (CURRENTLY LIES WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NORWALK–LA MIRADA USD)**

Status: Petition in circulation.
Status Date: March 20, 2007
Unification Proposals/Last Activity Date

- None

Transfer of Territory Proposals/Last Activity Date

- Glendale USD to La Canada USD/December 2015
- Monrovia USD to Arcadia USD/September 2015
- Pasadena USD to La Canada USD/April 2013
- Temple City USD to Arcadia USD/March 2012

Formation Proposals/Last Activity Date

- Malibu USD (Santa Monica-Malibu USD)/August 2015

Trustee Areas and Governing Board Size/Last Activity Date

- *Castaic Union SD / March 2016
- *El Monte Union HSD / March 2016
- Walnut USD / January 2016
- Glendale USD / December 2015
- Pomona USD / June 2015

* = indicates activity since last meeting

This document was prepared by staff to the County Committee.