

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE
ON
SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION
AND THE
PROCESS FOR
UNIFICATION AND FORMATION**

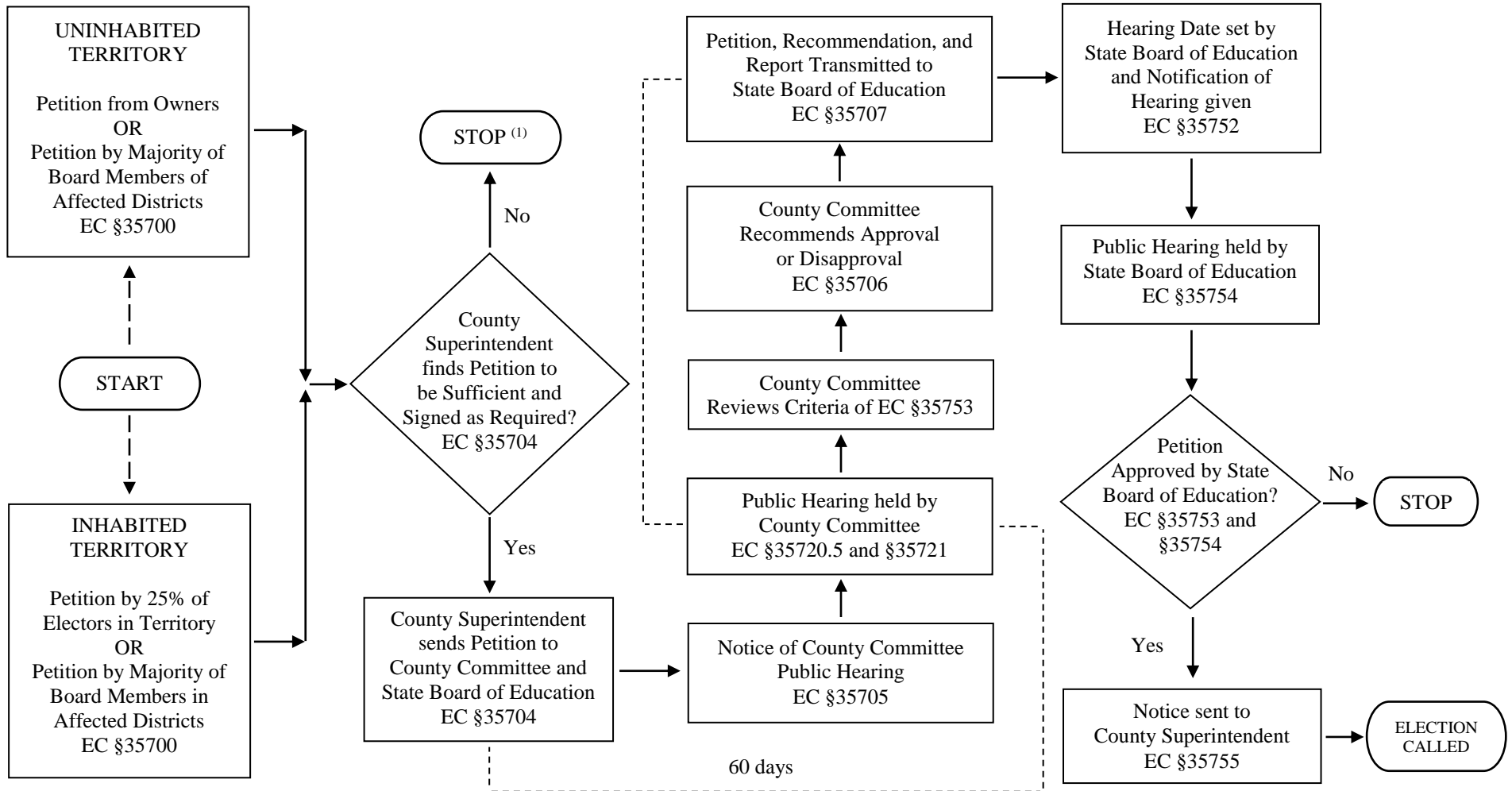
**LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVICES**

SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION PROCESS AND POTENTIAL TIMELINE*
SCHOOL DISTRICT UNIFICATION AND FORMATION
PURSUANT TO EDUCATION CODE §35700(a) *et seq.*

Petition Request	Should include a map and description of the area proposed for reorganization, supporting documentation, and rationale for proposal.
Petition Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Majority of the board members of each affected district, or * Signatures of a least 25 percent of the registered voters residing within the transfer area.
March 2021*	Completed petition containing required signatures returned to the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools (County Superintendent).
April 2021	Signatures verified by the County Superintendent (via Los Angeles County Registrar- Recorder/County Clerk) - 30 day timeline.
May 2021	If the petition is sufficient and signed as required by law, the proposal is presented to the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (County Committee) at its next regular meeting.
May 2021 - July 2021	At least <u>one</u> public hearing will be held by the County Committee in <u>each</u> affected school district. Note: Public hearings <u>must</u> be held within 60 days after presenting the proposal to the County Committee.
July 2021 - October 2021	Staff gathers data, prepares feasibility study of area, and formulates plans and recommendations based on specified criteria contained in Education Code §35753.
November 2021	<p>Within 120 days of the first public hearing, the County Committee makes a recommendation to approve or disapprove the proposal, and forwards it to the State Board of Education (SBE).</p> <p>If the County Committee recommends approval of the proposal, they may also recommend the area in which to hold the election.</p>
May 2022	SBE holds a public hearing (no statutory timeline for SBE to hold hearing), and makes a final decision to approve or disapprove the proposal. If approved, the SBE selects the area in which to hold an election, and orders the County Superintendent to call an election. If disapproved, the process ends.
May 2022	The County Superintendent orders an election.
November 2022	Election is held regarding the proposal. Governing board election consolidated with reorganization election.
December 2022	If the reorganization election carries, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors will order changes in school districts (must be completed prior to the end of calendar year in order for reorganization to become effective July 1 of the following calendar year).
July 1, 2023	Reorganization effective.

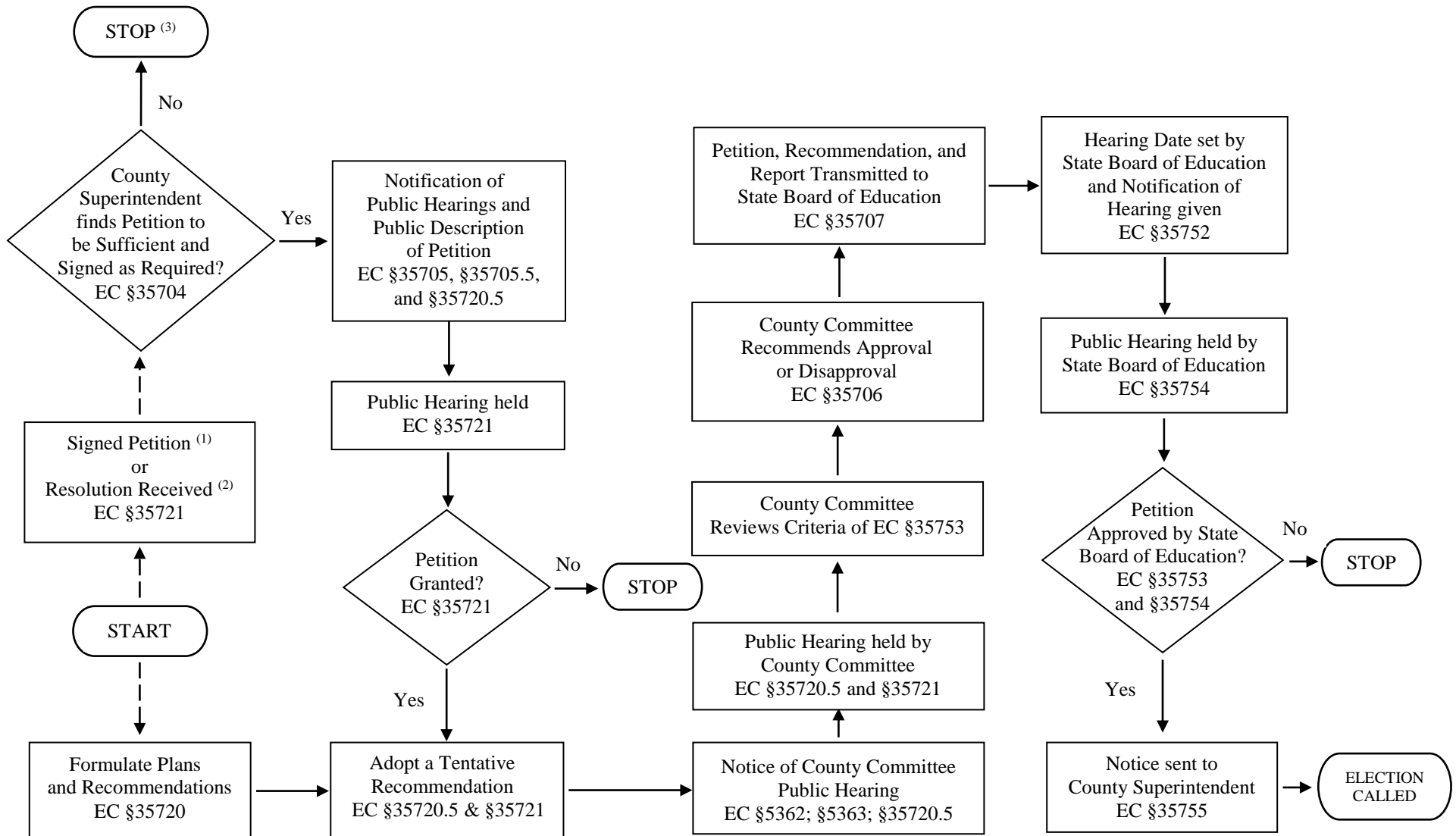
**Dates and timeline indicated are estimates, and used for illustrative purposes only.*

**UNIFICATION INITIATED BY OWNERS, 25% PETITION,
OR DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD**



(1) Petitioners may obtain supplemental signatures, and resubmit the petition to resume the process.

UNIFICATION INITIATED BY 10% PETITION, OR COUNTY COMMITTEE



(1) A petition signed by at least 10% of the qualified electors residing in any district for consideration of unification.

(2) A resolution approved by a majority of the members of a city council, county board of supervisors, governing body of a special district, or local agency formation commission that has jurisdiction over all or a portion of the school district.

(3) Petitioners may obtain supplemental signatures, and resubmit the petition to resume the process.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION
CONDITIONS AFFECTING REORGANIZATION PROPOSALS

Proposal: _____

Policy Statement

- The Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (County Committee) may vote to approve a proposal to transfer territory when the conditions contained in Education Code (EC) §35753(a)(1) through (10) are substantially met.
- The County Committee has the option to vote to recommend that a proposal for unification or formation be disapproved, when the conditions are substantially met, if it determines a proposal will not be in the best overall interests of those affected, there is no compelling reason for a change, the proposal will not improve the effectiveness and/or the efficiency of the delivery of educational services to students, or for any other reason(s) the County Committee deems relevant.
- The County Committee may vote to recommend approval of a proposal for unification or formation if it determines it is not practical nor possible to apply the EC §35753 conditions literally and circumstances with respect to the proposal present an **exceptional situation** sufficient to justify approval of the proposal.

I. Conditions Required To Be Considered By The County Committee

A. EC §35753(a)

NOTE: Following each condition is a list of considerations which may be used by the County Committee in determining if the condition has been substantially met. Because each reorganization proposal is unique, all considerations listed may not apply to specific proposals. Staff will use their discretion in determining which considerations to address in preparing reports and recommendations for the County Committee.

Condition #1 The reorganized districts will be adequate in terms of the number of pupils enrolled.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

<u>Type of School District</u>	<u>Minimum # of Pupils</u>
Elementary	901
High	301
Unified	1501

The County Committee should consider the projected enrollment and the resulting increase/decrease.

It is not necessary to meet the minimum requirements if the County Committee feels there are extenuating circumstances, e.g., geographical barriers.

Condition #2 The districts are each organized on the basis of a substantial community identity.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

The County Committee should consider the following criteria:

- isolation
- geography
- distance between social centers
- distance between school centers
- topography
- weather
- community, school, social ties, and other circumstances peculiar to the area
- size and style of homes and similarity of architecture
- usage patterns of park and school facilities for recreation programs
- traffic patterns and public transportation
- geopolitical factors such as cities, zip codes, and electoral districts
- neighborhood and regional shopping patterns

Condition #3 The proposal will result in an equitable division of property and facilities of the original district or districts.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

- a. All property, funds, and obligations, except real property and bonded indebtedness (e.g., funds, cash on hand, monies due but uncollected, state apportionments).

The County Committee will determine which of the criteria authorized under EC §35736 shall apply for dividing the property:

- assessed valuation;
- revenue limit per pupil in each district;
- average daily attendance (ADA).

The County Committee should consider the value and location of the school property and such other matters as may be deemed pertinent and equitable.

b. Real Property

The real property and personal property and fixtures normally situated there shall be the property of the district in which the real property is located.

In reviewing the aspects of proposals dealing with school facilities, the County Committee should request long-range facilities plans from the districts affected. Those plans should include:

- demographic studies showing both current and projected student population data;
- development of maps showing census tracts, boundaries, current and proposed zoning, and projected development;
- an evaluation and report of the utilization, capacity, and condition of existing facilities; and
- development of a “comparison analysis” considering both existing and proposed divisions.

c. Bonded Indebtedness

Provided for under EC §35570-§35579.

NOTE: The County Committee may recommend, pursuant to EC §35565, the appointment of a board of arbitrators to resolve any disputes between the governing boards of the affected school districts concerning the division of funds, property, or obligations.

Condition #4 The reorganization of the district will preserve each district’s ability to educate students in an integrated environment and will not promote racial or ethnic discrimination or segregation.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

The County Committee should consider the effects of the following criteria (Title V of the California Administrative Code (CAC) §18573). Each of these items should be evaluated to determine whether any imbalance would be so disproportionate that, realistically, minority students would be isolated from other students and that all students would be deprived of an integrated educational experience:

- The current number and percentage of pupils in each racial and ethnic group in the affected districts and schools in the affected districts, compared with the number and percentage of pupils in each racial and ethnic group in the affected districts and schools in the affected districts if the proposal or petition is approved.
- The trends and rates of present and possible future growth or change in the total population in the districts affected, in each racial and ethnic group within the total district, and in each school of the affected districts.
- The school board policies regarding methods of preventing racial and ethnic segregation in the affected districts and the effect of the proposal or petition on any desegregation plan or program of the affected districts, whether voluntary or court ordered, designed to prevent or alleviate racial or ethnic discrimination or segregation.
- The effect of factors such as distance between schools and attendance centers, terrain, and geographic features that may involve safety hazards to pupils, capacity of schools, and related conditions or circumstances that may have an effect on the feasibility of integration of the affected schools.
- The effect of the proposal on the duty of the governing board of each of the affected districts to take steps, insofar as reasonably feasible, to alleviate segregation of minority pupils in schools regardless of its cause.

The County Committee may also consider:

- participation in extracurricular activities;
- equipment of affected school districts;
- condition of facilities of affected school districts;
- perception of staff, administrators, and community regarding whether schools are segregated; and
- racial/ethnic makeup of staff and administration.

Condition #5 Any increase in costs to the state as a result of the proposed reorganization will be insignificant and otherwise incidental to the reorganization.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

- the proposal does not increase costs to the state for the affected territory by more than ten percent;

- other state special or categorical programs, and the increased state costs if students transferring would qualify in the gaining district and not in the losing district;
- the additional costs to the state if special or categorical program costs are higher in the gaining district; and
- the effect on the district’s home-to-school and special education transportation cost and state reimbursement.

Condition #6 The proposed reorganization will continue to promote sound education performance and will not significantly disrupt the educational programs in the districts affected by the proposed reorganization.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

The County Committee must look at the effect of the proposal on all school districts affected by the reorganization. The County Committee should look at district-wide programs and the school site programs in schools not a part of the proposal that will be affected by the proposal.

Condition #7 Any increase in school facilities costs as a result of the proposed reorganization will be insignificant and otherwise incidental to the reorganization.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

The County Committee should evaluate the affected districts’ school housing needs and the long-range facilities plans for meeting the current and projected facilities requirements including:

- local bonding capacity (potential);
- developer fee income;
- surplus property and asset management opportunities;
- eligibility for state school facilities funding;
- deferred maintenance, modernization, and reconstruction needs; and
- the portion of costs for additional housing to be assumed by state and local programs.

Condition #8 The proposed reorganization is primarily designed for purposes other than to significantly increase property values.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

The County Committee should analyze the rationale presented in the petition for the transfer. The County Committee should consider whether increased property values might be the primary reason for the petition. The county tax assessor’s office or local real estate boards should be consulted concerning the potential impact on property values in the area proposed for transfer or unification.

Condition #9 The proposed reorganization will continue to promote sound fiscal management and not cause a substantial negative effect on the fiscal status of the proposed district or any existing district affected by the proposed reorganization.	Condition Substantially Met	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDERATIONS:

The County Committee should look at the percentage of lost revenue to total revenue of the affected districts. It should also look at the viability of a new school district to operate a meaningful educational curriculum with its anticipated revenue.

The County Committee should review the financial status of the districts for several preceding years and evaluate the financial impact of the reorganization on each of the districts affected. The County Committee might also review other sources of financial data including the annual audit reports prepared by the districts’ independent auditors.

Additionally, the County Committee should review and consider any potential revenue gains and/or losses (e.g. community redevelopment agency agreements, Mello-Roos Community Facility District funds, parcel taxes, certificates of participation, mitigation agreements with developers, or any other categorical or specialized funds.)

B. EC §35707

The County Committee must report whether any of the following, in the opinion of the County Committee, would be true regarding the proposed reorganization.

The proposed reorganization would comply with the provisions of EC §35753.	True	Not True
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>The proposed reorganization would adversely affect the school district organization of the county.</p>	<p>True <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Not True <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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II. County Committee Decision/Recommendation

Within 120 days of the commencement of the first public hearing on the petition, the County Committee shall recommend approval or disapproval of a petition for unification of school districts; or for the division of the territory of an existing school district into two or more separate school districts, as the petition may be augmented; or shall approve or disapprove a petition for the transfer of territory, as the petition may be augmented.

A. May Approve the Proposal

If all the conditions of EC §35753 are substantially met.

Certain conditions may be waived, and the County Committee may approve a proposal if the County Committee determines circumstances with respect to the petition or proposal provide an exceptional situation sufficient to justify approval.

B. To Disapprove the Proposal

In making its decision, the County Committee should consider whether:

- a compelling reason necessitates the reorganization;
- the reorganization proposal improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of educational services;
- the reorganization is in the best interests of all those concerned;
- any other reasons deemed pertinent by the County Committee to support the reorganization.

Except for petitions for the transfer of territory, the County Committee shall forward its recommendation to the SBE.

<p>DECISION / RECOMMENDATION</p>	
<p>The County Committee:</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Approves the proposed reorganization</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Disapproves the proposed reorganization</p>

III. Determine the Area of Election

STEP 1:

- Identify the petition area.

STEP 2

- The County Committee may expand the area of election beyond the petition area if it determines that there exists a logical and meaningful reason to do so.
- If not, then the election area is deemed to be the petition area.

RECOMMENDED AREA OF ELECTION

Area Description:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization?

County committees on school district organization were created in each county by the California State Legislature in 1949 pursuant to Education Code §4000 *et seq.* The Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (hereinafter referred to as the County Committee) is governed by the rules and regulations established by the Legislature and by its own policies and procedures. Its duties and responsibilities pertain to school and community college districts.

The County Committee is charged by the state to study and make recommendations and decisions on school district reorganization, establishing, rearranging, and abolishing trustee areas, and on changing the number of governing board members and the manner in which they are elected. The County Committee's responsibilities include revising its countywide Master Plan for school district organization.

The activities of the County Committee are coordinated by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). The County Committee interacts with the California Department of Education, State Board of Education (SBE), the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board of Supervisors), Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, and other state and county agencies. Expenses and activities are funded from the County School Service Fund.

2. Who serves on the County Committee?

The County Committee consists of 11 members - two from each of the five county supervisorial districts, and one member serving at-large. Members are elected annually by a voting representative of each of the 94 school and community college district governing boards in Los Angeles County. The term of office is four years and begins upon election. County Committee members serve without pay.

3. How often does the County Committee meet?

The County Committee meets at 9:30 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month in the LACOE Board Room at 9300 Imperial Highway, Downey. Public hearings related to matters before the County Committee are held throughout the county as required by law. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by a quorum of the County Committee. A majority of the members of the County Committee constitutes a quorum. The meetings are subject to the provisions of the Brown Act.

4. How do items get on the County Committee's agenda?

The Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools or the designee serves as Secretary to the County Committee. Agenda items are originated by or submitted to the Secretary for the County Committee. Official minutes of each County Committee meeting are maintained and are available at LACOE.

5. What is “school district reorganization?”

The reorganization of school districts is one of the major responsibilities of the County Committee.

An action to reorganize school districts can refer to any one of the following:

- transfer of territory between/among school districts;
- school district unification or deunification;
- dissolution or lapsation of a school district;
- annexation of all or part of one district to another district;
- establishment of common governing boards; and
- formation of new districts of all types from territory of existing districts.

The processes to accomplish any of the above actions are similar.

6. What is the process for proposing a transfer of territory?

An action to transfer territory from one school district to another is initiated by the submission of a valid petition to the County Committee.

The petition may be initiated by:

- a) at least 25 percent of the registered voters residing in the area proposed for transfer (or by ten percent of the registered voters of the entire school district);
- b) the owner of the property if it is uninhabited;
- c) a majority of the members of the governing boards of each affected district; or
- d) a resolution approved by a majority of the members of a city council, county board of supervisors, governing body of a special district, or local agency formation commission that has jurisdiction over all or a portion of the school district.

The Secretary to the County Committee assists petitioners in securing the appropriate documentation.

After the County Committee has conducted a required public hearing(s) and/or studied the proposal, it prepares a series of findings, a report, and makes a determination to approve/disapprove the proposal. If the County Committee disapproves the proposal, the process ends. If the County Committee approves the proposal, an election is held on the proposal in territory selected by the County Committee. If the proposal passes at the election, the transfer action is implemented by the Board of Supervisors.

If the proposal is initiated by a majority of the governing board of each affected district and the territory proposed for transfer is less than ten percent of the territory of the transferring district, the proposal does not go to election.

Any action taken by the County Committee may be appealed to the SBE. The process is slightly different for community college districts and involves the Chancellor’s Office and the Board of Governors instead of the SBE.

7. What is the process for proposing a unification action?

Like a transfer of territory, an action to unify a school district(s) is initiated by the submission of a petition that has been determined to be sufficient and signed as required by law to the County Committee. The signature requirements are the same as those for a transfer of territory (except for proposals affecting the Los Angeles Unified School District [USD]).

After the County Committee has studied the proposal and held hearings on the matter in each of the affected school districts, it prepares a series of findings, a recommendation, and a unification plan for submission to the SBE. The SBE approves or denies the petition and plan. If approved, the proposal goes to an election in territory selected by the SBE. The SBE cannot be bypassed.

8. What is the process for proposing a formation action?

Like a unification, an action to form a school district(s) is initiated by the submission of a petition that has been determined to be sufficient and signed as required by law to the County Committee. The signature requirements are the same as those for a unification action.

After the County Committee has studied the proposal and held hearings on the matter in each of the affected school districts, it prepares a series of findings, a recommendation, and a plan for submission to the SBE. The SBE approves or denies the petition and plan. If approved, the proposal goes to an election in territory selected by the SBE. The SBE cannot be bypassed.

9. What is the County Committee’s role in relation to the number of trustees and the manner by which they are elected?

Except in a school district governed by a board of education provided for in the charter of a city, the County Committee has the power to establish or abolish trustee areas, rearrange the boundaries of trustee areas, increase or decrease the number of members of the governing board of a school district, or adopt an alternative method of electing governing board members. Board members can be elected by the registered voters of the entire district and reside anywhere in the district (“at-large” method); be elected by the registered voters of the entire district but reside in a trustee area (“trustee area” method); or be elected by the registered voters of the trustee area in which they reside (“ward” method).

A request for such an action may be initiated by the County Committee, a petition of the qualified electors in a district, or a resolution of the governing board of a district. At the conclusion of hearings held within the district, the County Committee will approve or disapprove the proposal. Approval constitutes an Order of Election; denial terminates the proposal.

If the matter goes to election, the voters determine the final outcome of the proposal.

10. What are the requirements for a petition?

To request a petition to reorganize a school or community college district, any citizen or school or community college district must write a letter to the Secretary of the County Committee. The letter should include a statement of what is proposed, the names of the districts affected, a

list of the reasons for such proposal, and a map and boundary description of the area involved. The Secretary will provide the format for the petition. The number of signatures required for a valid petition varies depending upon the type of action proposed.

Proposed Action	Number of Signatures Required for School District Organization Petitions
<p>Transfer of territory between/among districts</p> <p>Unification/deunification* *Except Los Angeles USD</p> <p>Formation of new district*</p> <p>Dissolution or lapsation</p> <p>Annexation</p>	<p>25 percent of the registered voters residing in the territory proposed for reorganization</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-or-</p> <p>Ten percent of the registered voters residing in any district proposed to be reorganized</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-or-</p> <p>The owner of uninhabited property if a subdivision map or an application for a project (as defined) has been filed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-or-</p> <p>A majority of governing board members from each affected school district</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-or-</p> <p>A resolution approved by a majority of the members of a city council, county board of supervisors, governing body of a special district, or local agency formation commission that has jurisdiction over all or a portion of the school district</p>
<p>Trustee areas</p> <p>Common governing boards</p> <p>Method of electing governing boards</p> <p>Increase/decrease in number of governing board members of a school district</p> <p>(Los Angeles USD only) Formation of new districts</p> <p>Unification/deunification</p>	<p>Signature requirements are determined based on the number of registered voters within the area to be reorganized with trustee areas. Under Education Code §5019(c)(1), depending on number of registered voters, signature requirements range from 50 to 1,000. Consult the code for exact requirements. Signatures submitted must be no older than 180 days when the petition is turned in.</p> <p>These provisions do not apply in school districts governed by a board of education provided for in a city charter.</p> <p>Eight percent of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the last gubernatorial election in the territory proposed to be reorganized.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-or-</p> <p>Five percent of the qualified electors residing in the school district.</p>

11. Can the County Committee be bypassed?

Certain petitions may bypass the County Committee and, with enough valid signatures from registered voters (typically 10% of the area to be reorganized), may be submitted directly to the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to be placed on an upcoming ballot. Any person or group considering such a petition should contact the Secretary to the County Committee for assistance. Certain hearing and compliance requirements still apply to petitions that may bypass the County Committee.

12. Where is the specific authority for the County Committee?

Authorization for the County Committee and its actions can be found in the California Education Code §4000, *et seq.* and 35500, *et seq.*, and the California Administrative Code, Title V.

13. Where can I get specific answers to questions about the County Committee?

Further information can be obtained from the Secretary to the County Committee:

Octavio Castelo, Director
Business Advisory Services
Los Angeles County Office of Education
9300 Imperial Highway
Downey, CA 90242-2890
(562) 922-6131