

LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

Los Alamitos Unified Begins Shift to New Voting System

The Los Alamitos Unified School District is beginning the process of changing the current at-large voting system to a voting system based on five trustee areas. This means that instead of voting for all five members of the school board, a voter will select one trustee to represent their area of the school district. The change in the election system will have no effect on school attendance boundaries.

The Board of Education is making this change because the California Voting Rights Act strongly discourages at-large voting and highly encourages area-based voting as a means of ensuring that minority group voting rights in a community are protected and not abridged or diluted. Most California cities, school districts and public agencies have converted, or are in the process of converting, to area-based voting. Some school districts and public agencies have been sued for not shifting away from at-large voting. In each case, the public agency has lost and been forced to pay steep legal costs with money that otherwise would support students and instruction.

To work with the community in making the change, the Los Alamitos Board of Education will hold public hearings to solicit input on how the District should be divided into trustee areas. The Board of Education is working with a professional demographer to draft multiple versions of voting area maps for review by the Board of Education and the public. The demographer will also propose a schedule for which areas will hold elections in 2020 and 2022.

The first meeting and public hearings are scheduled as follows:

Community Outreach Meeting
Sept. 18, 6:30 PM
District Office Board Room
10293 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos

Public Hearings
Sept. 24 and Oct. 14, 6:30 PM
District Office Board Room
10293 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos

After reviewing the different versions of the maps and election schedule, the Board of Education will hold additional public hearings before deciding on a final plan. The new voting system must be approved by the Orange County Committee on School District Organization and the State Board of Education before it goes into effect, most likely for the November 2020 election.

Anyone unable to attend a hearing but who wishes to learn more or submit comments or questions regarding the election transition process can visit the District website at www.losal.org/voting. A timeline for the transition, including dates and times for public hearings, can be found at the website. Comments or questions can be emailed to trusteeareaelection@losal.org.

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