

**BEFORE THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
SOUTHERN KERN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of Instituting By-Trustee
Area Elections in Single-Member
Trustee Areas Consistent with the
Purposes of the California Voting
Rights Act

RESOLUTION NO. 25-26-01

A Resolution by the Governing Board
Stating its Intent to Initiate a Change
of its Election System to By-Trustee
Area Elections in Single-Member
Trustee Areas

RECITALS

1. California Education Code sections 5019(a), 5019(c)(1) and 5030 authorize the Kern County Committee on School District Organization ("County Committee"), upon application of a school district's governing board, to change the method of election in a school district under its jurisdiction; and
2. Members of the Board of Trustees of the Southern Kern Unified School District ("School District" or "District") are currently elected in "at-large" elections, i.e., elections in which "each governing board member [is] elected by the registered voters of the entire school district" [Educ. Code § 5030(a)]; and
3. On or about July 11, 2025, the District received a letter from Robert Goodman contending that the District's at-large electoral system violates the California Voting Rights Act ("CVRA"), and threatening litigation if the District declined to adopt a by-trustee area election system; and
4. The Goodman letter was not accompanied by any evidence to support the claim of a violation; and
5. The Board of Trustees believes that, despite the foregoing, the public interest would be served by avoiding the expense of the threatened litigation by declaring its intent to institute by-trustee area elections; and
6. It is the considered view of the Board of Trustees that the public interest may also be well-served by election of its governing board members in "by-trustee area" elections, i.e., elections in which "one or more members residing in each trustee area [is] elected by the registered voters of that particular trustee area[.]" [Educ. Code § 5030(b)]; and
7. CVRA litigation is very costly to defend and would be a significant drain on other District resources; and
8. The District does not wish to risk costly litigation; and

9. If the County Committee approves this request to change the method of electing board members, Education Code section 5020(a)(2) exempts the County Committee from the obligation to submit its Resolution approving the change to the electorate because the change is being made in furtherance of the purposes of the CVRA to exempt by-trustee area electoral systems from liability under that Act; and
10. It is the intent of the Board of Trustees to change to single-member trustee areas for election of its members by trustee area; and
11. It is the intent of the Board of Trustees that the change to single-member trustee areas be implemented for the earliest possible election consistent with Education Code section 5020(a)(2); and
12. The adoption of by-trustee area elections will not affect the terms of any sitting Trustee, each of whom will serve out his or her current term; and
13. Elections Code section 10010 sets forth a process for the transition to single-member trustee areas and requires that the Board of Trustees set forth in this Resolution the specific steps it will undertake to facilitate this transition and an estimated timeframe for doing so.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

- A. The above Recitals are true and correct.
- B. The Board of Trustees hereby states its intent to transition to by-trustee area elections in single-member trustee areas.
- C. The Board of Trustees hereby adopts the proposed timeline of the specific steps it will undertake to facilitate the transition, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference.
- D. The Board of Trustees will complete the process prescribed by Elections Code section 10010 within 90 days of passage of this Resolution.
- E. The Board of Trustees shall apply to the County Committee for establishment of single-member, by-trustee area elections pursuant to Education Code section 5019(a) and 5019(c)(1).
- F. The Superintendent is directed to retain appropriate consultants, including a demographer, to support the Board of Trustees during the process of changing to by-trustee area elections in single-member trustee areas.
- G. The Superintendent shall send a copy of this Resolution to the County Committee on School District Organization.

H. The Superintendent shall consult with legal counsel to resolve all legal issues necessary to give effect to this Resolution.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was adopted upon motion by Trustee Vincellette, seconded by Trustee Hepburn, at a special meeting held on October 22, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: 5

NOES:

ABSENT:

DATED: October 22, 2025


Southern Kern Unified School District

CERTIFICATION

I Sunni Hepburn, am the Clerk to the Board of Trustees of the Southern Kern Unified School District. I certify that the foregoing Resolution was regularly introduced, passed, and adopted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting held on October 22, 2025.

DATED: October 22, 2025

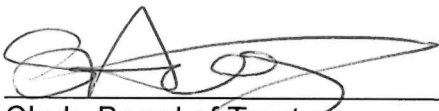

Clerk, Board of Trustees
Southern Kern Unified School District

EXHIBIT A

SOUTHERN KERN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

TENTATIVE TIMELINE FOR TRANSITION TO SINGLE-MEMBER TRUSTEE AREAS

Activity	Timing	Date
Demand Letter Received from Goodman		Dated June 30, 2025; Received July 11, 2025
Potential Resolution to Change to Single-Member Trustee Areas		October 22, 2025
Two Public Hearings Before any Maps Are Drawn	No more than 30 days apart	November 5, 2025, regular board meeting, and November 19, 2025, regular board meeting
Draft Maps and Election Rotation Published	7 days prior to 1 st public hearing	November 21, 2025
Two Public Hearings on Draft Maps		December 10, 2025, regular board meeting (Wednesday) and December 17, 2025, regular board meeting (Wednesday)
Final Public Hearing to Adopt Single-Member Trustee Area Plan Resolution to adopt final map	At least 7 days after any changes to map proposed for adoption	January 14, 2026, special board mtg
90 days from Resolution to Change		January 20, 2026
County Committee Proceedings		TBD

Initial meeting, five public hearings, county committee meeting