School District Reorganization

Brief Outline of Process
Reorganization of Districts

Education Code § 35511 defines “reorganization” as either:

- Forming a new district through one of several methods (see next slide)
- Transferring territory, including all or part of one district to another
Reorganization of Districts

Ways of forming a new district include any or a combination of:

- Dissolving two or more existing districts of the same kind to create a new one from the entire original territory
- Forming one or more new districts from parts of one or more existing districts
- Unifying districts (elementary and high school)
- Deunifying a district
  - Includes creating a new high school district with two or more component districts
## Reorganization of Districts

### Number of California school districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>3,579</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>1,535</td>
<td><strong>Unification laws passed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td><strong>Last mandated unification election</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>1,042</td>
<td><strong>Voluntary reorganization laws passed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>1,001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>979</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>963</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reorganization of Districts

Five-step process

1. Petition

For transfer of territory, dissolving districts and/or creating new districts:
Initiated and signed by 25% of property owners OR by a majority of board members in affected districts

For unification:
Initiated and signed by 10% of qualified voters OR via resolution by a majority of board members
Reorganization of Districts

Five-step process

2. Approval by County Superintendent
   *Education Code § 35704*
   Examine Petition
   Determines sufficiency of signatures
   Transmits to County Committee and State Board of Education

3. County Committee convenes
   *Education Code § 35705.5 & 35706*
   Holds public hearing
   Submits notice to Local Agency Formation Commission
   Studies impact and reviews conditions and criteria
   Makes recommendation to State Board of Education
Reorganization of Districts

Five-step process

4. State Board of Education reviews petition*
   - Holds public hearings
   - Approves or disapproves petition
   * BUT see next slide

5. County Superintendent calls for election
   - If approved in election, reorganization takes effect on the following July 1
Reorganization of Districts

* State Board does not review Petition under Education Code § 35708 & 35710(b) if:

- County Superintendent grants authority to County Committee to approve Petition
- Governing Board of each affected district consents to the Petition
- Secretary of the County Committee enters into an agreement with the affected districts to share the cost of the CEQA review

BUT, if the County Committee rejects the Petition, it is transmitted to the State Board
### Reorganization of Districts

**Timeline from petition to reorganization**

- Signatures gathered or board resolution passed: 90 days
- Petition verified by County Superintendent: 30 days
- County Committee hearing held: 60 days
- County Committee studies petition: 120+ days
- State Board of Education conducts hearing*: 120+ days
- Election order is delivered: 35 days
- County Clerk prepares for voting process: 120 days
- From November election to July 1 effective date: 235 days

**Total = 810 days or 2.2 years ... or longer**

* This step may not be required
Reorganization of Districts

Conditions for County Committee/State approval

- Will enroll an adequate number of students
- Is organized based on community identity
- Equitably divides property & facilities
- Does not promote racial or ethnic discrimination
- Does not increase costs to the state

more …
Reorganization of Districts

Conditions for County Committee/State approval

- Promotes sound education, doesn’t disrupt programs
- Does not increase school facility costs
- Is not designed to increase property values
- Promotes sound fiscal management
Consolidation studies have not reached consensus. Some districts realize financial benefits, while others never see the hoped-for fiscal savings.