

## **Background**

The Orcutt Union School District, like many other cities and school districts in the state, is in the process of changing how members of the Board of Education are elected to office. This change is in response to requirements within the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) which prohibits at-large elections which impair the ability of a protected class to elect candidates or influence elections, and in response to potential litigation for not implementing the provisions of CVRA. In May of 2018, the Orcutt Union School District Board of Trustees directed staff to begin the process of moving Orcutt Union School District from at-large elections to by-trustee elections. The district hires an outside demographer to help us during this process. The information below, including the timeline, will help you understand the process in more detail.

### **At-Large vs. By-Trustee Area**

Since its unification, the five (5) board members in the Orcutt Union School District are elected by all of the voters in the district. This is known as an "at-large" election. When there are multiple board seats up for election, voters choose multiple candidates from those who are running when they complete their ballot.

When elections are held through "by-trustee areas," the district is divided into smaller areas and candidates for the board seat representing that district area must reside in that specific district area. Voters select one candidate from those who are running to represent their area of the district and do not vote on the seats representing other areas of the district.

At the May 9, 2018 Board Meeting, the Board approved Resolution No. 23, "Intent to Initiate Transition from At-Large Elections to By-Trustee Area Elections" to be effective for the 2022 election using 2020 Census data.

### **Determining Trustee Areas**

Trustee areas must be roughly the same size in terms of the number of residents. Using the latest Census data available, a demographer generates maps that balance the size of each area along with requirements to ensure protected classes of voters are not divided in a manner that would make it more difficult for them to elect candidates of their choice or influence the outcome of an election. Trustee areas will be determined using Census data collected in 2020 once that data is certified. The demographer may also take into consideration local conditions such as major roadways, natural barriers, and other factors.

### **Trustee Area Map Options**

The district's demographer will generate maps after the September 8, 2021 regular board meeting. The draft maps will be published in October/November for public review and input. If the board requests revisions to the initial maps, those revisions will be published for public review and input.

## Timeline

DATE	ACTIVITY
August 11, 2021	<b>Board meeting: First Pre-Map Public Hearing and Presentation</b>
September 8, 2021	<b>Board meeting: Second Pre-Map Public Hearing</b>
October to November 2021	Preparation of draft trustee area scenarios
<b>*December 1, 2021*</b>	<b>Board Meeting: First Public Hearing on Trustee Area Scenarios</b>
December 15, 2021	<b>Board Meeting: Second Public Hearing on Trustee Area Scenarios</b>
<b>*January 12, 2022*</b>	<b>Board Meeting: Third Public Hearing on Trustee Area Scenarios Board Selection of Trustee Area Map Board Consideration of Change in Election Method</b>
February 2022	County Committee on School District Organization Holds a Public Hearing and Considers Approval of Change in Election Method and Trustee Area Map
November 2022	First Election Held Utilizing Trustee Areas

\*Date is tentative