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El Camino Community College District Board to Consider Election Revisions

The El Camino Community College District Board of Trustees will consider authorizing staff to draft a process and timeline for revising trustee area boundaries and the election format at its February meeting.

At the January 17 regular meeting, the Board directed staff to research the process required to modify trustee area boundaries and changing from “at large” to “trustee area” elections. The board will discuss the matter at its February 22 meeting.

Currently, trustees in the El Camino Community College District must live in the trustee area they represent; however, residents of the El Camino Community College District vote for all trustee candidates “at large;” that is, voters cast their vote for all candidates on the ballot. When voting by “trustee area,” residents would only vote for candidates who reside in their trustee area.

The Los Angeles County Office of Education is considering advising area school districts to review current voting practices to ensure they are representative of their constituents. The issue has come to the forefront with recent lawsuits against “at-large” voting practices filed against cities and education agencies around the state. New trustee areas would be determined utilizing 2010 census data, and based on population.

“This proactive move by our Board will ensure that our community is represented in the best possible manner,” said William Beverly, president of the El Camino Community College District Board of Trustees. “By initiating this analysis process, the Board will have access to relevant information as we consider election options. We want to ensure our system is proportionate, fair, and consistent with ‘one person one vote’ representation.”

Trustee area boundaries in the El Camino Community College District were established in the formative years of the district. In 1946, after strong recommendations by a consulting team to establish a two-year college in the Inglewood/South Bay area, the governing boards of the Centinela Valley, Redondo (later to become the South Bay Union High School District), Inglewood and El Segundo districts won 10-1 voter approval for the creation of a junior college. Torrance soon joined the newly chartered group, and the El Camino Community College District was officially established as of July 1, 1947. Trustee boundaries were drawn to represent the area unified high school districts that worked to establish the college district.

In 1993, the South Bay Union High School District split into two districts – the Manhattan Beach Unified and Redondo Beach Unified districts, making the original rationale for the trustee area boundaries inconsistent.

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