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Redistricting

At the July 27, 2011 Board of Trustees meeting, the Board voted to commence the process for redistricting the Trustee Area boundaries and change the procedure of electing trustees from an "at large" method to "by trustee" area elections.

Announcement

The Imperial Valley College Board of Trustees has started a process that will result in major changes to the way trustees are elected as well as boundaries of areas they represent.

The board voted Wednesday to modify trustee area boundaries and change from "at large" to "trustee area" elections.

Currently, the seven trustees must live within the boundaries of a specific area, which correspond to boundaries for the county's high school or unified school districts: Brawley Union, Central Union, Calexico Unified, Holtville Unified, San Pasqual Unified, Imperial Unified and Calipatria Unified. All residents of the Imperial Community College District vote for all trustee candidates on the ballot.

That will change, beginning in November 2012, when residents will only vote for candidates who reside in their trustee area.

The issue has come to the forefront with recent lawsuits against "at-large" voting practices filed against cities and education agencies around the state.

The new trustee areas will be determined utilizing 2010 census data, and based on population. It will be the first time since the community college district was founded in 1959 that board representation areas will be redrawn.

These changes are being driven by the California Voting Rights Act, legislation approved in 2002 which discourages "at large" elections by making them subject to expensive litigation due to discrimination. The 2010 census is the first since the voting rights act was passed and community college districts and other agencies up and down the state are reviewing or changing their elections procedures.

“ *"This proactive move by our Board will ensure that our community is represented in the best possible manner," said Victor Jaime, IVC interim president. "By initiating this 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."* **”**

The redistricting effort will take about three months and the board will be appointing a citizens committee to provide input on the new district boundaries. "We also will be working to have maximum public input during this process to identify areas of community interest that must be maintained," said Jaime.

Current trustee boundaries were established in the formative years of the IVC district. In 1959, Imperial County voters- by a ratio of 12 to 1-- approved a ballot measure to establish the two-year college district in the Valley. Trustee boundaries were drawn At that time to represent the area's high school or unified school districts.

"With the passage of the California Voting Rights Act, this method of representation has become obsolete," Jaime said.

"Additionally, there is a large disparity between populations in our seven districts which potentially could be counter to "One Person One Vote provisions" of the Federal Voting Rights Act," he added.

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