

SONOMA COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION  
Sonoma County Office of Education – SCOE Board Room  
5340 Skylane Boulevard, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**NOVEMBER 7, 2011 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - UNADOPTED**

Jeanne Bassett Fernandes, Committee Chair, called the meeting of the Sonoma County Committee on School District Organization to order at 5:33 p.m. and led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was held at the Sonoma County Office of Education in Redwood Rooms A and B. MEETING

Jeanne Bassett Fernandes, Jeremy Brott, Vernon Calsy, Sandra Elliot, Larry Haenel, Kathy Hayes, Ronald Kristof, Rick Massell, Mary Schafer, and Robert Smith MEMBERS PRESENT

James DeWilder MEMBERS ABSENT

Denise Calvert, Patti Springer, and School and College Legal Services representatives, Marko Fong, and Frank Zotter STAFF PRESENT

On motion by Ms. Schafer, seconded by Mr. Kristof, the motion carried to approve the November 7, 2011 agenda.

1. ACTION ITEMS

*1.1 Approval of the November 7, 2011 Agenda*

On motion by Ms. Schafer, seconded by Mr. Brott, the motion carried to approve the September 12, 2011 minutes. Ms. Hayes abstained.

*1.2 Approval of the September 12, 2011 Minutes*

None.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ron Abler, a member of the Forestville School District Board, spoke in objection to the reduction of County Board members. He stated that he does not think this is a good idea. The first response should be the concern for kids, all of these offices are non-partisan, people who are on school boards, as nearly as possible, eliminate politics. If you reduce to 5 members and make the boundaries the same as the Board of Supervisors, it will become political. He feels people will run as teams, instead of doing what's best for the kids; districts would be in more than one Trustee area. Currently Forestville is in 2 trustee areas and at least 3 Supervisorial districts, which makes it difficult in dealing with representation. He requested that if we do reduce to 5 members that we consider boundaries that don't split up school districts and that the population be approximately equal.

4. PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Bassett Fernandes announced that the committee had received correspondence from West Sonoma County Union High School District and Healdsburg Unified School District, voicing their opinion on the matter.

*4.1 Correspondence*

Mr. Kristof motioned to approve the proposal to reduce the County Board of Education from 7 to 5 members; Mr. Smith seconded.

5. ACTION ITEMS

*5.1 Resolution to Approve or Disapprove Proposal to Reduce County Board of Education from 7 to 5 members*

Discussion ensued. Mr. Kristof stated that he would like to hear other arguments for 7, has been going back and forth, and is leaning towards 5. Mr. Brott said that he has also been going back and forth, but the documents provided have made a strong argument to reduce to 5, and that he hasn't really heard too much from the Board. Ms. Schafer commented on a few concerns that were raised during previous meetings, 1) difficulty in obtaining a quorum, and 2) the issue of representation; she feels that obtaining a quorum with 5 would be doable and if the representation would be a full Board, rather than as individuals, this would be doable too.

Mr. Abler made additional comments stating he did not have the benefit of all the information the Committee had received, but he said the Board does not represent every one, it is an appeals Board. If someone should come with an appeal they would go to the person they voted for to represent their district. He added that he could not imagine the small percentage that the reduction would make to the County Board's budget. He does not see economics as a justification for something that would be detrimental.

*5.1 Resolution to Approve or Disapprove Proposal to Reduce County Board of Education from 7 to 5 members - Continued*

Karen Bosworth, a member of the Sonoma County Board of Trustees, also spoke during this time, stating that it would be very sad to reduce to 5, because of the loss of representation.

Mr. Kristof responded to the audience, stating that the \$40,000 savings may not seem significant, but to him that's a teacher's salary. He added that we have all struggled with this decision and there have been arguments for both sides.

On motion by Mr. Kristof, seconded by Mr. Smith, the motion carried to approve the proposal to reduce the County Board of Education from 7 to 5 members with a roll call vote of 10 ayes, 1 absent.

Ms. Calvert stated that the resolution would be transmitted to the County Clerk.

Mr. Zotter explained Ed Code Section 1004 and the waiver request procedure, stating that this Committee can request a waiver for the requirement of an election. The request form needs to be sent to the State for their January meeting and they would then vote on the request by a majority vote. He also discussed the election dates for trustees and how the reduction would affect them.

*5.2 Waiver Request – the Committee will consider requesting the State Board of Education waive the requirement for an election.*

On motion by Ms. Schafer, seconded by Mr. Haenel, the motion carried to request that the State Board of Education waive the requirement for an election.

Mr. Zotter added that the State is under a mandate to approve the waiver unless there are findings. The waiver needs to notify the represented groups/unions, both certificated and classified. Ms. Calvert will keep the Committee apprised as we move forward with the request.

## 6. INFORMATION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Calvert began by reviewing the 2011 Pre-Redistricting Population stating that an additional 629 voters from the areas of Napa that cross over into Sonoma County would have to be added in when determining trustee areas.

*6.1 The Committee will review options for potential changes to trustee areas*

Upon the Committee's direction, Ms. Calvert only reviewed the options (4, 5, and 6), which addressed the redistricting for 5 trustee areas. She stated that the registrar commented that in future redistricting for census that they could add a goal of aligning supervisorial areas with school district boundaries as well as their other goals.

Ms. Calvert and the Committee reviewed the options with the following comments:

- Option 4: • It would reduce confusion if the trustee areas match the Supervisorial districts, which would be option 4  
• Would like to see the districts more clearly
- Option 5: • Affects Old Adobe  
• Makes sense and minimizes impact to school districts, the appropriate option would be the one that has the least impact
- Option 6: • Affects Santa Rosa High and Mark West districts  
• Not a viable option

One member commented that Option 5 and 6 affect different parts of the County, and asked if another option could fix areas that split the districts.

The Committee members also discussed or commented on other issues such as: 1) having two representatives for school districts is not a bad idea, a person can go to either one; 2) change in boundaries doesn't really have an impact on school districts or how voters vote, etc. Mr. Kristof asked if it would be possible to poll district superintendents on concept of splitting their districts between two County Board representatives; what their priorities would be; and would it make any difference to them.

The Committee will adopt changes to the trustee areas at their next meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 30, 2012.

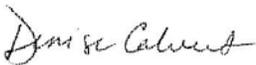
Ms. Bassett Fernandes adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

*6.1 The Committee will review options for potential changes to trustee areas –  
**Continued***

7. NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME

8. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Denise Calvert, Secretary  
S.C.C.S.D.O.