

A request for action may be initiated by (a) the County Committee, (b) a petition of the qualified electors in a district or (c) a resolution of the governing board of a district. At the conclusion of a hearing, the County Committee will approve or disapprove the proposal: approval constitutes an order of election; denial terminates that proposal.

**What are the requirements for a petition?**

Any citizen or school district that wants to register a petition to reorganize a school district must write a letter to the Secretary of the County Committee. All petitions submitted shall include a statement of what is proposed, the names of the school district affected, the geographical area which would be affected with a map and legal description and the reason(s) for the petition. The number of signatures varies depending on the type of action proposed.

<u>Proposed Action</u>	<u>Number of Signatures Required</u>
Unification and formation of a new district	25% of the registered electors residing in the territory proposed to be reorganized. E.C. Section 35700(a). 10% of the registered electors residing in the territory proposed to be reorganized. E.C. Section 35721(a)
Transfer of territory between/ among districts	25% of the registered electors (E.C. Section 35700 (a)) or 10% of the registered electors (E.C. Section 35721 (a)) residing in the territory proposed to be transferred. If the territory is uninhabited, the owner may petition.
Trustee areas	5% or 50 (whichever is less) of the registered voters residing in a district with 2,500 or fewer registered voters; or three percent or 100 (whichever is less) in a district with more than 2,500 registered voters but less than 10,000 registered voters; or 1% or 250 (whichever is less) in a district with between 10,001 and 50,000 registered voters; or 500 of more registered voters in a district with between 50,001 and 100,000. These provisions do not apply in school districts governed by a board of education provided for in a city charter.

**Can the County Committee be bypassed?**

Any proposal to reorganize school districts must be considered by the County Committee for decision or recommendation. The County Committee is readily accessible through its Secretary.

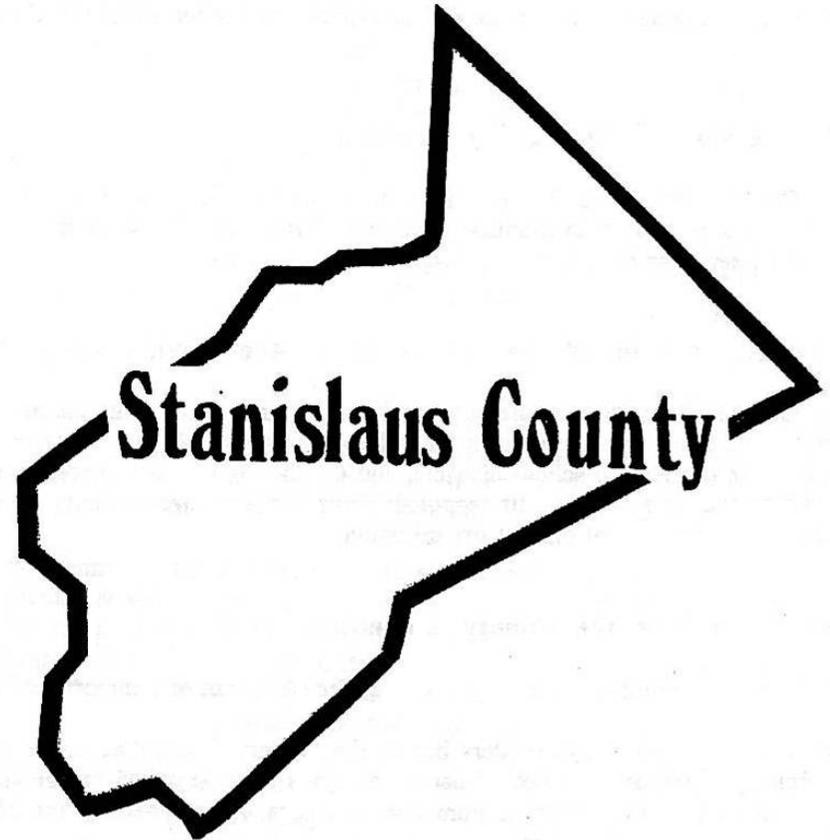
**Where is the specific authority for the County Committee?**

Authorization for the County Committee and its actions can be found in the California Education Code Sections 4000, et. seq. and 35500, et. seq., and the California Administrative Code, Title 5.

**Where can I get specific answers to questions about the County Committee?**

From the Office of Stanislaus County Superintendent of Schools, Tom Changnon, Superintendent, 1100 H Street, Modesto, CA 95354. Telephone (209) 238-1700.

# Questions and Answers



## STANISLAUS COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

# Stanislaus County Committee on School District Organization

## **What is the County Committee on School District Organization?**

The County Committee was created by the California State Legislature in 1949. It functions within the rules and regulations established by the Legislature and its own policies and procedures. It responds to petitioners and school district governing boards, and may initiate studies on its own. Its duties and responsibilities pertain to school districts —kindergarten through community college.

The activities of the County Committee are coordinated by the County Superintendent of Schools and it interacts with the State Department of Education, County Board of Education, State Board of Education, the County Board of Supervisors and other state and county agencies. Expenses and activities are funded from the County General Fund.

## **Who serves on the County Committee?**

The County Committee consists of 11 members appointed by trustee representatives of each school district in Stanislaus County. Their term of office is four years. The members serve without pay.

## **What are the broad responsibilities of the County Committee?**

The County Committee studies and makes recommendations in the areas of (1) the organization and reorganization of school districts, (2) the transfer of territory between and/or among school districts, and (3) the number of trustees and the manner by which they are elected. Its responsibilities include development of a county-wide Master Plan for school district organization.

## **How often does the County Committee meet?**

The County Committee meets upon call of the chairman or a majority of its members.

Public hearings related to matters before the County Committee are held throughout the county as required by law. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by a majority of the County Committee members. The meetings are subject to the provisions of the Brown Act.

## **How do items get on the County Committee's agenda?**

The County Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee serves as secretary to the County Committee. Agenda items are originated by, or submitted to the County Superintendent of Schools. Official minutes of each County Committee meeting must be maintained and are available according to the rules and regulations of the Committee at the Office of the County Superintendent of Schools.

## **How are new districts organized and reorganized?**

The formation of new districts is a major responsibility of the County Committee. The County Committee supports the formation of unified districts which meet the criteria set forth in state law and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. It recommends action to form, dissolve or lapse a school district, annex all or part of a district to another district, transfer all or part of a district to another district, unify or deunify a district, and prepare and amend the county Master Plan for School District Organization.

## **How is organization and reorganization action initiated?**

Action is initiated by a citizen petition, a developer who has filed a tentative tract map, a request from a school district governing board(s), or by the County Committee. After a preliminary study is made, the required number of public hearings held, and the County Committee has considered the matter at a regular meeting, a tentative plan is formulated.

A report, final plan and recommendations are submitted to the appropriate agency (County Board of Education, County Board of Supervisors, Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges or State Board of Education).

## **How may a transfer of territory be accomplished?**

A request to transfer inhabited territory from one district to another is initiated by either a petition signed by at least 25% of the registered voters in the territory to be transferred or 10% of the registered voters in the territory to be transferred, the owner of the property, or a majority of the members of the governing boards of each of the affected school districts. If the process is initiated by a petition of registered voters, there are different County Committee procedures depending on whether the petitions is a "25% petition" or a "10% petition".

After the County Committee has studied the requested transfer, and hearings are held in each of the affected school districts on the matter, a report and recommendation are prepared. If the affected boards agree to the proposed transfer, and it will not adversely affect racial or ethnic integration, the matter is submitted to the State Board of Education. The State Board approves or denies the petition which, if approved, goes to an election in the territory selected by the State Board.

A request to transfer uninhabited territory may be initiated by a petition signed by a majority of the members of the governing boards of the affected school districts or the owner of the property who has filed a tentative tract map. If the owner and affected boards agree, the County Board of Supervisors shall be notified if the County Committee holds the required public hearings and orders the petition granted.

## **What is the County Committee's role in relation to the number of trustees and the manner by which they are elected?**

The County Committee has the power to establish, abolish or rearrange trustee area boundaries and increase or decrease the number of members of the governing board of a school district if such district is not governed by a city charter.