

**Number of members; terms; student member**

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(a) Except as otherwise provided, the governing board of a school district shall consist of five members elected at large by the qualified voters of the district. The terms of the members shall, except as otherwise provided, be for four years and staggered so that as nearly as practicable one-half of the members shall be elected in each odd-numbered year.

(b) A unified school district may have a governing board of seven members in the event the proposal for unification has specified a governing board of seven members. The members of the board shall be elected at large or by trustee areas as designated in the proposal for unification and shall serve four-year terms of office.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), and except as provided in this subdivision and Section 5018, the governing board of an elementary school district other than a union or joint union elementary school district shall consist of three members selected at large from the territory comprising the district. Whenever, in any such elementary school district the average daily attendance during the preceding fiscal year is 300 or more, the procedures prescribed by Section 5018 shall be undertaken.

(d) There may be submitted to the governing board of a school district maintaining one or more high schools a pupil petition requesting the governing board to appoint one or more nonvoting pupil members to the board pursuant to this section.

There may also be submitted to the governing board of a school district maintaining one or more high schools a pupil petition requesting the governing board to allow preferential voting for the pupil member or members of the board. This request may be made in the original petition for pupil representation on the board or in a separate petition after a pupil member or members have been appointed to the board.

Whether for pupil representation or for preferential voting for the pupil member or members, the petition shall contain the signatures of either (a) not less than 500 pupils regularly enrolled in high schools of the district, or (b) not less than 10 percent of the number of pupils regularly enrolled in high schools of the district, whichever is less.

Upon receipt of a petition for pupil representation, the governing board shall, commencing July 1, 1976, and each year thereafter, order the inclusion within the membership of the governing board, in addition to the number of members otherwise prescribed, at least one nonvoting pupil member. The board may order the inclusion of more than one nonvoting pupil member.

Upon receipt of a petition for preferential voting for the pupil member or members, the governing board shall allow preferential voting for the pupil member or members of the governing board.

Preferential voting, as used in the section, means a formal expression of opinion that is recorded in the minutes and cast prior to the official vote of the governing board. A preferential vote will not serve in determining the final numerical outcome of a vote. No preferential vote will be solicited on matters subject to closed session discussion.

The governing board may adopt a resolution authorizing the nonvoting or preferential voting pupil member or members to make motions that may be acted upon by the governing board, except on matters dealing with employer-employee relations pursuant to Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

Each pupil member shall have the right to attend each and all meetings of the governing board, except executive sessions.

Any pupil selected to serve as a nonvoting or preferential voting member of the governing board shall be enrolled in a high school of the district, may be less than 18 years of age, and shall be chosen by the pupils enrolled in the high school or high schools of the district in accordance with procedures prescribed by the governing board. The term of a pupil member shall be one year commencing on July 1 of each year.

A nonvoting or preferential voting pupil member shall be entitled to the mileage allowance to the same extent as regular members, but is not entitled to the compensation prescribed by Section 35120.

A nonvoting or preferential voting pupil member shall be seated with the members of the governing board and shall be recognized as a full member of the board at the meetings, including receiving all materials presented to the board members and participating in the questioning of witnesses and the discussion of issues.

The nonvoting or preferential voting pupil member shall not be included in determining the vote required to carry any measure before the board.

The nonvoting or preferential voting pupil member shall not be liable for any acts of the governing board.

(Amended by Stats. 2000, Ch. 135, Sec. 36.)

Reference:

Education Code [5018](#)

Education Code [35120](#)

Government Code [3540](#)