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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fresno County Committee on School District Organization Disapproves Petition to Transfer School District Territory

Fresno, CA – November 7, 2024 – The Fresno County Committee on School District Organization met tonight and voted on a petition proposing the transfer of school district territory out of Sierra Unified School District and into Clovis Unified School District. After thorough consideration of the petition, including over five hours of presentations and public comments received during prior meetings, the Committee has decided to disapprove the petition. This decision is also based on the documents submitted, and recommendations from the staff of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. The County Committee would like to gratefully acknowledge the countless hours spent by district and county staff gathering, organizing, and preparing information to help us weigh the impacts of the proposal.

The petition was rejected because it does not address compelling educational needs and fails to meet the minimum requirements established by the Education Code. Specifically, the nine minimum conditions for approval were not all substantially met, which required the Committee's disapproval of the petition.

"The legislative intent behind school district organization law is to ensure that any reorganization truly serves the educational needs of the community," said Dr. Larry Wilder, Chairperson of the County Committee. "Approval of this petition would not only fail to meet the minimum standards but would also pose significant educational and financial risks to Sierra Unified School District."

The County Committee wishes to remind the community that the process for reviewing petitions to transfer school district territory is both costly and time-consuming, utilizing substantial district and county resources. Every dollar and every hour spent reviewing a non-meritorious proposal diverts money and attention that could otherwise be directed to students in the classroom. Therefore, the Committee encourages the submission of only those proposals that can clearly demonstrate compelling local educational needs and meet the minimum Education Code requirements. The law does not permit territory transfers based on convenience, individual preferences, or the benefit of real estate developer interests.

The County Committee is committed to preserving the effectiveness and viability of local school districts and will only approve proposals that substantively address community educational needs and comply with the Education Code. The disapproval of this petition serves as a reminder of the importance of thorough consideration and planning when proposing school district reorganizations.