

# Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High Introduction to Districting

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# Election Systems

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1. “At Large”
2. “From District” or “Residence” Trustee Areas
3. “By District/By Trustee Area”

**The California Voting Rights Act  
was written to specifically  
encourage by-district elections.**

# California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

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- ❑ Under the Federal Voting Rights Act (passed in 1965), a jurisdiction must fail 4 factual tests before it is in violation of the law.
  
- ❑ The California VRA makes it significantly easier for plaintiffs to force jurisdictions into “by-district” election systems by eliminating two of the US Supreme Court Gingles tests:
  - ~~❑ Can the protected class constitute the majority of a district?~~
  - ❑ Does the protected class vote as a bloc?
  - ❑ Do the voters who are not in the protected class vote in a bloc to defeat the preferred candidates of the protected class?
  - ~~❑ Do the “totality of circumstances” indicate race is a factor in elections?~~
  
- ❑ Liability is now determined only by the presence of racially polarized voting and dilution of the protected class’s voting strength

# CVRA Impact

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- **Switched (or in the process of switching) as a result of CVRA:**
  - 200 cities
  - At least 328 school districts
  - 46 Community College Districts
  - 1 County Board of Supervisors
  - 73 water and other special districts.
  
- **Palmdale, Santa Clara and Santa Monica fought “on the merits.” All lost.**
  - Santa Monica: CA Supreme Court sent case back down. Now back in Superior Court.
  - Palmdale spent about \$1.8 million, Santa Clara \$1.37 million, and Santa Monica over \$7 million, just on their defense.
  - Santa Monica plaintiffs requested \$22 million
  - So far, no jurisdiction has won a case.
  
- **Sample settlements:**
  - Palmdale: \$4.7 million
  - Modesto: \$3 million
  - Highland: \$1.3 million
  - Anaheim: \$1.1 million
  - Whittier: \$1 million
  - Santa Barbara: \$600,000
  - Tulare Hospital: \$500,000
  - Camarillo: \$233,000
  - Compton Unified: \$200,000
  - Madera Unified: about \$170,000
  - Hanford Joint Union Schools: \$118,000
  - Merced City: \$42,000
  
- **An estimated \$16 million in total settlements and court awards so far.**

# Districting Process

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Step	Description
<b>Two Initial Hearings</b> January 28 & February 11	Held prior to release of draft maps. Education and to solicit input on the composition of districts.
<b>Release draft maps</b> March 4	Maps must be posted at least 7 days prior to 3 <sup>rd</sup> hearing.
<b>Hearing on draft maps</b> March 11	First of two public hearings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence.
<b>Hearing on draft maps</b> March 25	Second of two public hearings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence.
<b>Board selects its preferred map</b> April 14	Map and election sequence selected by simple majority vote
<b>County Committee Hearing</b> TBD, likely May 2025	The County Committee on School District Organization will hold a public hearing followed by the final vote on the map and election system change.
<b>First Elections</b> Nov. 2026 & Nov. 2028	First three seats hold election in November 2026, and the remaining two in 2028

# Districting Rules and Goals

## 1. Federal Laws

**Equal Population**  
**Federal Voting Rights Act**  
**No Racial Gerrymandering**



## 2. California Criteria

*In prioritized order:*

1. **Geographically contiguous**
2. **Avoid division of neighborhoods and “communities of interest”**  
(Socio-economic geographic areas that should be kept together)
3. **Avoid division of Cities and Census Designated Places**
4. **Easily identifiable boundaries**
5. **Compact**  
(Do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people)

## 2. California Prohibition

“Shall not adopt election district boundaries for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against an incumbent, political candidate, or political party.”

## 3. Other Traditional Districting Principles

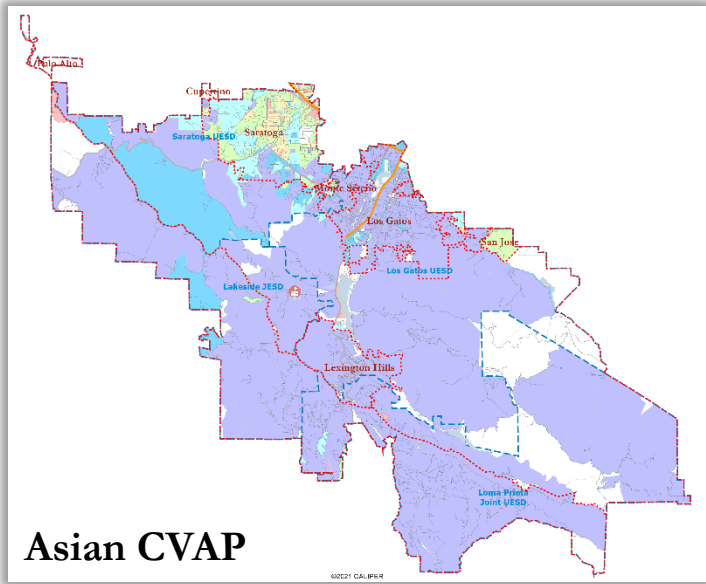
**Future population growth**

# Demographic Summary

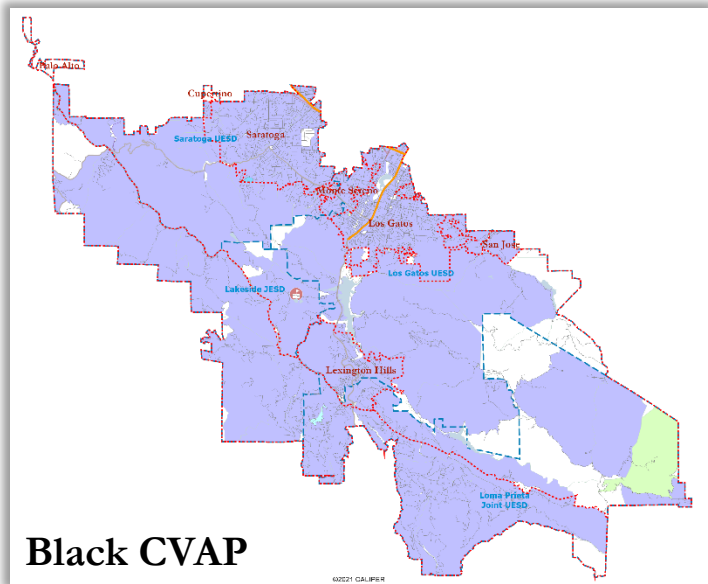
Each of the five trustee areas must contain about 11,424 people.

Category	Field	Total	Category	Field	Total
2020 Census	Total Population	57,119	Age	age0-19	23%
Total Pop.	Hispanic/Latino	6%		age20-60	48%
	NH White	58%		age60plus	29%
	NH Black	1%	Immigration	immigrants	28%
	NH Asian/Pac.Isl.	33%		naturalized	69%
	NH Native Amer.	1%	Language spoken at home	english	69%
Citizen Voting Age Pop	Total	40,157		spanish	3%
	Hisp	5%		asian-lang	17%
	NH White	69%		other lang	10%
	NH Black	1%	Language Fluency	Speaks Eng. "Less than Very Well"	8%
	Asian/Pac.Isl.	25%		Education (among those age 25+)	hs-grad
Native Amer.	0%	bachelor	36%		
Voter Registration (Nov 2022)	Total	40,552	graduatedegree		41%
	Latino est.	4%	Child in Household	child-under18	32%
	Spanish-Surnamed	4%	Pct of Pop. Age 16+	employed	57%
	Asian-Surnamed	22%		Household Income	income 0-25k
	Filipino-Surnamed	1%	income 25-50k		6%
	NH White est.	72%	income 50-75k		5%
NH Black	0%	income 75-200k	30%		
Voter Turnout (Nov 2022)	Total	26,696	income 200k-plus		53%
	Latino est.	4%	Housing Stats	single family	84%
	Spanish-Surnamed	3%		multi-family	16%
	Asian-Surnamed	19%		rented	23%
	Filipino-Surnamed	1%		owned	77%
	NH White est.	76%	Voter Turnout (Nov 2020)	Total population data from California's adjusted 2020 Census data. Citizen Voting Age Population, Age, Immigration, and other demographics from the 2018-2022 American Community Survey and Special Tabulation 5-year data. Turnout and Registration data from California Statewide Database. "Latino" figures calculated by NDC using Census Bureau's Latino undercount by surname estimate.	
NH Black	0%				
Total	36,638				
Latino est.	3%				
Spanish-Surnamed	3%				
Asian-Surnamed	19%				
Filipino-Surnamed	1%				
NH White est.	75%				
NH Black est.	0%				

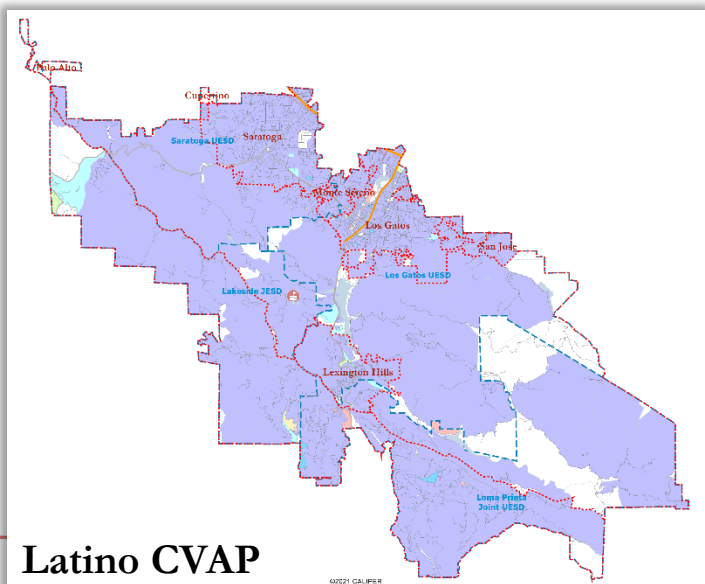
# Voting Rights Act “Protected Classes”



**Asian CVAP**



**Black CVAP**



**Latino CVAP**

# School Demographics

District Data from SARCs				Census Data		
Students	Los Gatos	Saratoga	Total		Tot. Pop.	CVAP
Enrollment	1,977	1,198	3,175			
Hispanic or Latino	12.0%	5.3%	9.5%	Hispanic/Latino	6.4%	4.7%
Asian	15.5%	61.4%	32.8%			
Filipino	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	NH Asian/Pac.Isl.	33.0%	25.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%			
Black or African American	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	NH Black	0.8%	0.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	NH Native Amer.	0.8%	0.0%
White	56.3%	18.2%	41.9%	NH White	58.4%	69.0%
Two or More Races	9.9%	8.3%	9.3%			
Other/not provided	4.9%	5.4%	5.1%	Other	0.6%	0.2%

# Defining Neighborhoods

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**1<sup>st</sup> Question: How do you describe or name the area where you live?**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Question: What are its geographic boundaries?**

**What other neighborhoods are there?**

**Examples of physical features defining a neighborhood boundary:**

- Natural neighborhood dividing lines, such as highway or major roads, rivers, canals and/or hills
- Areas around parks or schools
- Other neighborhood landmarks



# Defining Communities of Interest

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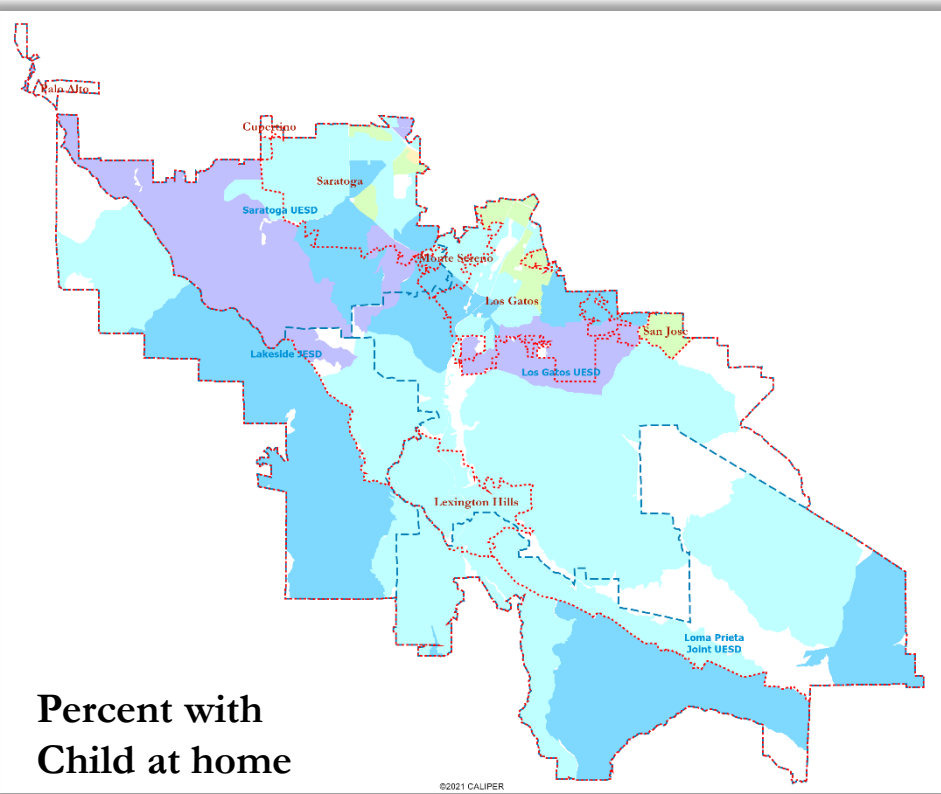
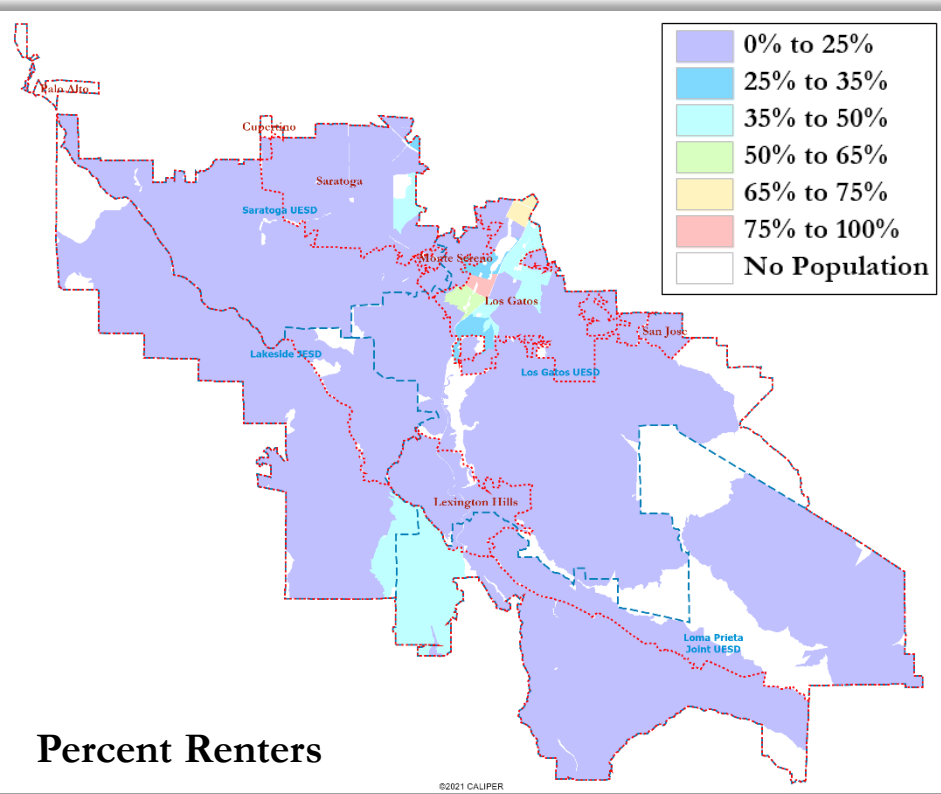
California Elections Code Section 21130(c)(2):

**A “community of interest” is a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.**

The shared interests may include (but are not limited to):

- ❑ Shared public policy concerns such as education, public safety, public health, environment, housing, transportation, and access to social services. cultural districts;
- ❑ Shared socioeconomic characteristics;
- ❑ Similar voter registration rates and participation rates; and /or
- ❑ Shared histories.

Definitions of Communities of Interest may not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.



# Your Turn:

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1. **What area do you consider your neighborhood?**
2. **What are your “communities of interest”?**

For each answer, please provide:

- **Geographic boundaries**
- **The history or defining shared characteristic of the area**

In the absence of public testimony, planning records and other similar documents may provide definition.

3. **Any other questions about the process, criteria, maps, or any other part of this process?**



# Share Your Thoughts

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## Website

[By-Trustee Area Election Transition - Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District](#)

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