

LTUSD, LTCC investigating altering how boards are elected

By Kathryn Reed

Early next year the boards of Lake Tahoe Unified School District and Lake Tahoe Community College are expected to decide if they will alter elections to no longer allow candidates to be elected at-large.

The California Voting Rights Act is forcing K-12 and community colleges to look at their demographics to ensure everyone is represented.

“The data shows we’re at risk if we keep it at-large,” LTUSD Superintendent Jim Tarwater told the board at the Nov. 13 meeting. “We have 40 percent Latino population. We don’t reflect our population.”

LTUSD and LTCC have formed committees to work on this together with their top administrator. LTUSD’s committee is board members Wendy David and Larry Green, and Tarwater. The college committee is board members Molly Blann and Roberta Mason, and President Kindred Murillo.

They are all scheduled to meet after Thanksgiving, with the respective boards expected to take action after the first of the year. Both have elections in 2013.

Lawsuits filed elsewhere have involved schools, though it does not mean municipalities are immune. South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News* the city wants to be part of the discussions, but that the city is different because it doesn’t have the disparity issues the schools do because the boundaries are different. LTUSD and LTCC include

the unincorporated part of El Dorado County in the basin.

If either LTUSD or LTCC abandons at-large elections, each of the five board members would be elected from a geographic area. This is different from South Tahoe Public Utility District which has districts, but they have nothing to do with geography.