

## Valley school boards facing recall elections

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Recall elections in two Valley districts could change the landscape of local school boards.

Recall elections will be held in Selma Unified and Golden Plains Unified school districts Nov. 3, and will ask voters to reconsider some trustees serving on each school board.

Selma voters will be asked if they want to recall school board members Gilbert Lopez, John Lorona and Roger Orosco. Candidate Sara Rodriguez is up to replace Lopez, Mark Falcon could replace Lorona and Andy Montijo could replace Orosco.

Rodriguez is a retired Selma Unified secretary, Falcon is a retired warehouse stocker and Montijo is a business owner, according to the [League of Women Voters](#).

The recall effort is in response to the school board's vote earlier this year to [oust](#) Superintendent Mark Sutton for unclear reasons, despite public push-back. Sutton has since been [hired](#) to oversee Central Unified, and Tanya Fisher of Santa Clara Unified School District is now leading Selma Unified.

At Golden Plains Unified, school board members Richard Gonzalez, Luiz Ramirez and Maria Gomez will be on the recall ballot. Candidates Thomas Fairless and Edna Munguia are running for Gonzalez's spot, Sal Parra is running for Gomez's spot and Leticia Fernandez is running for Ramirez's spot.

Fairless is a farmer and businessman, Munguia is a school bus driver, Parra is a farmer and Fernandez is a business owner.

The recall comes after the newly elected board members abruptly voted to end Jesus Cruz's contract as superintendent earlier this year. Martin Macias, former director of English learning at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, was named superintendent of Golden Plains in July.

Only voters living in zones represented by the three Selma trustees will be asked to vote, while all Golden Plains voters will be able to vote in their recall election.

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Fresno County Superintendent Jim Yovino

Fresno County Superintendent Jim Yovino has spoken out about the [influx](#) of recall efforts in the Valley, saying, "Upheaval in school boards causes disruption in the education process, which ultimately affects the children of those districts."

The Golden Valley Unified School District, in Madera County, also held a [recall](#) election in September, ousting three of its school board members. Trustees Kathleen Crumpton, John Moseley and Carla Neal were recalled by wide margins and were replaced by Mona Diaz, Maria Knobloch and Brian Freeman.

The recall came in response to the school board's ousting of Superintendent Andrew Alvarado in February despite widespread public support of him. The school board contends that Alvarado was not fired, but that it was a mutual separation.

Raisin City Unified School District – a small district made up of about 600 voters in western Fresno County – also is facing recall efforts, but no election has been called. There, recall leaders are pushing to clean out the entire school board. The efforts are mostly in response to Superintendent Anna Ramirez’s felony charges for not repaying house loans.

Recall efforts at Kingsburg Joint Union, over the school board’s handling of its football program, have since been dropped because signatures were not turned in to the Fresno County Clerk’s Office on time.

The word “recall” also has made its way to Fresno Unified, but there is no sign yet of real progress in the process. [Fresnans for Responsibility and Ethics in Education](#), a political action committee created in light of a federal investigation of the district’s no-bid contracts, has called for FUSD trustees to be recalled in an attempt to oust Superintendent Michael Hanson.

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Also on the ballot

West Hills Community College Area 4: Leonard “Len” Falter, incumbent; Bobby C. Lee, Sophia Aguilar

West Hills Community College Area 5: Mark McKean, incumbent; Sylvia V. Chavez, Huron mayor

West Hills Community College Area 6: Steve Cantu, incumbent; Raul Hernandez, R.S.P. instructional aide

Fig Garden Fire Protection District: Lisa Coleman and Louis H. Linney, incumbents; Oney Durney, a retired fire captain; Elizabeth Kolstad, businesswoman

Richgrove Community Services District: Juanita Flores, incumbent; Alberto H. Sanchez, agricultural laborer; Atzimba Hernandez, no ballot designation; Albert Sabado, athletic director; Rose B. Rodriguez, retired school secretary