

**The Natomas Unified School District
Special Education Program
Struggles to Meet Student Needs
June 30, 2026**



SUMMARY

In 1975, Congress passed legislation, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), granting every child with a disability the right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Those words became the foundation of special education throughout the country. Schools could no longer exclude children with disabilities from their classrooms. Furthermore, the law mandated that schools provide students with disabilities accommodations or resources needed to help them succeed academically to their fullest potential. That law became what is now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Today, school districts across the nation struggle to meet that mandate, especially as federal funding shrinks. School districts, including those in Sacramento County, face financial challenges, difficulty hiring enough specialized staff, and, especially since the pandemic, obstacles in getting students to attend school regularly. Meanwhile, the number of students qualifying for special education services continues to grow for a variety of reasons: constantly improving medical care lengthens the lifespan of people with disabilities and chronic illnesses; a law known as “Child Find” requires districts to

identify and serve all students with disabilities; and the number of people with certain qualifying disabilities, such as autism, continues to rise.

While this difficulty in adequately serving all special education students and their families is not isolated to particular public schools, the 2025-26 Sacramento County Grand Jury received a complaint about the Natomas Unified School District (District) in particular. In response to that specific complaint, the Grand Jury investigated Natomas' special education program. In so doing, the Grand Jury seeks to provide some perspective as to how the District's special education program performs and how it compares to other districts in Sacramento County.

The overall subject of effective special education services, whether nationwide, statewide or even within Sacramento County itself, is a complex study, beyond the scope of this Grand Jury report. Nevertheless, this report includes observations, findings and recommendations regarding the District's special education program and comparison of some perspective relative to larger Sacramento County school districts. On the important subject of special education for students with disabilities, the Grand Jury makes this report in an effort to improve both the efforts of the District and, perhaps, those of other districts in the County.

BACKGROUND

The Natomas community lies within the northwestern part of the City of Sacramento, just north of downtown and near the Sacramento International Airport. The District serves about 17,000 students, offering programs from preschool and transitional kindergarten through adult education. The district's population has challenges. In the District, 13.1% of students are English learners and more than 50 languages are spoken by students there. Additionally, 66.5% of students are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged. Its 16.4% of students in special education is higher than the state average of 14.8% as well.

The 2025-26 school year hit the District especially hard. The Sacramento Police Department pulled its resource officers from school campuses due to staffing shortages. Community members have complained publicly about the disproportionate suspension of African American/Black students in the District. Teachers went out on strike for seven days in March. This investigation, however, focuses solely on the District's special education program.

Natomas serves its special education population through its own Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), a State governmental designation that indicates

who is responsible for providing services to students with disabilities. Usually, the California Department of Education (CDE) only allows larger districts to become single-district SELPAs because districts need to provide such a vast array of services to all of their own students as well as professional development to their staff. Multiple-district SELPAs, such as the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE), can share the burden and the administrative costs, although they also must share the funding.

CDE considers Natomas a medium-sized district, but nevertheless granted the District a waiver. The District sought the waiver in 2018 in order to keep its special education funding intact within the District. Initially, the plan worked and the District’s special education funding problems eased, but expenses continued to escalate. Those interviewed for this investigation painted a picture of a SELPA now struggling to meet its obligations, not an uncommon situation for any school district.

The District’s SELPA is administered by an assistant superintendent with three special education directors, each assigned to a specific region of the District. As of May 2026, the District was seeking a new SELPA director.

The District’s SELPA does not cover charter schools within its attendance boundaries. District charter schools chose to be in other SELPAs. Without the charter school population, the District serves 10,865 students. Of those 1,782 were special education students in 2025-26. This represents about 16% of the District’s non-charter student body. The District charter schools served 595 special education students the same year, or about 10% of the charter school population.

Natomas Enrollment 2025-26

	Total Enrollment	Special Education Enrollment	Percentage of Total Enrollment
Non-Charter Schools	10,865	1,782	16.4%
Charter Schools	5,799	595	10.3%
TOTAL	16,664	2,377	14.3%

The percentage of non-charter students in the District who were special education students is comparable to the percentage of such students in the other larger districts in Sacramento County.

Special Education Enrollment in Non-Charter Schools 2025-26

	Natomas	Elk Grove	Folsom-Cordova	Sacramento	San Juan	Twin Rivers
Total Enrollment	10,865	64,256	22,167	36,136	39,470	22,785
Special Education Enrollment	1,782	10,217	3,171	6,732	6,124	3,989
Percent of Total	16.4%	15.9%	14.3%	18.6%	15.5%	17.5%

Source: California Department of Education

The Complaint

The Grand Jury received a complaint that Natomas SELPA was in violation of the “Williams Act,” which states California schools must provide all students with safe schools, quality teachers, and equal access to instructional materials. The complaint further alleged the District placed special education students in general education classes without adequate support, hired uncredentialed teachers, and excluded moderately to severely disabled students from receiving materials for early literacy programs which other students received. The complaint stated special education students were scared and not progressing academically due to these issues.

CDE and the District’s Local Control Accountability Program (LCAP) budget plan, both have found the District was not in violation of that law.

Interviews with those working with special education students in the District confirmed the District’s special education students could benefit from additional support, especially more instructional aides. The Grand Jury, however, found no evidence the District fails to support students to the best of its ability. Interviews indicated that special education teachers and instructional aides, while facing a daunting challenge educating students and managing caseloads, tend to be warm, caring people who want the best for their students. A review of complaints filed with CDE and the state Office of Administrative Hearings against the District over the past three years did not show lack of classroom support as a common complaint.

The District has not hired uncredentialed teachers, as CDE requires all teachers hired by a district to hold a teaching credential. The District, like many other school districts, struggles to maintain a special education program fully staffed by teachers credentialed in special education. When the District cannot hire enough teachers with full credentials, the District hires long-term substitute teachers and interns, people who are in college learning to be teachers while teaching. While substitute teachers and interns may not offer the same level of instruction that a veteran teacher might, they are credentialed by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Like many other school districts, the District has an especially difficult time filling speech pathologist vacancies. The

District contracts with private speech pathologists to fill the need, but continues to post the job openings.

The District has created a “Diverse Future Teachers Program” that offers financial incentives and tuition assistance to people who want to become District teachers. Natomas graduates, people who live in the District, and those who want to teach difficult-to-fill subject areas, such as moderate- to severe-disability special education classes, receive additional financial incentives.

District staff indicated special education teachers who wanted early literacy curriculum and materials received them.

Though the Grand Jury could not confirm the allegations of the original complaint, its investigation did raise some concerns about the District’s special education program as well as the programs in neighboring districts. Two other districts, Twin Rivers and Sacramento City, seem to struggle as much as Natomas in many areas, such as chronic absenteeism, academic test scores and suspension rates.

Twin Rivers, Sacramento City and Natomas combine to serve Sacramento County’s urban core. This report focuses on Natomas because the complaint was made about that District, but data is included for the five other single-district SELPAs for comparison. Data for SCOE SELPA is not included because it serves students in the juvenile justice system, some small school districts, and several specialized programs, including those for children with severe disabilities.

Natomas’ Special Education Costs Encroach on the District’s General Fund

The average annual cost of educating a California student with disabilities in 2023-2024, the most recent data, was \$23,834, almost three times the cost of a general education student, making special education one of a school district’s most expensive programs. Although the state and federal governments earmark funds for special education, school districts generally use funds from their general operating budgets to make up significant shortfalls. Natomas’ budget records illustrate this common situation for school districts. The District’s 2025-26 budget projected that State and Federal resources would be insufficient to cover all the District’s special education expenses and predicted the District’s General Fund would need to pay \$18.48 million in special education expenses to make up the shortfall from State and Federal resources.

By the time the District reported its second interim budget plan to the school board in March 2026, it was clear the adopted budget was optimistic. The District showed special

education encroaching upon its General Fund by about \$20.5 million in 2025-26. This was an increase of about \$3 million over the 2024-25 General Fund encroachment.

The Governor's budget for 2026-27 includes an additional \$509 million statewide to equalize special education base rates for districts throughout the state. The anticipated additional money, however, will not be enough to address the District's funding shortfall.

Despite the obvious funding issues, special education costs will continue to be problematic for the District. However, cuts to funding are especially difficult in special education. Neglecting special education requirements carries a high risk of potentially costly legal action against the District. School districts that run short of special education funding have limited options since state and federal mandates do not allow them to cancel services.

METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury researched federal and state regulations, reviewed state and district data and budgets, conducted several interviews, and reviewed written correspondence and documents. Interviewees included school employees, parents, and special education advocates. Jurors also watched videos of past school board meetings and read minutes of Community Advisory Committee meetings.

A complete list of sources is in the Appendix.

DISCUSSION

Special Education Students Missing Too Much School

Absenteeism

CDE defines chronic absenteeism as missing more than 10 percent of the school year due to absences. Research shows that, nationwide, disabled students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are more likely to miss school than any other subgroup of students in a school. Interviews with special educators in Sacramento County indicate this is at least partially due to the medical fragility of many special education students. Research also confirms that students who miss any amount of school fall behind in their studies. The more days missed, the greater the negative impact on standardized testing scores, classroom behavior and achievement, and graduation rates.

The CDE has cited the District's special education program as "significantly disproportionate" in the area of chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism not only affects a district's funding source as California school funding is largely based on

attendance, but schools face a difficult job educating students who are not in their classrooms. Natomas is not alone. All SELPAs in Sacramento County are wrestling with chronic absenteeism. CDE’s data, however, shows the District’s African American/Black special education students have missed so much school over the past three years that the State has required the District to pull a team together and develop a plan to address the issue. This is not the only issue the State has directed the District to address. In addition to the chronic absenteeism issue, the CDE also cited the District for overidentifying African American/Black students over the past three years as emotionally disturbed and requiring special education. CDE mandated a corrective plan for that as well. The CDE’s data for 2024-25 also shows the District overidentified Hispanic/Latino students as emotionally disturbed and requiring special education. However, Natomas was not labeled significantly disproportionate because it had only overidentified Hispanic/Latino students for one year.

In addition to the Natomas District, Elk Grove Unified and Sacramento City Unified have also been cited by CDE to create a corrective plan to address chronic absenteeism. Both Elk Grove and Sacramento City were also cited by CDE for disproportionality with African American/Black students.

Suspension

While the District’s absenteeism has caught CDE’s attention, its special education suspension rate is also significantly higher than the State average of 5.4% and higher than most of the surrounding districts in the county. Suspension is another issue that keeps Natomas’s special education students out of school.

Suspension Rates of Special Education Students

	Natomas	Elk Grove	Folsom-Cordova	Sacramento	San Juan	Twin Rivers
2024-25	10.9%	4.8%	6.9%	8.9%	6.7%	11.4%
2023-24	10.7%	7.1%	7.3%	8.6%	7.9%	11.5%
2022-23	11.6%	6.7%	6.9%	9.2%	8.4%	12.1%

Source: California Department of Education

Research indicates suspension does not reduce incidents of student behavior or make a school safer, because the punishment does not teach alternative behaviors. Students do, however, lose instruction time when suspended, and research shows a correlation between suspensions and lower academic achievement.

One operating procedure in the District that stands out is the District’s practice that schools bring special education case managers into discipline discussions when

students are being suspended. The District created a consistent discipline matrix that explains the expected consequences of escalating student behaviors. The procedure reminds staff that, if a student is on an IEP or a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the student's case manager should be informed of the pending suspension and the behavior leading to the suspension. Per the District wide discipline behavior matrix, the District involves case managers at step three of the five step chart, at which point the student is subject to suspension. A special education student's case manager is required to monitor and document student behavior, as well as anything else that could prevent a student with disabilities from progressing academically.

If the case manager is included when the inappropriate behavior first occurs, alternative behaviors can be taught directly and IEP meetings can be scheduled to address unacceptable behavior before it progresses.

Impact of Absenteeism on Academic Performance

Research indicates missing school negatively affects academic performance. In addition, the District loses State revenue from lower average daily attendance. As discussed earlier, the District has experienced both chronic absenteeism and substantially higher rates of suspensions of its special education students. At the same time, consistent with the research, special education students in the District generally have lower academic performance than such students in most of the other larger school districts in the county.

The table below indicates the percentage of special education students who are proficient, that is, meet State standards for their grade level in the designated subject area, over the past three years.

Percent of Special Education Students Proficient in English Language Arts

	Natomas	Elk Grove	Folsom-Cordova	Sacramento	San Juan	Twin Rivers
3rd Grade						
2024-25	11.48%	22.28%	26.83%	24.13%	19.04%	13.41%
2023-24	17.53%	22.69%	30.67%	18.21%	20.92%	14.23%
2022-23	13.04%	23.93%	31.84%	18.69%	17.24%	9.77%
6th Grade						
2024-25	10.31%	19.34%	15.79%	14.35%	11.96%	9.71%
2023-24	22.22%	15.64%	13.85%	14.59%	9.84%	10.94%
2022-23	4.55%	14.92%	15.88%	13.64%	13.62%	4.58%
11th Grade						
2024-25	2.94%	13.20%	24.47%	7.72%	11.55%	11.46%
2023-24	7.14%	13.55%	19.46%	10.76%	14.35%	10.52%
2022-23	8.99%	15.53%	23.35%	11.11%	13.68%	5.17%

Source: California Department of Education

Percent of Special Education Students Proficient in Math

	Natomas	Elk Grove	Folsom-Cordova	Sacramento	San Juan	Twin Rivers
3rd Grade						
2024-25	11.57%	26.74%	31.02%	25.05%	19.45%	14.18%
2023-24	18.56%	25.25%	32.74%	18.94%	23.60%	21.16%
2022-23	22.58%	28.18%	42.57%	24.10%	21.16%	17.25%
6th Grade						
2024-25	8.33%	15.56%	10.63%	12.44%	7.38%	8.28%
2023-24	10.96%	12.42%	10.24%	14.11%	6.97%	8.27%
2022-23	4.55%	8.79%	11.38%	12.71%	9.41%	4.98%
11th Grade						
2024-25	1.52%	7.41%	5.18%	2.87%	3.59%	5.86%
2023-24	2.41%	3.28%	9.15%	2.84%	5.08%	2.66%
2022-23	1.08%	5.20%	6.55%	2.24%	3.35%	1.30%

Source: California Department of Education

Transition Planning Needs More Emphasis

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires every special education student to have a transition plan in place no later than their 16th birthday. The

plan is created with the student and parents. It must address the student’s post-secondary goals in employment, education and training, and independent living. Case managers or transition specialists are expected to assist each student in identifying possible career choices. They also must help them prepare to either enter the workforce or college immediately after high school by linking them with outside agencies to give students the skills they need to succeed in finding a job or enter college. A case manager or transition specialist must conduct some form of assessment to collect data used to create the transition plan.

Transition planning remains a problem. IDEA requires 100 percent compliance when creating transition plans to ensure special education students do not miss employment or higher education opportunities after they leave high school and the support provided there. The District had less than 85% compliance in 2023-24. Only Sacramento City Unified School District had a lower level of compliance when compared with all SELPAs in the county.

Percentage of Special Education Students with Transition Goals or Services in 2023-24

Natomas	Elk Grove	Folsom-Cordova	Sacramento	San Juan	Twin Rivers
84.59%	97.81%	97.58%	83.13%	88.24%	98.51%

Source: California Department of Education

The District’s only career preparation program for special education is WorkAbility I, a CDE grant-funded program that temporarily helps pay the salaries of a limited number of special education students so they can gain work experience. All single-district SELPAs in Sacramento County have a WorkAbility I program.

WorkAbility I’s program funding is extremely limited. The Natomas district received \$73,470 during the 2025-26 school year. That paid for a job coach, temporary job placement for 11 students and a Success Club to provide pre-employment skills to students selected by teachers. Natomas’ WorkAbility I program does not provide services to all eligible students. While some Natomas High and Inderkum students receive services, the program is not offered on the alternative high school’s campus, Discovery High.

WorkAbility I was never intended to be a stand-alone program, but rather a component of a multi-prong transition program. The CDE’s evaluation criteria includes collaboration with outside agencies. According to interviews, the District is not using the WorkAbility I program in conjunction with other employment programs such as the State Employment

Development Department or Sacramento Works Youth Services. When districts partner with other outside employment training programs, they can stretch their own funding further and serve more students. Collaboration among agencies also helps districts leverage additional grant money in many cases.

The District refers a limited number of high school students to the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for job training assistance. The DOR, the nation's largest vocational rehabilitation program, helps people with disabilities prepare for the workforce and can assist with college costs. The DOR also offers a Transition Partnership Program (TPP) to school districts to prepare high school students for employment. About half the SELPAs in Sacramento County participate in the TPP program. The Natomas SELPA does not.

Furthermore, the District's 2025-26 SELPA Plan gives conflicting information on what Natomas is doing to prepare special education students for careers or college before they leave high school. The SELPA Plan, a state mandated document, says "service is available on the continuum of services; however, no students are currently receiving this service" in the categories of: work experience education, job coaching, mentoring, referral to and placement in other agencies and travel/mobility training, such as how to take a city bus or schedule paratransit. This statement is factually incorrect, at least for those students receiving WorkAbility I services.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

F1. Natomas District has received a citation from CDE for significant disproportionality in chronic absenteeism, which adversely affects students because students who are chronically absent miss critical instruction time.

R1a. The Grand Jury recommends the District bring the special education community together to address disproportionality by including its critics, students, parents, general education staff and community in the process for developing a plan to address disproportionality. The planning process and finished product should be completed by January 1, 2027.

R1b. The Grand Jury recommends the District ensure transparency and public participation through community meetings, newsletters, reports to the school board and press releases to the media. This should begin by Oct. 1, 2026.

F2. The CDE has identified Natomas SELPA as a special education program that overidentifies African American/Black students as emotionally disturbed and that has an excessive number of African American/Black special education students missing school.

F3. The Grand Jury has found, through interviews and data, that African American/Black students tend to receive more severe punishments by suspensions at some Natomas schools. This is problematic as it indicates African American/Black students are missing school at a higher rate than their peers.

F4. The Grand Jury finds that the suspensions and chronic absenteeism issues result in African American/Black students' exclusion from a rigorous public school education.

R2-R4a. The Grand Jury recommends the Natomas SELPA administration address the African American/Black overidentification and suspension issues by holding listening sessions with African American/Black families and leaders by January 1, 2027. Information and feedback from this process should then be incorporated into the plan CDE has ordered resulting from the disproportionality citation.

R2-R4b. The Grand Jury recommends the Natomas Unified School District administration implement ethnic, racial, and disabled cultural awareness training to all district employees, classified and certificated, by January 1, 2027.

F5. The Grand Jury finds the District's discipline matrix may delay notification to case managers of a student's behavioral issue until the student is facing possible suspension, resulting in some special education students unnecessarily missing school.

R5. The Grand Jury recommends the District modify the discipline matrix by October 1, 2026 to include the case manager earlier in the process to permit teaching of alternative behaviors directly and scheduling of IEP meetings to address behavior before it progresses, and notify all school administrators of the change.

F6. Natomas case managers do not consistently write transition plans as required by federal law, which deprives special education students of opportunities to prepare for life after high school.

R6. The Grand Jury recommends the Natomas SELPA begin monthly, site-based IEP audits by November 1, 2026 to determine trends in IEP errors and implement training at the site level on a consistent basis to ensure transition plans are written and other IEP errors are corrected.

F7. The 2025-26 SELPA plan does not accurately reflect the provision of transition services to students, which could give the impression the SELPA is doing nothing.

R7. The Grand Jury recommends Natomas amend its SELPA plan by October 1, 2026 to include the transition services the District does provide including the WorkAbility I program and referrals to the State Department of Rehabilitation.

F8. The Grand Jury finds a lack of highly trained special education staff, due to high turnover and low retention, resulting in a shortage of experienced, fully credentialed

special education teachers. This is problematic as research clearly shows schools staffed with experienced, fully credentialed teachers tend to produce students with higher academic achievement.

R8. The Grand Jury recommends the District's administration consider by January 1, 2027 creating an educational pathway that would train high school students to become classroom instructional aides upon graduation and, possibly, coordinate with the District's existing teacher preparation program to become credentialed teachers.

F8. The Grand Jury finds the District has created an incentive program for people who want to become credentialed teachers with a focus on people who already live in the community, in response to its immediate need to find and retain highly qualified teachers in several subject areas, including moderate- to severe-disability special education classes. The District is commended for this program.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the grand jury requests a response from the following "governing body" as specified in Penal Code section 933(c) within 90 days, for all Findings and Recommendations:

- Board of Trustees
Natomas Unified School District
c/o Micah Grant, President
1901 Arena Blvd.
Sacramento. CA 95834

Mail or deliver a hard copy response to:

The Honorable Lawrence G. Brown
500 G Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Email the response to:

TapiaE@saccourt.ca.gov
Erendira Tapia-Bouthillier
Sacramento County Grand Jury Coordinator

INVITED RESPONSES

- Dr. Robyn Castillo, Superintendent, Natomas Unified School District
1901 Arena Blvd.
Sacramento. CA 95834
- Megan Hudson, Assistant Superintendent, Natomas Unified School District,
or the District's current SELPA director
1901 Arena Blvd.
Sacramento. CA 95834
- Nico Vaccaro, President, Natomas Teachers Association
2121 Natomas Crossing Drive, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95834
- Members of the Natomas SELPA Community Advisory Committee
1901 Arena Blvd.
Sacramento. CA 95834

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

DISCLAIMER

One member of the Grand Jury was recused from this investigation due to a family conflict. That member had no role in the investigation or the preparation of this report.

GLOSSARY

Advocate: A person, either paid or unpaid, who assists the family of a special education student in navigating the process of securing services for a child.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA): The Federal law that protects people with disabilities from discrimination.

California Department of Education (CDE): The State agency responsible for administering education policies and programs in California.

Case manager: A school official who writes the Individualized Education Program, collects data, tracks a student's progress, and acts as a liaison between the family and the school.

Certificated: A school employee who holds a teaching certificate or credential.

Classified: A school employee who does not hold a teaching certificate or credential.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC): A state-mandated special education-focused group that includes parents and school staff.

Credential: A license to teach school children, issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. California offers a wide variety of credentials.

EDJOIN: An extensive educational employment website.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that all students with an Individualized Education Program receive a public education appropriate for the individual student at no cost to families.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The Federal legislation that governs special education throughout the nation.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A legally binding contract a school creates with families to outline how a special education student will receive instruction.

IEP team: A team that develops the student's IEP, and minimally includes the student's parent or guardian, a school administrator, a special education teacher, a general education teacher familiar with the student's curriculum, and anyone who has conducted special education testing for the purposes of the IEP such as a school psychologist. Other team members may be required depending upon circumstances.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP): A school or district budget plan that ties spending to specific goals.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): A legal mandate that schools place students in classrooms with their non-disabled peers to the fullest extent possible.

Special Education: An extensive program designed to ensure that students with disabilities are educated to their full extent possible.

504 Plan: A written plan developed by a school and family to assist a student with disabilities based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In education, these plans are for students with less severe disabilities who do not qualify for an IEP.

Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA): A consortium of school districts created to develop a local plan describing how special education services would be provided by the schools within the consortium. School districts of sufficient enrollment, or those receiving a waiver by the CDE, can form a single-district SELPA.

Transition plan: A written plan created by a special education student's 16th birthday that outlines what the student's post-secondary goals are in education, work, and housing and a plan to achieve those goals.

APPENDIX

The Grand Jury accessed the following laws and regulations:

- The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- California Education Code

- California Code of Regulations
- California Department of Education (CDE) Procedural Safeguards

The Grand Jury reviewed numerous databases to collect information that either supported or invalidated claims made during interviews.

- California Special Education Technical Assistance Network
- CDE Dashboard
- CDE DataQuest
- EDJOIN
- Transparent California

- The Office of Administrative Hearings

The Grand Jury accessed several websites to review agendas and minutes and acquire subject matter knowledge, including:

- Natomas Unified School District
- California Department of Education
- Natomas SELPA
- Natomas Community Advisory Committee

- Local Plan Annual Budget Plan 2025-26
- Local Plan Annual Service Plan 2025-26
- Local Plan Government and Administration
- Natomas Unified School District governing board meeting, video, Feb. 11, 2026
- Report presented to the Board of Trustees, March 23, 2022, and accessed from the District website on Feb. 21, 2026
- Individual School Accountability Report Card (SARC) reports, Natomas Unified School District
- Natomas Black Parents United Facebook page
- California Legislative Analyst's Office, "Overview of Special Education in California," Nov. 6, 2019
- Natomas Teachers' Association contract
- EDJOIN, educational employment website, Accessed Feb. 13, 2026
- National Center for Educational Statistics, Accessed Feb. 22, 2026
- Disability Rights California website, Accessed Feb. 22, 2026
- Comprehensive School Safety Plans, Natomas Unified School District individual school plans
- Natomas Unified Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), 2025-26
- Natomas Unified School District General Fund Budget, 2025-26
- First Interim Budget Report to the School Board, December 2025
- Second Interim Budget Report to the School Board, March 2026

The Grand Jury reviewed the following articles on relevant academic research:

- WestEd, California Special Education Funding System Study, October 2020
- The Center for School Turnaround, Assessing and Improving Special Education, 2017
- Institute of Education Services, California's Special Education Local Plan Areas: Funding Patterns, Inclusions Rates, and Student Outcomes, December 2021
- WestEd, How Are Suspensions Related to School Climate in California Middle Schools?, September 2020
- UCLA Civil Rights Project, Lost Instruction Time in California Schools: The Disparate Harm in Post-Pandemic Punitive Suspensions, October 2023
- WestEd, Serving Students with Disabilities, 2020
- Economic Policy Institute, Student Absenteeism Who Misses School and How Missing School Matters for Performance, September 18, 2018