



SACRAMENTO COUNTY GRAND JURY NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2026

MEDIA CONTACT

Laurie Sopwith, Grand Jury Foreperson
SopwitL@saccourt.ca.gov or (916) 874-7559

The Natomas Unified School District Special Education Program Struggles to Meet Student Needs

Following a complaint, the Sacramento County Grand Jury opened an investigation into the Natomas Unified School District (NUSD)'s special education program. The program is administered by NUSD's Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA).

The report, *The Natomas Unified School District Special Education Program Struggles to Meet Student Needs*, concludes that NUSD has a pattern of chronic absenteeism that, while high for the general population, is even higher for students with disabilities. The district also tends to suspend special education students at a rate that's twice as high as the state average and higher than NUSD's general education population. The report notes that the California Department of Education this year cited NUSD as having a disproportionate number of African American/Black students with disabilities who are chronically absent and for disproportionately identifying African American/Black special education students as emotionally disturbed. Chronically absent is defined as missing classes for at least 10 percent of the school year.

Furthermore, the Grand Jury report finds that NUSD is not consistently preparing transition plans for eligible high school students with disabilities to ensure they are prepared for college or a career after leaving NUSD. The district's SELPA has a work experience program, WorkAbility I, to assist students, but not every high school in NUSD offers the services.

The full investigative report is available for public review on the Grand Jury website:

<https://www.sacgrandjury.org/reports.aspx>.