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## Board Memorandum

### Santa Rosa City Schools – Proposed SELPA Local Plan

**Date:** March 25, 2026

**To:** Board of Education  
**From:** Lisa August-Hulme, Interim Superintendent  
John Fischer, Executive Director, Special Services  
**Re:** Santa Rosa City SELPA Local Plan [First Read]

### Background

On December 17, 2025, the Board of Education authorized staff to develop and submit a Local Plan to the California Department of Education (CDE) to establish a new Santa Rosa City (SRC) SELPA, with a target implementation date of July 1, 2026. This decision was based on many factors, including the anticipated ability for SRCS to:

- Reduce administration costs – divert this funding to instruction and services
- Increase local decision-making and responsiveness
- Align resources more closely with local student needs
- Maintain accountability within the local community
- Streamline systems while continuing required services

State law requires each SELPA to adopt a Local Plan that demonstrates how the district will meet all federal and state requirements for serving students with disabilities within the SELPA.

### Purpose of the Local Plan

The Local Plan is a state-required document that provides assurances to the CDE that each local education agency (LEA) of the SELPA will comply with federal and state laws, such as:

- Will provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Maintain systems for Child Find, assessment, and IEP development
- Ensure procedural safeguards and parent participation in decision-making
- Implement required special education services and supports
- Maintain appropriate governance, administration, and fiscal oversight



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The Local Plan will contain all sections currently required by CDE for an initial SELPA Local Plan, including Sections:

- A – Certifications [to be completed with Board approval]
  - B – Governance and Administration [draft attached]
  - D – Annual Budget Plan [draft attached]
  - E – Annual Service Plan [draft attached]
- Plus attachments [drafts attached]

The required elements of the Local Plan are prescribed in detail in Education Code, and LEAs must use a state template for the Local Plan. As a result, the content of Local Plans across California are somewhat standardized, and focused on compliance assurances rather than operational detail. Operational procedures and local agreements amongst the LEAs of the SELPA and other partnering agencies are not generally submitted with the Local Plan.

### **Board Governance Responsibilities**

As the governing board of the SELPA, the SRCS Board of Education will be responsible for:

- Approving and updating the Local Plan
- Ensuring compliance with all legal requirements
- Adopting policies consistent with SELPA operations
- Appointing members to the Community Advisory Committee
- Providing oversight and fiscal accountability for special education programs and services

*(Ed. Code §§ 56195.5, 56205(a)(12).)*

### **Local Plan Development Process**

As noted above, the Board authorized staff to proceed with developing a new Local Plan on December 17, 2025. Subsequently, in order to meet statutory requirements and ensure stakeholder input, SRCS established:

- A Local Plan Committee to assist SRCS staff in the development of the draft Local Plan from January 22, 2026 to March 6, 2026.
- A “Founding” Community Advisory Committee (CAC), which was appointed by the Board on February 11, 2026.

The CAC is appointed by and functions in an advisory capacity to the governing board of the SELPA (here, the SRCS Board of Education). The primary purpose of the Founding CAC is to review and provide comment on the proposed Local Plan to found the SRC SELPA, as required



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by Education Code, and to develop CAC Bylaws outlining CAC procedures. Once the new SRC SELPA is established, the CAC will expand into its full membership and role as set forth in CAC Bylaws and outlined in the Local Plan.

### **CAC Advisory Statement**

It is the CAC's responsibility to advise the Board and SRCS administration regarding the development, amendment and review of the Local Plan, and to provide comments for the Board's review and consideration.

The Founding CAC had its first meeting on February 12, 2026. On February 13, 2026, staff provided all sections of the draft Local Plan, Sections A, B, D and E, with attachments, to CAC members. CAC conducted its review of each section in three additional open meetings (February 26, 2026, March 5, 2026, and March 12, 2026), and submitted the attached Advisory Statement to staff on or about March 17, 2026. This process satisfied the legal requirements for stakeholder participation in the development of an initial SELPA Local Plan.

#### ***Brief Staff Comment on CAC Advisory: Key Points for Board Consideration***

- Staff acknowledges the contributions of the Founding CAC members in the Local Plan's development, on an ambitious timeline, and for their thoughtful consideration and advice on the Local Plan.
- The redline Local Plan, attached, reflects a substantial reorganization and changes made by staff in response to issues raised in the CAC Advisory, as well as from Local Plan Committee input.
- The Local Plan includes required legal assurances and statement of policy, describes SRC SELPA's governance structure, and outlines the available budget, services and programs within SRCS. While the Local Plan is not a vehicle for detailed program design, the CAC Advisory raised topics that may serve as ongoing CAC priorities for discussion, parent-administrator collaboration, and community involvement.
- The Local Plan template asks SELPA LEAs to reference policies, local agreements and other operational documents for information that is beyond the scope of the Local Plan submitted to CDE. Some documents are currently being developed pending SELPA/Local Plan approval; and, all will be made available to the CAC upon request as developed.
- Additional operational documents under development include, but are not limited to:
  - Updated job descriptions
  - Board policy revisions and updates



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- Interagency and local agreements, memoranda of understanding
  - Nonpublic School and Agency contracts
  - A comprehensive *SRCS Special Education Procedures Manual*, currently in development by the SRCS Special Education Task Force comprised of staff and parents, established in August 2025.
  - CAC Bylaws, currently in development by CAC members, which will provide the process for establishing the inaugural CAC and other CAC processes upon Local Plan approval.
- As a new SELPA, SRCS will develop a local Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) approach to support early, collaborative resolution of disputes.

### **Next Steps**

- Board review and input on the proposed Local Plan
- Public Hearing and Action on Local Plan
- Submission to Sonoma County Superintendent for 45-review, approval or denial
- Submission to the California Department of Education
- Continue finalizing operational documents
- Implementation of the SRC SELPA effective July 1, 2026, or upon approval by CDE

### **Conclusion**

The SRC SELPA Local Plan would establish the required legal and governance framework for SRCS to operate the SELPA, providing local control, accountability, and alignment of resources to meet the needs of SRCS students and families.