



Sonoma County

Office of Education

Williams Settlement Report & State of Sonoma County Schools

Nov. 8, 2022

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About the Williams lawsuit

- Class action lawsuit filed in 2000
- Schools must provide students with equal access to instructional materials, safe facilities, and qualified teachers
- The county superintendent of schools must visit the lowest performing schools annually to assess conditions
- Reports to the **Board of Supervisors** on the state of the schools



Five goals of visits

1. Monitor and review **teacher assignments**
2. Verify that the school has provided **accurate data**
3. Verify student access to **instructional materials**
4. Review **quarterly reports** on complaints
5. Identify any **unsafe facility conditions**



2022 Williams Report site visits



SCOE visited or contacted **31 schools** in **10 districts** in August and September.

The districts with schools that were visited include Cotati-Rohnert Park, Guerneville, Horicon, Liberty (virtual), Montgomery Elementary, Petaluma City Schools, Santa Rosa City Schools, Sebastopol, Sonoma Valley, and Windsor

Instructional materials and facilities were in compliance at all school sites.

The School Accountability Report Card and credentials will be reviewed in March and May.





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A Look at School Issues in 2022-23



Sonoma County public schools

40

districts

164

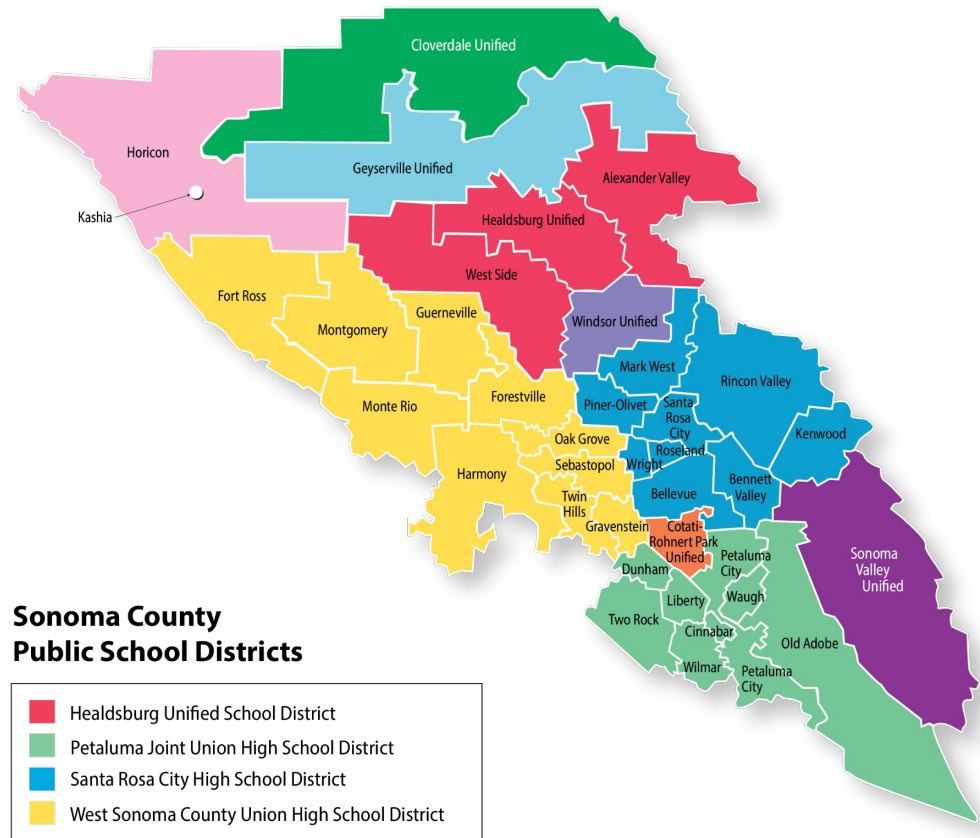
schools

64,802

students

Current District Structure

November 2022



Unified districts operate both elementary and secondary schools. Cloverdale, Cotati-Rohnert Park, Geyserville, Healdsburg, Sonoma Valley, and Windsor are unified districts.

Horicon and Kashia are unique in that these small elementary districts feed into Mendocino County.



Special Projects in 2022-23

Medium- and long-term efforts at SCOE

- **Superintendent Transition**

A new superintendent will be elected today and will start their term on Jan. 3. With only one candidate actively in the race, transition planning already has begun.

- **Housing for Educators and Other Public Servants**

SCOE is developing a plan to build housing near Amarosa Academy along Dutton Avenue in Santa Rosa.

- **Completing Reconfiguration Studies of Several County Districts**

SCOE has completed the first phase of two studies requested by districts looking at potential reconfigurations of districts in west Sonoma County and in the Santa Rosa area. These are the first such studies under the current school funding model, which started in 2013.



District Reconfiguration Studies

- **40 School Districts for 64,802 students**
Sonoma County has the fifth highest number of districts among California's counties (Los Angeles, Kern, Tulare, San Diego are higher).
- **West County study**
West Sonoma County Union High School District and its 10 feeder elementary districts are evaluating several scenarios that could eliminate duplicative functions and save money.
- **Santa Rosa-area study**
Santa Rosa may be able to capture more state funding by reconfiguring the high school district and its nine feeder elementary districts, in addition to potential savings from eliminating duplicative services.



State of Education in 2022-23

Coming Out of Five Years Marked by Disasters, COVID

- **The Past Five Years were Hard, Especially for Students**
Locally, we had five school years in a row disrupted by fires, smoke, floods or COVID-19. We have seen COVID-related disruptions reflected in test scores locally, statewide, and at the national level.
- **We are Trying to Move Forward**
Lost days of instruction and distance learning set our students behind, but rather than focus on what was lost, we are seeking to make sure students feel engaged and supported where they are now.
- **Emphasis on Social and Emotional Learning, and Empowerment**
Our behavioral health team is the fastest growing department at SCOE, and new activities such as the Environmental Justice Sharecase aim to empower students to use their voices to solve community problems.



The Educational Workforce

A shortage of teachers and substitutes

- **Districts Grapple with Unfilled Positions**

A wave of departures, high cost of living, and the rollout of an optional new grade level (transitional kindergarten) have contributed to staffing shortages for many of our schools and districts.

- **North Coast School of Education**

We are working this fall to spread the word about our affordable teacher credentialing program. Tuition reimbursement scholarships are available for prospective teachers from diverse backgrounds.

- **Teacher Housing Plans**

We continue to look for ways to support our educational workforce, including the housing plans discussed earlier at our Amarosa site.



Any questions?

