

What is a SELPA?

The acronym "SELPA" stands for Special Education Local Plan Area.

In 1974, the California State Board of Education adopted the California Master Plan for Special Education. This statewide plan to equalize educational opportunities outlined the process of developing a quality educational program for the disabled students of California.

The Master Plan required that all school districts and County Offices of Education (referred to as Local Educational Agencies, or LEAs) join together in geographical regions in order to develop a regional special education service delivery system. A region might be a group of many small districts or a large single district, but each region must be of sufficient size and scope to provide the full continuum of services for children and youth residing within the region boundaries.

The service regions were named Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA's). There are now approximately 135 SELPA's carrying out the spirit and mandate of the California Master Plan for Special Education.

To become a member of a SELPA, the applying charter organization must apply for membership in that SELPA and be deemed by that SELPA a Local Education Agency (LEA) for purposes of special education. This process requires the charter school to demonstrate its ability to serve the full continuum of special education services, as well as assume the full liability for students served in the charter school. While charter schools can apply to become an LEA in their local SELPA or in a charter SELPA, the power to grant membership lies solely with the SELPA itself. If membership is not granted, the charter will not become a member of the SELPA.

Of the 135 SELPAs in California, there are only a few that currently accept charter schools as LEA members. SELPAs accepting applications from charter schools for the 2016-2017 school year include: the El Dorado County Office of Education Charter SELPA, the Los Angeles County Charter SELPA, the Sonoma County Charter SELPA, and the Desert Mountain Charter SELPA. **CCSA is actively working** with SELPAs across the state to increase the options available to charter schools seeking LEA status for special education.

Local SPED Review:

MUSD - All districts run their own program through the MCOE SELPA. They hire their own staff.

SCOE - Charter based SELPA - Potentially available to us, but currently frozen.

MCOE - Barbara Bloom, in charge of SPED Services for the county, confirms that they do not provide staff, and each district provides their own services. It is possible for an Independent Charter to apply to be their own district, but it is a lengthy process and must be approved by the Superintendent's Council and that process will have an impact on other things that should be considered. I presented our formula with Fort Bragg to MCOE and I have asked them to review it to see if it is considered fair. I explained that my concern with it is that we are being charged for services that we are not receiving and I felt that the amount should be reduced or services provided. I also told MCOE that I thought it was illegal for Fort

Bragg to block student enrollment based upon the SPED Services required by those students.