May 11 - One of the highlights of the year for me is participating in the Queer Youth Leadership Awards which honors the important contributions LGBTQ youth are making to help our schools become safer and more welcoming for all students. It is so important that we, as an educational community, demonstrate our support for all student-run leadership initiatives to help encourage students to become leaders within their communities and help create environments that are supportive of all identities.

Mental Health Consortium

May 6 - In collaboration with school districts, community agencies, and the County Department of Health, we have established a consortium to integrate mental services for students. Our plan is to create a stronger continuum of services to address the increase in incidences of anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, and other mental health issues students are facing in growing numbers. #Student Programs

Countywide Math Contest

May 11 - 276 middle school students from all over Santa Cruz County attended Aptos High School to compete in this year’s math competition. They received their awards on May 14. #EdServices
Prayer Breakfast
May 2 - I was invited by Mayor Martine Watkins to speak at the Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast. The audience consisted of interfaith organizations and community members. Other speakers included Mimi Hall, Doron Comerchero, and Mayor Watkins.

#LivePajaroValley Conference
Apr. 26 - I attended a conference in Watsonville that brought together many government and community agencies to address some of the greatest challenges Pajaro Valley is facing in the areas of economic development, housing, health, and education.

LGBTQ Safety Training
May 8 - Rob Darrow from the Safe Schools Initiative led a training detailing steps school leaders can take to make our schools safer for LGBTQ youth. #StudentPrograms

Countywide Science Initiative
May 26-27 - Teachers and administrators from every school district in the County participated in two full days of professional learning and planning for the ongoing implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards. #EdServices

African American Student Taskforce
Apr. 23 - In collaboration with Brenda Griffin of the NAACP, we have established an African American Student Achievement Taskforce to discuss the challenges and success of our African American students. The group will be meeting monthly to look at creating support systems to help students achieve and thrive.

Learning to Code at Poly
Apr. 27 - Dozens of Middle Schools from all over Santa Cruz County participated in a Saturday class at Poly (formerly Plantronics) to learn how to code Arduino boards. Our partnership with Poly is creating exciting career skills and opportunities for our students. #EdServices

Upcoming Events
- May 19 - 14th Annual Vive Oaxaca Guelaguetza (San Lorenzo Park)
- May 21: Tech Leadership Summit
- May 22 - 1 pm Staff Appreciation Picnic
- May 25 - CAC Special Education Awards
- June 2 - Santa Cruz Pride
- June 4-6 - Santa Cruz COE Graduations
- June 12 - Annual Foster and Homeless Education Summit
- June 13 - Special Board Meeting

College Signing Day
May 1 - The Educational Partnership Center of U.C. Santa Cruz organized a wonderful event at the Civic Auditorium to recognize students who had made a commitment to attend a 4 year University or a Community College.
Division Updates

Student Support Services

Our Real DUI Courts in Schools Program, funded by the Judicial Council of California, in partnership with our local Superior Court, The Sheriff’s Office, the CHP, the Public Defender’s Office and the DA, hosted its third session of the school year at Costanoa High School. Sessions include real defendants appearing in a mobile courtroom to speak about, and be sentenced for, driving violations while under the influence of substances. Judge Denine Guy helps select participants and uses the opportunity to educate youth about the consequences of a DUI, financially, legally and emotionally. She also introduces the court staff and explains their roles in a career exploration context and allows students a question and answer period for all parties on stage. Finally, in collaboration with Santa Cruz County Friday Night Live, the Substance Use Disorders Services Department’s Youth Outreach and Prevention program hosts a speaker tells a story of how driving under the influence harmed them or their loved ones. Resources are shared and everyone hopefully leaves with more knowledge and empathy about all impacted by DUIs! Our final session will be May 28th at Sequoia High School.

Additionally, with the help of Bank of America’s Charitable Grant Program, the SCCOE will host a Summer Youth Employment Program for some of the most vulnerable youth populations; foster youth, homeless, gang involved, probationary or diverted youth. The COE was awarded $23,797 to serve at least 10 students with 100 hours each at minimum wage this summer using existing infrastructure and staffing, and targeting those most in need of the work experience and money.

Educational Services

On May 10, the 2018-2019 Teacher Leadership Institute had its final professional development day. 67 teachers from 11 districts participated in the first cohort. The professional learning focused on Next Generation Science Standards and connecting classroom science to local environmental field studies. Our second year will include 55 new teachers to continue to build capacity for engaging all students K-12 in rich science experiences and to create partnerships with community-based environmental organizations to increase opportunities for students to apply their science learning to real issues in their communities.

Business Services

This month the Business Division has been wrapping up a new roof on 399 Encinal which is expected to be completed by the end of May. In addition, new lighting has been installed throughout the the 399 and 400 Encinal Buildings. This new lighting will enable us to recognize savings on our PGE bills.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department is finalizing the staffing of Santa Cruz County Cypress Charter School. They are also collaborating with Cal State Monterey Bay for a future partnership that will allow the SCCOE to house CSUMB Special Education Intern Credential programs in Santa Cruz County.
Special Education
Our annual Fun Day Event is occurring this Friday, May 10, 2019, we are expecting approximately two hundred students, parents and staff to celebrate another great year. Post-Senior Graduation will be in the COE Tech Center on June 6th at 10:30 a.m. We recently were approved as a vendor for the San Andres Regional Center allowing our students ages eighteen to twenty-two to participate in their Paid Internship Program. We are excited to provide more paid work experience for our students as they prepare for their adult lives.

Career Technical Education Partnership (CTEP) Program
The Career Technical Education Partnership (CTEP) just completed a successful WASC review visit. CTEP was able to showcase its diverse programs located in many different areas of the county. In the middle of our visit, the review team participated in a CTEP Community Partner Luncheon where our business partners shared how we collaborate to provide high quality career technical education to our students.

Managing Updates (cont.)

Technology, Innovation, and Communications
The Technology, Innovation, and Communications Division has launched our distributed approach to website updates! Recently, several lead staff members were trained representing all divisions. These staff will serve as leads in keeping the Santa Cruz COE website updated. Working closely with the Web and Communications department, staff were trained on how to edit and update existing web content on our Content Management System (WordPress). We currently have 9 staff members also piloting Gmail and Google Calendar through our Santa Cruz COE Gsuite for Education service. The pilot team will evaluate the value of the possible migration from our on premise Exchange email and calendar servers to Gsuite’s free, cloud-based service.

The Technology and Innovation Leadership Team (TILT) met to discuss updates including creating integrated email phishing training to keep staff safe and aware. TILT were also introduced to virtual reality and how it is being used to provide realistic and engaging opportunities in education and business. Finally, we will be convening a Leadership Summit with over 100 attendees across Santa Cruz County on May 21st discussing innovative approaches to leading schools in the future. Learn more about the event here: https://leadership.santacruzcoe.org. This event is co-produced by us, Google, and CDW-G.