



400 Encinal Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 • Tel (831) 466-5600 • Fax (831) 466-5607 • [www.santacruzcoe.org](http://www.santacruzcoe.org)

Date: May 17, 2021

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: Commitment to Safety and Inclusivity for All Students; LGBTQ+ Flag Raise

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

Research has shown that when students feel safe, their learning increases, their engagement increases, and more students graduate from high school who are college and career ready. We want all students to feel safe, supported, and celebrated for who they are. However, the data is clear that we have work to do to help our students feel more safe in school. Local data from the most recent California Healthy Kids Survey indicates that students who identify as LGBTQ+ disproportionately experience anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation (source: 2019 California Healthy Kids Survey).

The COVID-19 pandemic and movements for racial justice over the past eighteen months have challenged educators to think critically about how we can make our schools more safe, supportive, and inclusive. As we welcome students back to classrooms now and in the fall, Santa Cruz County schools are taking steps to increase inclusivity and safety at schools by providing more culturally-responsive student events and historically-inclusive curriculum.

The week of May 18th, schools countywide will raise the rainbow flag in celebration of Harvey Milk Day to honor the legacy of Harvey Milk, a local gay rights pioneer and California's first openly gay elected official who helped pass our country's first gay rights ordinance that sparked a number of other movements for LGBTQ+ rights throughout our country. Harvey Milk Day was designated as a day of special significance in California in 2009 by Governor Swarzenegger. The Santa Cruz COE has also made a number of age-appropriate curriculum about Harvey Milk and LGBTQ+ history available to teachers in an effort to increase awareness about LGBTQ+ history and celebrate the diversity of all of our students. Our policies and procedures are aligned with California Education Code, federal and state laws, standards and frameworks in support of our LGBTQ+ students and their families, just as all of our policies and procedures support a positive school and learning climate for all students and their families.

This event is just one educational opportunity of many that students will have to learn about LGBTQ+ history. For more information about [LIST OF RESOURCES HERE](#)

Yours in education and equity,

Laurie Bruton, Superintendent, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District  
Lorie Chamberland, Superintendent, Live Oak School District

Alicia Doolittle, Administrative Director, Linscott Charter School  
Eric Gross, Superintendent, Pacific Elementary School District  
Mike Heffner, Superintendent, Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District  
Tanya Krause, Superintendent, Scotts Valley Unified School District  
Michelle McKinny, Superintendent, Happy Valley Elementary School District  
Diane Morgenstern, Superintendent, Mountain Elementary School District  
Kris Munro, Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools  
Michelle Rodriguez, Superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified School District  
Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools  
Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District



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Fecha: 17 de mayo de 2021

Para: Familias del condado de Santa Cruz

Re:

Con ustedes en educación y equidad,

Laurie Bruton, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar Unificado del Valle de San Lorenzo  
Lorie Chamberland, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar Live Oak  
Alicia Doolittle, Directora, Linscott Charter School  
Eric Gross, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar del Pacífico  
Mike Heffner, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar Bonny Doon Union  
Tanya Krause, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar Unificado de Scotts Valley  
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Diane Morgenstern, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar Mountain  
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Faris Sabbah, Superintendente de Escuelas del Condado  
Scott Turnbull, Superintendente, Distrito Escolar de Soquel Union