The following matters and events have occurred since the report of March 15, 2012:

**Gary Taubes**
Gary Taubes, science journalist, researcher, and author of “Why We Get Fat,” spoke to a full house at New Brighton Middle School on Wednesday, April 11th. This presentation was in keeping with our focus to fight obesity in children and was attended by educators along with members of the public. Thanks to Carole Mulford, Child Development Resource Center and her staff for coordinating this event. (see attached article)

**United Way of Santa Cruz County**
As a member of the Board of the United Way, I attended the Marilyn Monroe fundraiser at Chaminade. The event raised $25,000 to assist in the work of the United Way. As well, I attended the yearly celebration for the United Way campaign. The County Office of Education received the Silver Award for 2012-13.

**Media Arts Show - Regional Occupational Programs (ROP)**
The Media Arts Show presented by the students at Harbor High was a success and well attended. With the success of the show, students were invited to present their program at the McPherson Museum of Art and History on May 18th. Thanks to teacher Pam Falke-Krueger for her efforts on behalf of her students.

**Kindergarten Art Show**
I welcomed parents, students and teachers to our first ever Kindergarten Art Show. The art came from Freedom Elementary and Starlight Elementary.

**Region V Superintendents/Assistant Superintendents**
The Santa Cruz County Office of Education hosted a meeting of the Region V Superintendents, Assistant/Associate Superintendents and their curriculum representatives to discuss recent information in education, the effects of the Governor’s budget including the Weighted Student Formula, and collaborations to leverage resources between the counties represented. Region V consists of Santa Cruz (Michael Watkins), Santa Clara (Chuck Weis), Monterey (Nancy Kotowski) and San Benito (Mike Sanchez) counties.

**Alternative Education Options for Elementary Students**
Meetings are continuing with Dorma Baker, superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified in an effort to fill the need for alternative education options for at-risk 6th graders who have disruptive behavioral issues and are not eligible for special education programs.
Ag Day Luncheon
As an Agriculture board member, I attended the Ag Day Luncheon where the Al Smith Friend of Agriculture Award and the Jimmie Cox Memorial Scholarship were awarded along with awards to the student winners of the 2012 poster and poem contests. Catherine Barr, executive director of Monterey Bay Certified Farmers Market was the guest speaker at the sold out event.

Educational Opportunities for Incarcerated
Scott MacDonald, Probation Department and Sheriff Wowak, County Sheriff’s office met with me to discuss providing educational opportunities for the incarcerated at the Blaine Street facility, Rountree Facility and the city jail. Inmates are averaging stays of 15 months making the need for training and schooling a priority.

Opal Cliffs Preschool - Groundbreaking Ceremony
I attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Opal Cliffs Preschool being built by the Soquel Union Elementary District. A number of dignitaries participated in the event. This is just one more small step forward in making sure that preschool is available to those most vulnerable and to the underserved in our community. Preschool has been shown to make a significant difference in success in school and the district is excited to finally make this decades-old dream come true.

Education Coalition
I attended the monthly meeting of the Education Coalition meeting in Sacramento. The members of the committee are extremely concerned with some of the provisions in the Governor’s proposed budget including the Weighted Student Formula. The education community would like to see this new funding formula postponed until such time as hearings can be arranged to fully explore the effects of this proposed change to school funding formulas.

Dwight Bonds and Reginald Fair
I met with Dwight Bonds, director, CAAAA and Reginald Fair, legislative director, Senator Current Price’s office to discuss current legislative topics including the Governor’s proposed budget and the Weighted Student Formula and its implications for education.

Youth Radio Project
Tyler Wardwell, program director, KZSC met with me to discuss the implementation of a new program which gives high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to tell their stories. There would also be workshops for high school students on oral history, storytelling, interview techniques, sound recording, sound editing, and broadcasting pre-recorded radio pieces. Participation will give students a hands-on experience in radio and will give them access to UCSC and hopefully impress the importance of a continuing education beyond high school.

Muscular Dystrophy Lock Up Fundraiser
I participated in the annual Lock Up Fundraiser for Muscular Dystrophy. I want to thank all those who so generously donated to their fund to support the summer camp for children suffering with this disease. The event raised over $26,000 and will allow 32 local children to attend camp this summer.

Santa Cruz Writes
I met with the group of retired educators who will be working on a writing program modeled after the 826 Writing Project in San Francisco. The 826 Writing Project is a network of afterschool tutoring and mentoring program focused on improving students’ communication skills through workshops, tutoring centers, in-school programs, and field trips for underserved youth.
Vernon Billy, Executive Director, California School Boards Association (CSBA)

Vernon Billy joined district and county trustees along with superintendents to discuss the changes coming about at CSBA to better serve the needs of districts and feedback from discussions with Governor Brown on his proposed budget. Thanks to Trustee Levine for his coordination of this event.

Proposed Montessori Charter School Petition

Associate Superintendent Theresa Rouse and I met with representatives of the proposed Montessori Charter School. Currently they are working with district administration who are investigating the establishment of classrooms that will use the Montessori methods for their instruction.

National Laboratory for Education Transformation (NLET)

I met with Rod Agawa and Gordon Freedman from University of California, Santa Cruz to discuss the National Laboratory for Education Transformation’s ideas for redesigning America’s education through inter-disciplinary and inter-sector cooperation. NLET fosters the creation of research and development partnership networks, forges to identify and to explore solutions for persistent education problems that remain unsolved.

Criminal Justice Council Retreat

The Criminal Justice Council held a three hour planning retreat on May 11. The Council elected three officers - Chief Solano, Chair, Judge Symons, Vice Chair and Michael Watkins, Secretary. The primary focus of the CJC for the first year will be gang prevention and early Intervention with emphasis on school violence prevention. This Task Force will work closely with the North and South County BASTA groups and the BASTA County-wide group convened by Michael Watkins. This CJC Task Force will not replace BASTA.

StudentsFirst

At the invitation of San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, I attended his event featuring Michelle Rhee, former chancellor of the Washington, D. C. school system. She is now the founder and CEO of StudentsFirst whose mission is to build a national movement to defend the interests of children in public education and pursue transformative reform, so that American has the best education system in the world. This mission will be accomplished through great teachers, access to great schools and effective use of public dollars. She was joined by her husband and mayor of Sacramento, Kevin Johnson.

Science Fair Award Ceremony

This year’s Science Fair had 487 students participating individually and in teams on 351 projects. Volunteer judges numbered 150 and represented local scientists, university research staff, educators, graduate students, and community partners. On March 20th the winners were awarded ribbons, prizes, certificates, and scholarship monies. Funding from Seagate Technologies is allowing us to send 40 projects to the State Science Fair plus two high school projects that will be traveling to Pittsburgh in May to participate in the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF). Saige Manier from Harbor HS with her research project, “Jumping Galls: A Novel Mechanism for Motility” and Rose Leopold from Pacific Collegiate School with her project, “Morphological Disparity During the Ammonoid Recovery After the Permian Mass Extinction” are the two students traveling to ISEF.
SC4 – Santa Cruz County College Commitment
Brian King, president, Cabrillo College and Melinda Silverstein, director, Cabrillo Foundation met with me to discuss the funding of a position to coordinate and support the SC4 effort. The funding of this position will be a joint effort of Cabrillo College and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education to ensure the success of this program promoting college for all students.

Pacific Collegiate School (PCS) Foundation Proposal
Trustees Aaron Hinde, Gina Locatelli, and President Levine along with Theresa Rouse, Associate Superintendent participated in a phone conference with our legal counsel to draft questions regarding the formation of a non-profit foundation by PCS. A subsequent call will be held on Friday, April 13th with legal counsel to continue the discussion purpose, bylaws, and role of the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

Monthly Meetings

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Upcoming Events:

- May 5, 2012: Student Authors Fair
- May 17, 2012: Day of the Teacher and Classified Employees Week Celebration (following the Board meeting)
- May 18, 2012: Special Education Fun Day
- June 14/15, 2012: Alternative Education Graduations