Subject: Superintendent’s Monthly Report to the Board  
June 18, 2009

The following matters of interest and events have occurred since the report of May 21, 2009:

2008-09 Second Interim Report
I am in receipt of a letter from the Financial Accountability and Information Services Division of the California Department of Education certifying the Second Interim Report and positive certification of financial solvency. Barney Finlay, Jean Gardner and I met with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and members of the Board of Santa Cruz City Schools District to address concerns relative to the Santa Cruz City Schools District fiscal status. We were successful in coming to a resolution which does not require the COE to order a stay and rescind to the District which has submitted a balanced budget but will require them to make additional reductions next year.

Kudos received and published
Watsonville High ROP Merchandising Class students and teacher Nevenka Radich were recognized in a letter to the editor for their volunteer work selling concessions during the Watsonville Fly-In over Memorial Day weekend.

Thank you to Thrivant Financial Services and Habitat for Humanity for a donation of $1,000 and to community volunteers who painted and generally spruced up the Watsonville Community School.

I received a letter from the Bonny Doon District trustees commending Mike James and HR Director Traci Outtrim for their guidance and assistance in the Board’s search and hiring process of a new district superintendent.

Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education Presentation
I attended a presentation made by Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, wherein he challenged the California schools system’s chances for success. He addressed significant issues, including the lack of a data tracking system, the need for more charter schools, universal pre-school requirements, and teacher merit pay, all of which he warned the State will not be able to obtain top funding.

County Parks Collaboration
I met with Joe Schultz, County Parks and Recreation, to look into possible collaborations between that agency, schools and the Children’s Network, to provide after-school programs for students.
School Wellness Policy Awards
School districts nationwide are required to create wellness policies that put their commitment to student health in writing. The Wellness Recognition Award is an appreciation program for those schools, districts and individuals who make a concerted effort to adopt into the principle and practice of their policies. Local awards were presented in categories that include School Gardens, Healthy Nutrition Programs, Creative Physical Education Programs, and Passion of Wellness Coordinator.

Inside Education
The final session of the 2008-09 Inside Education cohort met the end of May. The agenda included a discussion of the financial issues facing Santa Cruz County and California schools, a review of the Alternative Education Program, and a presentation by Theresa Rouse on testing and accountability issues. The cohort members unanimously expressed appreciation for the program, students, teachers and administrators throughout the Santa Cruz school system and gave our Inside Education series high commendation.

Watsonville High School ROP Agriculture Class
ROP Director Bryan Wall and I met with Watsonville High principal Murry Schekman and Lowell Hurst, teacher. Due to budget concerns, the ROP Agriculture class at the high school was to be cancelled. At the request of school administrators, the class will be reinstated to the satisfaction of all involved.

Arts and Athletics Fundraisers
I was honored to be invited to address school issues as part of the program during the Arts and Athletics Telethon which was conducted on Community TV for two nights the beginning of June. A second fundraising event, a 5K walk/run sponsored by a group of community volunteers was conducted the day prior to the Telethon. These events raised a total of approximately $60,000 which will be distributed to schools throughout the county. Thank you to the organizers, volunteers, participating students and administrators who contributed to making the events financially successful in the current economic environment.

New Brighton Middle School Distinguished School Ceremony
A ceremony was conducted at New Brighton Middle School celebrating the school’s recognition by the State Superintendent of Public Education as a 2008-9 Distinguished School. The ceremony was highly celebratory. Thank you to trustees and administrators who attended.

Pajaro Valley High Graduation
I attended the graduation exercise of the first class to have attended all four years at Pajaro Valley High School which was conducted at the County Fair Grounds. A total of 320 graduates received their diplomas. Those students and faculty deserve recognition in that 85% of the graduating class have enrolled in college.

Alternative Education Graduations
Our Alternative Education Program conferred diplomas to 138 students in eight separate graduation ceremonies early this month. Congratulations to the students and our distinguished
staff. It is gratifying and humbling to witness the success of these students who struggle but win against tremendous challenges to obtain a diploma. Thank you to those trustees who attended and participated in the ceremonies.

**Watsonville Community School Cleanup**
A group of community volunteers and Alternative Education staff were enabled by a donation from Trivant Financial to perform a general cleanup of the Watsonville Community School last week.

**Special Ed Graduation**
Six students were graduated from the Special Education Program’s Cabrillo and Soquel High School Post Senior Programs at a ceremony here at the COE. The students presented excellent musical numbers which they both sang and signed. Congratulations to the graduates and their teachers Eileen Halvey and Penny Norquist.

**Irvine Foundation Recognition Event**
I attended an event recognizing innovative leaders throughout the state sponsored by the Irvine Foundation. Honorees included State Treasurer Bill Lockyear and State Controller John Chiang. My goal in attending was to position the COE for future funding opportunities.

**Meeting with School Nurses**
I met with school nurses from throughout the county to discuss concerns about the lack of wellness and healthcare oversight in schools. I will be working with district superintendents to increase MAA funding and establishing a consortium to ensure student access to healthcare.

**Science Fair Funding – Seagate**
Nancy Serigstad, Science Programs Coordinator, and I met with representatives of Seagate Technology to discuss Seagate’s funding of the Science Fair for the 2009-10 year. I am pleased to report that, although the funding is much reduced, Seagate has granted the COE enough funding to continue the program.

**GAMEstorming**
I was introduced to Gamestorming, a competition-based facilitation technique designed to deal with the issue of shortcuts, power dynamics, and the lack of fun in brainstorming, gamestorming is a structured process of play-based facilitation that uses tools and rules to break brainstorming complacency.

**Regularly Scheduled Meetings**
- Preschool Steering Committee
- Special Education Council
- Children’s Network Executive Committee
- New Teacher Project