The following matters and events have occurred since the report of August 20, 2009

**CDE Acceptance of 2009-10 County Office of Education Budget**
The Financial Accountability and Information Services Division of the California Department of Education has confirmed that the County Office of Education 2009-2010 Budget meets specified criteria and is approved.

**Orientation**
Thank you to Board members who were able to join staff for Orientation Day festivities celebrating our staff’s achievements. We annually present service awards to employees who, during the current school year, celebrate five-year service milestones. Vicki Nunez, Special Education teacher, was honored with a thirty-five years award.

**SPIN Award**
I was honored to receive a recognition award from the Special Parents Information Network (SPIN) last month with proclamations from Congressman Farr, Assemblyman Bill Monning, Assemblywoman Anna Caballero and Senator Joe Simitian. Wendy Harrison, COE Special Education teacher, was also honored for her work with Special Education students. Wendy has been instrumental in promoting art for and by our students. SPIN is a parent organization that supports special needs children by working with families and professionals.

**Tannery Arts Board**
I’m pleased to announce my appointment to the Tannery Arts Center Board of Directors. I intend to utilize that membership to form partnerships that advance arts programs within the school system. During my orientation, I visited the new Tannery Arts housing complex and was impressed with the living quarters available to local artists.

**UCSC Arts Partnership**
I also met with David Yager, Dean of the UCSC Arts Division, to explore arts in K-12 partnerships with UCSC.

**Meet the Educator Chamber Mixer**
It was gratifying to join with members of the Board and a large contingent of educators from throughout the county at the mixer, and I acknowledge the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce for providing the opportunity for us to meet with leaders from the business community.
Leadership Santa Cruz
As a new enrollee in the Leadership Santa Cruz program, I attended the orientation sessions for the current cohort. Because of my schedule, I will likely have to adhere to a two-year completion schedule.

TANF
At the request of Trustee Marani, Maria Castro, Coordinator of the COE Migrant Head Start Program and I met with the Santa Cruz Site Manager of the Native TANF Program, to investigate possible collaborations. Native TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) provides temporary assistance and services to help Native American families achieve self-sufficiency. The COE will monitor and refer eligible individuals for services provided by the Student Services and Alternative Education Programs.

Region V Meeting
The county superintendents from San Benito, Monterey, Santa Clara and I met to discuss immediate issues including online learning, technology for learning, the CCSESA Arts Grant, regional capacity building in core subject areas in our region, efficiency studies, charter schools and best practices.

Inside Education 2009-10 Cohort
Yesterday was the first session of the 2009-10 Inside Education cohort. There are twenty-five participating community members this year including County Supervisor Mark Stone. The first session focused on early care and preschool education. Following a presentation on the countywide preschool blueprint study, participants visited the Cabrillo Early Childhood Education Department, including the Children’s Center and Lab, Pajaro Valley Head Start classrooms, and the bilingual kindergarten class at Freedom Elementary. Kathy Lathrop, Director of PVUSD Child Development Programs provided an overview relative to the importance of early literacy.

Dominican Hospital TagAway Gang Tattoo Removal Program
I attended a benefit dinner at IHOP in Capitola, the proceeds from which support Dominican Hospital’s TagAway Gang Tattoo Removal Program. The program is part of a larger effort to help former gang members return to productive lives in our community.

Parental Involvement
Theresa Rouse, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services, and I met with Joni Samples, former county superintendent of Glenn County, to discuss her successful programs to educate parents about the importance of their participation in their student’s education and schools and that relationship to student achievement.
National School Lunch Event
I joined about sixty other people at San Lorenzo Park on Labor Day for a picnic rally sponsored by the Santa Cruz Education Foundation in support of improving meals served to schoolchildren nationwide. The timing of the event was based upon Congress’ preparation to reauthorize child nutrition programs. Other speakers included Congressman Sam Farr and Cynthia Matthews.

ROP Cosmetology Graduation
ROP administrators invited me to speak at the ROP Cosmetology class graduation this month. The program graduated eight adults who completed the retraining to reenter the workforce. Their success and outlook for the future was emphasized by the attendance of family and supporters numbering approximately 100.

United Way Campaign Kickoff
Brunella and I attended the kickoff event for this year’s United Way campaign early this month at which time I made opening comments relative to United Way’s community educational goals. COE employees have consistently been highly supportive and recognized for their participation as donors. The United Way does an excellent job of providing universally but many donors designate our Homeless Education Programs as a beneficiary.

National Read for the Record Day
I met with representatives of the Santa Cruz County Reading Association which is sponsored by the COE. The Association will be the local sponsor for the October 8 National Read for the Record Day. On the 8th participants, who can read as individuals, as a classroom or school-wide, will all read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. I will join the students at San Lorenzo Elementary for a reading.

Teacher, Speak Out
I was invited to participate last Saturday in a discussion group on the Community TV program, Teacher, Speak Out. The topic centered on efficiencies of operation among school districts as well as consolidation. Other panelists were Alan Pagano, Peter Nichols and Rhea DeHart. The taped program will be aired at various times over the next few weeks.

Second Saturday Network
I participated in discussions at the monthly Second Saturday Network, a grassroots community based program of educational resources aimed at promoting African cultural awareness and informed appreciation of Black heritage and focuses on working with youth and their families.

Community Assessment Project (CAP)
CAP tracks education indicators including community/parent satisfaction in schools and health and academic outcomes. The COE is instrumental in shaping indicators and using data to take action. I recently met with other members of CAP’s Community Indicator Consortium to focus on keeping children and youth in school and healthy through the promotion of social change.
Institute of Heartmath
Theresa Rouse and I met with the representatives of the Institute of HeartMath and organizers of a local education fundraising event. From September 10 through January 1, Johnny’s Harbor Restaurant will donate part of their proceeds on wine sales and from a special dinner on November 4, to the support of teachers in the county. HeartMath has created the Resilient Educator Program which teaches educators how to recognize stress and equips them with a set of practical tools to counter stress, how to use tools to create harmonious classrooms and help students enhance learning and academic performance.

New Teacher Center, Los Altos
I attended the opening of the New Teacher Center in Los Altos this week. The New Teacher Center, now a 501(c)3 agency and independent from the University, is embarking on a new era.

Mexican American New Teacher Reception
The Association of Mexican American Educators, Pajaro Valley Chapter, is hosting a welcome-back reception for teachers and other staff on September 18th at Jalisco’s Restaurant. The Association teams with the Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers to increase networking among district celebrants. Special recognition is given to new teachers. Community officials, board members and other community leaders throughout the district will highlight the event.

County Fair
The County Fair opened this Tuesday with a renewed emphasis on quality educational displays and events. Jody Akimoto, COE employee in the Business Services Division, is the Fair Board president, and one of the Fair Board members is Trustee Marani’s brother.

Scotts Valley High IB Science Project Evening
Scotts Valley High’s annual International Baccalaureate Project Evening is scheduled for October 1st. Science students will present their marine biology projects findings.

Special Education Chrysalis Center Open House
The Special Education Department will host an open house on October 9th at 2:00 p.m. to showcase our new facility that facilitates services to preschool through second grade children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. The COE has collaborated with the Morgan Center for staff training in order that we can provide these services since 2008. We are proud to now be able to provide an independent, quality program to this expanding student population. The new facility is located at 987 Bostwick Lane, near the Live Oak District Office and Green Acres campus.

Other Regularly Scheduled Meetings
Childrens’ Network Superintendents Council