The following matters and events have occurred since the report of November 19, 2009:

**Chief Business Officer Announcement**
As announced earlier this week, Mary Hart has accepted the position of Associate Superintendent of Business Services, replacing Barney Finlay upon his retirement the end of this month. Mary has been the Associate Superintendent of Business at the Pajaro Valley Unified School District.

**Race to the Top**
On Monday, the Governor and the State Superintendent of Schools issued guidelines and a Memorandum of Understanding requesting local education agencies participate in the state’s application for federal Race to the Top competitive grant program funding. The timeline requires a Letter of Intent be submitted by Dec. 31, followed by a signed MOU on January 8.

**Inside Education**
The focus of the December session of Inside Education was on Outdoor Science School. Following an introduction to the basics of the program at the Coe, participants were transported to the Koinonia Conference Grounds in Corralitos where they took a science quiz based on 6th grade science standards. Heather MacDougall, Director of the Outdoor Science School accompanied the group on a two-and-half hour field study class along with students attending the school.

**Teacher Pipeline Project Funding**
We are continuing to develop grant applications to submit to various funding sources to fund development of the Teacher Pipeline Project.

**Meeting with Sentinel Editorial Board**
Associate Superintendent Barney Finlay and I met with the Sentinel Editorial Board prompted by the Sentinel’s analysis of salaries in the Santa Cruz educational community. We discussed broader issues of education in the County. It is likely the Sentinel will acknowledge Barney as an outstanding man of the year.

**Attendance at Dependency Court**
I attended a session of Judge Denine Guy’s Dependency Court as she adjudicated several cases involving foster youth addressing such issues as placement, adoption, and oversight.

**Foster Youth Services Advisory Board Meeting**
I met with Judge Guy at her chambers to discuss Dependency Court matters and how we might advance the education lives of foster youth. Our meeting was followed a few days later by the Foster Youth Services Local Advisory Board meeting at which an
Memorandum of Understanding was completed among the school districts and other service agencies which outlines actions and agreements that will be taken in Santa Cruz County to enhance and ensure compliance and implementation of AB 490 and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

**Addressing Absenteeism**
As part of the on-going work begun at the Community Indicators Conference that I attended in Seattle in October, I continue to coordinate, with other involved agencies, a strategy plan to address chronic student absence starting in the early grades. I attended the San Mateo School Boards Association presentation where the absenteeism issue was addressed and will be coordinating with Applied Survey Research to find means to fund an analysis of absenteeism rates in the Santa Cruz County.

**Meeting with Commissioner Joseph Irwin**
I met with Superior Court Commissioner Irwin regarding the court’s South County Evening Center, a partnership between the courts, probation, and public agencies. We are discussing ways the education community can support those efforts and will continue the dialogue to find ways to enhance opportunities to wards of the court.

**Pacific Collegiate School Principal**
I met with Archie Douglas, newly appointed principal for Pacific Collegiate School. He has a strong resume and charter school experience and, I believe, will do well at Pacific Collegiate.

**KZSC Radio**
I met with Bruce Bratten at KZSC to discuss County Office of Education services and programs that we provide both directly and indirectly and how they affect public education.

**January Superintendents Council Meeting**
The January meeting of the superintendents will focus on safety issues in the community and on school campuses. I have invited county-wide law enforcement and judicial leaders to join with me and the superintendents to strategize how we might collectively work together and pool resources to effectively combat violence to keep students and communities safe.

**California County Superintendents Education Services Association (CCSESA)**
The agenda for county superintendents focused primarily on Race to the TOP and the process for local education agencies to participate as well as proposed state legislation education. I brought those matters forward in my later meeting with Assemblymember Bill Monning’s K-12 Education forum.

**K-12 Education Forum**
I attended a focus group meeting called by Assemblymember Bill Monning to discuss K-12 Education issues. The goal of the meeting was to share policy and budget priorities
for the upcoming year where education is impacted by decisions at the state level. Regional collaborations were also a focus.

**Educator of the Year Awards Ceremony**
Pam Falke-Krueger, ROP teacher, was nominated for the Santa Cruz Educator of the Year award presented by the Santa Cruz High Schools Association. Pam teaches the ROP Economics of Marketing class at Harbor High. Each nominee gave a short presentation before the audience voted for one nominee to represent Santa Cruz in the regional award category.

**Everyone Can Learn Fundraiser**
I was honored to deliver an address on the occasion of this south county fundraising event, the proceeds of which went to support scholarship programs at high schools in south County.

**Harlem Children’s Zone Conference**
All local representatives who attended the Harlem Children’s Zone Conference in New York last month, met to determine capacity and leadership to implement concrete next steps to develop a community network of programs and interventions that will ensure students are given the opportunity to succeed.

**Community Assessment Project Report Release**
The Community Assessment Project recently released the 15th edition of the Community Assessment Report. The report provides useful data regarding the needs and well-being of citizens of the County in all aspects of the community environment. A copy of the report can be obtained directly from the United Way or by visiting the United Way / Community Assessment Project website.

**Silicon Valley New Teacher Project**
I was pleased to give the welcome address at the recent Silicon Valley New Teacher Project conference. The New Teacher Project is now providing sixty teacher mentors who serve 750 teachers in the tri-county area.

**Monterey Bay Education Consortium (MBEC)**
The meeting of consortium members was focused primarily on legislation affecting K-12 and higher education issues in the Monterey Bay area. Consortium members include county superintendents, community college presidents and the presidents of CSUMB and UCSC. It is clear that higher education as well as K-12, will be seriously affected by additional coming budget cuts. It was announced there will be 45,000 fewer student slots at CSUMB, higher student fees at UCSC, and Cabrillo will be offering fewer classes. There is a controversial Assembly Bill that links Career Technical Education with A-G classes in colleges and universities.

**Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate**
The committee that I served on to select the first Santa Cruz County poet laureate has completed the process and a selected poet will be announced in January.
Santa Cruz County School Boards Association All Boards Meeting
The COE and the Santa Cruz County School Boards Association will co-sponsor an all-boards meeting at 5:30 p.m., Thursday evening, January 14th. The meeting will be held in Scotts Valley. The SCCSBA will be issuing details soon.

Retiring Employee
In addition to Barney, we have another long-time employee retiring. Carmelita Martinez, Resource Specialist in the Child Development Resources Department, has only hours to complete her last day at the COE. Carmelita was hired January 4, 1993, 17 years ago, when the Child Developments Programs first became affiliated with the County Office of Education. Congratulations and thank you Carmelita.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings
Migrant Head Start Board Meeting
Children’s Network Executive Committee
Superintendents’ Council Meeting
Second Harvest Resource Bank

Steinbeck Center Board Meeting
Tannery Arts Board
First Five