Subject: Superintendent’s Monthly Report to the Board  
December 20, 2012

The following matters and events have occurred since the report of October 18, 2012:

Employee Generosity
Employees once again participated in the Salvation Army Angels, providing close to 40 toys for needy children. They also raised over $1700 towards gifts for children in our Migrant Headstart Program. Over 100 children will have a merrier Christmas thanks to our employees and the dedicated staff of Migrant Headstart. As well, the United Way campaign is in full swing with previous donors renewing their donations and a few new donors signing up.

Chinese Bridge Delegation
The College Board arranged a weeklong trip to China to help educators start or strengthen their institution’s Chinese programs and partnerships. Highlights included school visits, cultural activities and educational workshops. The attendees were guests of Hanban/Confucious Institute Headquarters. We were able to:

- Visit Chinese K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions, meet with Chinese educators, observe classes and interact with students;
- Establish meaningful partnerships with Chinese education institutions and network with U.S. colleagues;
- Attend presentations on best practices and gather resources to build and support Chinese language and cultural programs;
- Experience China firsthand and marvel at the rich traditional culture set against stunning modern development.

*See attached Op-Ed

Safe Schools Training/Bullying & Cyber-bullying Symposium
- On November 30th, we hosted approximately 40 school district personnel along with representatives of law enforcement for our annual review of lockdown procedures and intruder on campus response.
- On December 4th, I welcomed over 90 Santa Cruz County teachers, staff, administrators, students, parents and community members for our safe schools symposium on bullying & cyber-bullying in schools and exploring collaborative solutions required to transform school cultures from bullying to belonging.

CSLA(California School Libraries Association) Administrator of the Year Award
Mary Anne James was honored with the Administrator of the Year Award by the California School Libraries Association after being nominated by a Santa Cruz City Schools colleague for her advocacy for school libraries while with Santa Cruz City Schools.
Solar Retrofit
The solar retrofit is well on its way with the system completely installed on the building and hillside. This past weekend the system was tied into the building but has not yet been turned on. The recent rain has held up a couple stages of the project. We need more concrete poured for a component to be placed which will then make it possible to ‘turn on’ the system and begin producing power. The fencing has also been held up by the rains and will be installed as soon as the weather allows. It should be complete before next month’s Board meeting if all goes as planned. Once online, it will supply approximately 80% of our needs.

November Elections
Prop 30 was passed in the November elections and the outlook for schools financing has improved as a result. Schools will not be receiving additional funding but will not have their funding cut for the first time in many years. Money that had been set aside in case the proposition did not pass will now be available to districts giving them added flexibility and the ability to maintain current programs. Many new trustees were elected to Boards across the county including Jane Barr and Sandra Nichols elected to the Santa Cruz County Board along with the re-election of Dana Sales and Bud Winslow.

Board Retreat
With the addition of new Board members, I would like to suggest that we begin planning for a Board Retreat around March. The retreat would serve to provide a foundation for our newest members and to cover topics of interest to all members.

CCSESA Quarterly Meeting
In October, the CCSESA Quarterly meeting was held in San Diego. The upcoming elections and the outcome’s effects on school budgets were uppermost on the agenda. The group received information on increased funding for mental health services, the issue of sequestration, teacher evaluations, alignment of curriculum to Common Core Standards, aligning California Standards Test with the Early Assessment Program and Special Education teacher credentialing among other issues.

CCSESA Presidency
As of January 1st, I will be assuming the office of president of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Agency (CCSESA.) With this office will come increased statewide responsibilities such as committee meetings and other commitments necessitating travel. Fortunately, the County Office of Education has an amazing staff that will be watching over the office and will keep me apprised of issues in Santa Cruz County when I am unable to be here.

Governor’s Budget
Governor Brown’s budget will be coming out on January 10th. There are concerns that he will be looking at overhauling school finance with the Weighted Student Formula or other variations thereof. There are concerns amongst educators that the Weighted Student Formula will adversely affect students and the operation of our office.

Foster Grandparents Speech
I spoke at the Foster Grandparents October meeting attended by approximately 350 teachers and Foster Grandparents. Topics covered included making a difference in the lives of children, overcoming the opportunity gap for children at an early age, the importance of preschool, and thanking them for their commitment to the children of our community.
Santa Cruz – Silicon Valley New Teacher Project Administrator’s Breakfast
The New Teacher Project held its annual Administrator’s Breakfast. This is an opportunity to check in with administrators to see what is working and direction for the next year. The breakfast was very well attended this year.

Be the Difference Awards
I served on the committee that reviewed the nominations for the Volunteer Center’s Be the Difference Awards. Since the awards took place while I was at the CCSESA Quarterly meeting in San Diego, other employees attended the awards ceremony where various individuals, groups and companies were recognized for their volunteerism.

Youth Violence Summit
Individuals from law enforcement, courts, community services and education met to discuss community efforts to continue to get the upper hand on youth and gang violence.

Santa Cruz City Council Teen Forum
Santa Cruz City Council sponsored an information fair for students and then a teen forum in their council chambers. The Fair was well attended by young people with approximately 25 students speaking to Council members in regards to their concerns. Students from our YES School also addressed the Council in regards to the importance of alternatives for students with needs beyond the regular high school setting.

Tri County Boards Associations’ Fall Dinner
I attended the Tri County Boards Associations’ Fall Dinner with Kevin Gordon, president of Capitol Advisors as featured speaker. He spoke on various issues of importance to schools from budget to advocacy.

Everybody Eats
Our office co-sponsored a panel of speakers addressing healthy foods and the importance of good nutrition in academic excellence. Michael Pollan, author, and John Robbins, local author, joined local food specialists to discuss good food choices and how they affect our everyday lives. Various vendors were there to inform the public of good food choices that can be found locally.

David Eggers – Santa Cruz Writes
Bookshop Santa Cruz hosted author David Eggers to talk about and sign copies of his latest book. In addition, this appearance also served as a fundraiser for Santa Cruz Writes, the local non-profit who’s Young Writers Program is dedicated to assisting teachers in promoting literary projects in classrooms. They received $1772 in support of children learning to appreciate literature and to support teachers in the classroom.

Agri-Culture Progressive Dinner
As a member of the Board of Agri-Culture, I personally co-sponsored the annual Progressive Dinner. This dinner is limited to 100 people who are taken by bus to three different unique agricultural destinations not generally open to the public for the various parts of the meal. This fundraiser supports the many community and educational programs sponsored throughout the year.
California Schools Boards Association (CSBA) Annual Conference
Along with Board members, I attended the annual CSBA conference in San Francisco. As the next president of CCSESA, I was introduced and gave a brief address to attendees.

Community Assessment Project
The results of the annual Community Assessment Project were released to the community on November 19th. I attended the event where our own Michael Paynter was honored as a community hero for his work with foster youth, the mental health initiative, BASTA, and at-risk youth.

Schools for Humanity
I met with Mike Noble in regards to the mission of Schools for Humanity. They are a global organization that aims to generate sustaining prosperity, cultural tolerance, and equity by bringing education and technology to the students and their communities in needy nations such as Ethiopia. We talked about how to bring a more global view to our own students.

Disability Awareness Employers Recognition
The annual recognition event for employers who support students with disabilities by providing employment and job training was held at Severino’s. Our Special Education Department would not be able to do their jobs without the support of these businesses. The provide an amazing experience for our students that builds survival skills along with self-esteem and communication expertise.

Juvenile Hall Mural
Renowned mural artist Emanuel Martinez from Colorado came to Santa Cruz to coordinate two murals at the county’s Juvenile Hall. The nonprofit Art for Kids Emanuel Project provided the paint, brushes and other supplies to provide this unique experience to the incarcerated youth at the hall. One mural, “Seek New Visions,” was painted outside using windows as the eyes of the mural and the other mural, “Achieve Higher Education,” is located in the cafeteria.

Lightfoot Industries
I met with Carmen Kubas, founder of Lightfoot Industries to find out more about her program. Lightfoot Industries is a hybrid social enterprise that provides entrepreneurial Training for at-risk teenagers. They use a for-profit restaurant, retail line, and innovative curriculum to model social, environmental, and fiscal responsibility. Students learn about food from the planting of crops to the cooking of food and serving the public in a restaurant setting.

Esquela Popular and the National Hispanic University
After meeting with Mike O’Farrell, vice-president for the Community Foundation and Laurie Butterworth of Cieba College Preparatory, I visited and met with the staff of Esquela Popular in San Jose, dual language academies for Kindergarten through eighth grade and another for high school and young adult students. The schools’ goal is to provide the opportunity for students to build on their social, linguistic and cultural strengths to give students the foundations to pursue a college education.

Bonny Doon Science Lab Dedication
Bryan Wall attended the dedication of the Bonny Doon Science Lab. The lab was constructed with the assistance of the County Office of Education. Each Santa Cruz County school district was awarded a grant based on number of students and wrote a plan of how they would use the funds.
California League of High Schools
The California League of High Schools held their annual High School Teacher of the Year Awards. I attended the function and was honored to be present as Regional Occupational Programs teacher Hal Rovick was one of the award recipients.

Anthony Muhammad
The first week of November, our staff development series featuring Anthony Muhammad continued with the second in the series of three workshops. We have 150 local educators participating in school teams. They have been very excited about these trainings and taking what they are learning back to their school sites.

Breakfast Roundtable Discussion
- In November, approximately twenty to twenty-five administrators attended the Breakfast Roundtable discussion with educator and author Enid Lee on inclusionary and equitable education.
- December’s Roundtable featured Aida Walqui, director, Teacher Professional Development Programs for Wested. She spoke to approximately twenty-five administrators regarding “Five Key Shifts for Leaders Working with Underserved Students.”

AB790 Grant for S4C
The grant in support of S4C (Santa Cruz County College Commitment) was finalized and submitted. The grant will is to plan and implement a pilot program of Linked Learning Pathways which meet the following criteria: an integrated core curriculum for academic rigor, an integrated career technical core curriculum, a series of work-based-learning opportunities and student support services. The goal of S4C is to introduce young students to the concept of higher education and the idea that preparing themselves to go on to college begins in elementary school and continues on throughout their entire school career.

Inside Education
November’s Inside Education focused on elementary education. The day began with an overview given by Diane Morgenstern, principal, Mountain Elementary. The cohort first traveled to Bonny Doon Elementary near Davenport where they toured the Life Lab garden and several classrooms including the new state of the art science classroom that was partially funded by the County Office of Education. They then traveled to Pacific Elementary in Davenport where students gave tours of their school and fixed a special lunch for the group incorporating vegetables from their garden. The superintendents emphasized that they could not function without the assistance offered them by the County Office of Education.

ARCHES/MBEC
I was contacted by personnel from ARCHES (Alliance for Regional Collaboration to Heighten Educational Success) to discuss the status of MBEC (Monterey Bay Educational Consortium) and its future. At one time, MBEC was a collaboration of local school districts, Cabrillo College, California State University Monterey Bay, and the University of California at Santa Cruz. With the many budget cuts faced in the past few years, the organization lost its administrative support and has not been functioning as originally intended. The call with ARCHES was to explore the possible re-establishment of this program and how ARCHES might be involved.
National Laboratory for Education Transformation/Resilient Networks
I met with Gordon Freeman of the National Laboratory for Education Transformation who is partnering with us, Resilient Networks, the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace and local school districts to pilot program to create a network of thrust that allows secure data sharing between multiple entities in order to facilitate quantitative analysis and research in support of educational reform.

School Site Visits
Recently I have been making an effort to visit schools. I have visited our own classrooms as well as Cieba Middle and High Schools in Watsonville. It is energizing to go out into the classrooms and visit with teachers and students. I would like to work on arranging some school site visits of our programs in the upcoming months for Board members and would like to know where your interests lie.

Makers Factory
One of the goals behind the purchase of the building at 399 Encinal was the establishment of a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Program. Along these lines, we are looking at the possibilities of collaborating with Makers Factory, a company dealing in 3D Printing and Modeling, Robotics, Electronics, and Technology Classes for Adults and Kids as a first step in the development of this new area.

Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline
Bidyut Bose, founder and executive director, Niroga Institute and Heidi Brown, consultant, met with me to discuss Niroga’s Transformative Life Skills Program being used in Alameda County schools for at-risk youth and detainees at the juvenile justice center, as well as, in their elementary and middle schools.

Monthly Meetings
First 5 Commission
Tannery Executive Board
CCSESA Finance Committee
CCSESA Legislative Committee
Inside Education Planning Committee
Agenda Committee
SECA – Special Education Coordinating Agency
Children’s Network Executive Committee
Children’s Network
Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance
Migrant Headstart Videoconference
SEAC