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May 15, 2020

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: **Governor's May Budget Revision, Support for Families, & School Personnel Appreciation**

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

It is especially important during difficult times to celebrate the efforts and achievements of our school community. California Day of the Teacher and Classified Employees Week, two statewide opportunities that occur each year in May, present us with special opportunities to express our gratitude for our school personnel. Teachers and other educators have been working tirelessly to ensure student wellness and adapt to our new distance learning environment to help our students and their families. Our classified team members have been working hard to ensure continuity of essential services to help support students and teachers through this challenging time. Both groups have demonstrated dedication, creativity, and compassion for students and families while under a great deal of stress. Please join our School Districts and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education in celebrating teachers and classified staff for their important contributions and continued partnership with families.

Yesterday, Governor Newsom released California's May Budget Revision Proposal which is projected to result in significant funding cuts of about 10% to all school districts in Santa Cruz County. All Santa Cruz County schools are working to prepare three-year budgets that account for a range of possible financial impacts based on the Governor's proposed budget and the recommendations of our state's education financial advisors. Schools will be working with staff, bargaining units, and their school boards to develop and approve budgets and submit them to the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

While the Governor's budget does include significant reductions to education funding, our school districts are working with representatives of the California legislature to advocate for the protection of school funding. The financial landscape remains unclear as the state revenues will not be fully known until after the tax collection date of July 15th which could lead to additional reductions. The Governor is hopeful we will receive additional federal funding if the HEROES Act coronavirus relief bill is signed into law. We anticipate the COVID-19 crisis to continue into next year and our plans to safely re-open schools in the fall will require more funding, not less.

The longer this crisis persists, the more challenges families are facing. Financial pressure to return to work, the challenges of working and learning from home, feeling unsafe under current working conditions, and new family dynamics caused by spending more time at home are only a few examples of factors that are significantly compounding stress for families and exacerbating challenges with mental health. Santa Cruz County schools are committed to taking all possible action to help families secure resources for financial assistance, meal and grocery programs, and social-emotional support opportunities. For more information please call [211](tel:211) or text "coronavirus" to 211211 or visit sccoe.link/wellness. We will continue to make every possible effort to provide support, guidance, and resources through this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Laurie Bruton, Superintendent, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District
Lorie Chamberland, Superintendent, Live Oak School District
Eric Gross, Superintendent, Pacific Elementary School District
Mike Heffner, Superintendent, Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District
Tanya Krause, Superintendent, Scotts Valley Unified School District
Michelle McKinny, Superintendent, Happy Valley Elementary School District
Diane Morgenstern, Superintendent, Mountain Elementary School District
Kris Munro, Superintendent, Santa Cruz City Schools
Michelle Rodriguez, Superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools
Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District