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March 18, 2021

To: Families of Santa Cruz County

Re: **Standing In Solidarity With Asian American Communities**

Dear Families of Santa Cruz County,

The Santa Cruz County school community stands in solidarity against violence, intimidation, and racism towards Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and all communities of color. Anti-Asian violence has significantly increased since the start of the pandemic with more than 2,800 hate incidents recorded in the United States in 2020. These recent acts of hate, including the attacks upon elderly community members in the San Francisco Bay Area and the shootings in Atlanta, are symptomatic of long-standing systemic racism toward Asian American communities. These recent killings of 8 victims in Atlanta also underline the intersection of racism and misogyny and violence. Our hearts are with those who have been directly affected by these attacks and with our students and staff who are enduring the emotional impact of these racist events and fear for their families' safety.

We strongly believe that there is no place for racial hate, discrimination, or violence in our schools nor in our community. Santa Cruz County schools are determined to ensure educators engage in cultural competency training and resources to build structural awareness about racial violence in our classrooms and create safer and supportive spaces for students. The Santa Cruz County Office of Education has compiled a library of anti-racism resources for educators and our community, which is available on our website at justice.santacruzcoe.org.

As a community, we can and must take action to build a more racially-just future. One important action we can take is to listen and learn about the lived experiences of Asian American communities and the ways in which the effects of systemic racism continue to harm all communities of color. Racial justice movements of this past year have prompted direct dialogue about the harmful effects of white supremacy and emphasized an urgent

need for equitable transformation in our institutions. Santa Cruz County schools are committed to deepening our responsibility to continued learning and racial justice as we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis and thereafter.

In solidarity,

Laurie Bruton, Superintendent, San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District
Lorie Chamberland, Superintendent, Live Oak School District
Alicia Doolittle, Administrative Director, Linscott Charter School
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
Jennifer Proudfoot, Tierra Pacifica Charter School
Maria C. Reitano, Head of School, Pacific Collegiate School
Josh Ripp, Head of School, Ceiba College Prep
Jen Ra'anan, Principal/CEO Delta High School
Michelle Rodriguez, Superintendent, Pajaro Valley Unified School District
Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools
Scott Turnbull, Superintendent, Soquel Union Elementary School District
Kevin Sved, CEO, Navigator Schools