



Report from **Schools:**

Excellence

College & Career

AI & Math

Building

Community

Future

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Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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State of our
SCHOOLS

C O M M U N I T Y R E P O R T

OUR COMMUNITY

Public Schools protect **property values** by providing a world class education & robust community supports.

Find out how our schools support Santa Cruz!



OUR YEAR

- Student success & **Achievement**
- Responsible Response to **AI**
- A spotlight on **Math Education**
- District **Fiscal Responsibility**
- Update on **Bonds & Housing**
- Success in **College & Career**



OUR FUTURE

2025-26

Learn how **Santa Cruz City Schools** is driving Academic Acceleration & Personal Growth!





Santa Cruz City Schools



Kris Munro
Superintendent

Winter 2026

Friends & Neighbors,

At the end of each year, we reach out to our community with an update on your local public schools. From the achievements of our soaring graduates to innovative programs, district-wide campus modernizations to sustainable futures, **we have a lot to celebrate this year.**

We are celebrating the success of our students, who continue to significantly out-pace the rest of the state in their academic progress. **We are celebrating** our expanding career exploration pathways, which boost college readiness and acceptance rates while teaching real-world skills in a wide variety of professions.

We are celebrating our technological leadership, which includes a collaborative approach to exploring **AI tools** while diligently preserving critical thinking and student creativity. **We are celebrating** the successful establishment of entirely phone-free High School classrooms, supporting focus and student success!

We are celebrating the successful roll-out of our new Math Action Plan, meeting a nation-wide struggle in math with a rejuvenated focus that has already seen a surge in student performance. **We are celebrating modern classrooms, theaters, fields and gymnasiums**, replacing aging facilities through the work of **Bonds K&L**.

We are celebrating fiscal responsibility and sustainability, through the grant revenue that powers today's programs as well as our new Future Fund Endowment that will protect programs for generations to come. **We are also celebrating our Educator Workforce Housing** helping our community attract and retain outstanding teachers and staff to serve our students.

I invite you to review this community update, to learn about the work of the passionate educators, dedicated staff, engaged families, and dazzling students whom it is my privilege to serve. Thank you for taking the time to get to know us better!

With Best Regards & Gratitude,

Kris Munro
Superintendent
Santa Cruz City Schools



“I love everything about our school!”

JOANNA ESKILSON Harbor High Parent

“The staff is very caring & approachable. My son’s teacher is such a good fit.”

MARCIANO GUTIERREZ DeLaveaga Parent

“Gault feels like family.”

CHRIS GARCIA Gault Parent

The staff is wonderful & inviting; the community events bring us together.”

“This school feels like home.”

We love the outstanding educators & office staff, and we’re incredibly grateful for our principal’s leadership!”

SARA ALUFFI Branciforte Middle Parent

“Santa Cruz High has teachers who are truly invested in your success

AVA HILLARD Santa Cruz High Senior

and take the time to get to know you.”

“Students come out of the building after school with lots of smiles & laughter.”

ARIA DISALVIO Mission Hill Parent

I never thought our transition to middle school could be so easy.”

“Bay View is open, welcoming & has strong ties to the community.”

JENNA CAUGHMAN Bay View Parent

“We’re really grateful for the community we have at Westlake!”

NAOMI DARR Westlake Parent

“I have grown so many new relationships at Soquel High.

I feel part of a great & supportive community.”

NAYELI SERNA NUNEZ Soquel High Senior

“Our teacher is wonderful:

kind, respectful & effective. My daughter is inspired.”

JENNIFER COCKERILL Alternative Family Ed. Parent

“Monarch provides individual student attention, & the most incredible teachers I have ever met.”

JASON ARONSON Monarch Parent



Rising Higher

We are so proud that **Santa Cruz City Schools students have surpassed our State's academic performance** the past few years. In 2025, our students made meaningful progress.

From early literacy in 1st grade to college readiness at graduation, our students are making noteworthy, ongoing progress. And although tests don't tell the whole story, we're pleased to see the solid growth reflected in this year's state testing results.

We are so grateful to have an amazing team of teachers and support staff, as well as the partnership of involved parents across the district. **And next year, we'll go even further.**

ELEMENTARY Students:



MIDDLE SCHOOL Students:



HIGH SCHOOL Students:



"I have learned how to lead with confidence and compassion, and I have discovered who I am and who I aspire to be."

Bethany Mansfield
Soquel High

"I'm grateful for the academic supports & mental health supports!"

Helena Salinas Sone
Mission Hill

"The Teachers are always willing to help you succeed and apply yourself!"

Sophie Graham
Santa Cruz High

"We have such a great community here at Harbor!"

Charlie Galdos
Harbor High

"All the teachers are really kind and sweet!"

Vida Penelope Hartmann
B40

"There has been engaging activities, supportive teachers & a nice campus!"

Akemi Riggs
Soquel High

"Everything in my Medical Pathways course can be applied to the outside world. It feels like a headstart."

Mayala Vinluan
Harbor High

"I've been inspired to consider a career in microbiology of all things: something I would've never thought of a year ago!"

Clark Tomàs Maciel-Snyder
Santa Cruz High

& Building Futures

with Career Exploration

At Santa Cruz City Schools, we have consistently expanded our Career Technical Education (CTE) program for the last decade. CTE classes give students the opportunity to learn real-world on-the-job skills from industry professionals, exploring careers—all within a college-prep curriculum!

We are truly grateful for our community partners, whose support gives students real-world learning that helps students grow far beyond the classroom and into career & college pathways.

in Many Pathways like:

Healthcare, Biotechnology, Sustainable Agriculture, Welding, Graphic Design, Information Technology, Floral Design, Auto Technology, Woodworking, Bike Technology, Culinary Arts, Sports Medicine, Construction, Music Production, Photography & More.

CTE participation boosts Graduation & College Acceptance rates. Thank you to everyone who has helped build this program in our community!

sccs.net/CTE

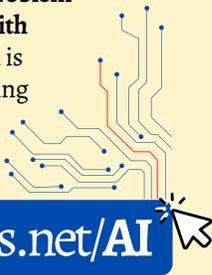




Artificial Intelligence

The rapid pace of technology has changed our current landscape. In Santa Cruz City Schools, we are glad to have a collaborative community with our **AI Task Force**, made up of families and staff.

This group is shaping our policy & **keeps our focus on students' critical thinking & problem solving, while building literacy with AI tools.** AI's impact on education is still developing, and with something this new & evolving, we are proud to be able to work together with intention to support student success.



Phone-free Classrooms

We are so happy to have fully adopted and implemented our new cell phone policy in High School: **no phones during classtime.** This partnership was developed in partnership with our educator/parent Tech Task Force, and informed by direct input from students.

Our Middle & Elementary schools both have a full "away for the day" policy, and we have been happy to see our students embrace phone-free classrooms. You can learn more on the district website:



sccs.net/Cellphone

“Every day he comes home saying, “Today was so much fun!”

”
Samantha Brown
Mission Hill Parent

“High School is a great place to meet new people and make new friends!

”
Andres Tremblay
Santa Cruz High

“I used to not want to go to college. Now, I'd like to go to UCSB.

”
Jenaya Rose
Alaniz
Soquel High

“School is a good space for academics, sports & fun with friends!

”
Ohpelia Judson
Mission Hill Middle

Math Action Plan

A Nation-wide Trend

In the years following COVID, schools across the country saw a common trend: students were struggling in math more than ever before. Here in Santa Cruz City Schools, we saw this as a call to action. We committed to a bold, district-wide effort to strengthen math learning & help every student rebuild confidence and skills.



A Collaborative Response

Knowing the best solutions come from working together, we brought teachers & leaders from our district & others together to share what works in the classroom to help students grow in math. Guided by the California Math Framework, we built a clear action plan to strengthen instruction, boost confidence, and prepare students for future STEM opportunities. Digging into our own data, we identified bright spots in student learning & used our successes to shape a plan that lifts achievement for all.



An Action Plan

With a plan in place, our educators rolled up their sleeves & got to work: participating in collaborative lesson study & professional development to refine & align instruction. This work was guided by math leaders in both elementary and secondary, ensuring our classrooms are consistently using the most effective approaches.

A Focus on Discovery

Our new Math Action Plan emphasizes creative problem-solving & deep thinking. Both data & our team's experience show that students learn math best when they have space to explore, test ideas & make sense of concepts through trial & error: putting *understanding & long-term retention over memorization.* Early results from our classrooms have been encouraging, with students showing greater confidence and persistence in tackling challenging math tasks.

“My daughter really feels so supported in all of her classes.

”
Carrie Castillo
B40 Parent

“All of the teachers and staff are interested in my child, his mind & well-being.

”
Melanie Andrews
Gault Parent

“The special education and associated support services are outstanding.

”
Deborah Malkin
Santa Cruz High Parent

“The teachers and faculty are kind, friendly and supportive!

”
Leanna Jensen
DeLaveaga Parent





Grants help us Today

Because schools work on a fixed, public budget, we work each year to secure grant funding beyond state resources to serve our students. Each grant has a complex application process.

Last Years' Grant Revenue:

Career Technical Education (State)	\$ 547,602
Middle School Career Training (State)	\$ 50,000
Career Training (State)	\$ 842,990
After School (State)	\$ 28,177
Special Education Career Skills (State)	\$ 220,785
Career Technical Education (Federal)	\$ 86,012
Kaiser Community Grant (Private)	\$ 25,000
Santa Cruz City Children's Fund (City)	\$45,000

Total.....\$1,845,566

Endowment & Gala for Tomorrow

To help provide for the longterm stability of services & student opportunities (*and to insulate against economic or political fluctuations*), our District launched an Endowment Fund to establish a standalone source of revenue. And for the first time ever, we are holding a fundraising **Gala for this Endowment January 31st at the Grove by the Boardwalk** to give our community an opportunity to support local education!

Thank you so much to our Gala Sponsors:

\$10,000

- Bogard Construction

\$5,000

- Climatec LLC (*Bosch*)
- American Modular
- Peartree + Belli Architects
- 19six Architects
- Fred Gawlick
- Bay Federal Credit Union
- Santa Cruz Seaside Co.
- Bookshop Santa Cruz

(Ryan Coonerty & Emily Bernard Coonerty, Casey Coonerty Protti & Michael Protti)

\$2,500

- Quilici Gardening
- PG&E
- Lozano Smith
- Sandbar Solar & Electric

\$1,000

- Santa Cruz Warriors
- Kathy Stefanki & Don Iglesias

\$500

- Carolyn & Curt Coleman
- Discovery Preschools

Gala Info & Tickets



sccs.net/Endowment

Rejuvenating our Schools

► Thanks to You & K&L

Since school districts are not funded to repair, rebuild or modernize school facilities, we are so grateful to have a community that supported **Facilities Bonds K&L in 2022**. This allows us to: **Repair Schools, Modernize Classrooms, Replace Infrastructure, Increase Sustainability & Remove Hazardous Materials** from last century. **Completed this year:**

- Harbor High Theater Renovation
- DeLaveaga Cafeteria Renovation
- Branciforte Middle Field Replacement
- Soquel High Gym Renovation
- Mission Hill Middle Solar Expansion
- Gault Staff Room
- DeLaveaga HVAC Improvement
- Bay View Carpet Replacements
- High School Wellness Centers



A Home for our Educators



K&L will allow our district to provide **100 units of reduced-rent housing** to district teachers & staff, helping us to recruit & retain amazing staff to serve students and families during our **national teacher shortage**. The project is approved for the lot owned by the district at 313 Swift Street (*Between Gateway School and Derby Park*). Now in the final stages of design, **we plan to break ground this winter & open in 2028!**



sccs.net/BONDS



Harbor High Theater

DeLaveaga Cafeteria

B40 Middle Field

Soquel High Gym

Wellness Centers

Celebrating Student Excellence!

Our Elementary School Enrollment

BAYVIEW 430	DELAVEAGA 465	GAULT 327	MONARCH 122	WESTLAKE 450
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Our Middle School Enrollment:

BRANCIORTE 442	MISSION HILL 497
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Our High School Enrollment:

HARBOR 995	SANTA CRUZ 1,061	SOQUEL 1,070
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Our Alternative Schools Enrollment:

AFE 123	ARK 70	COSTANOA 65
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Your Class of 2025 is Absolutely Soaring:

University of CA

UC Berkeley
UC Davis
UC Irvine
UC Los Angeles
UC Merced
UC Riverside
UC Santa Barbara
UC Santa Cruz
UC San Diego

California State University

Cal Poly Humboldt
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
Cal State San Marcos
Chico State
CSU Channel Islands
CSU Fullerton
CSU Long Beach
CSU Los Angeles
CSU Monterey Bay
CSU Northridge
San Jose State
Fresno State University
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
Sacramento State University

Out-of-State Public

Alabama A&M University
Arizona State University
ASU Polytechnic
University of Oaxaca
Boise State
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University
Fort Lewis College
Georgia Tech
Iowa State University
McGill University
Minnesota State U, Mankato
Montana State University
Morgan State University
Oklahoma State University
Oregon State University
Southern Oregon University
University of Arizona
University of Utah
University of British Columbia
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Hawaii at Manoa
U of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of Maryland
University of Oregon
University of Pavia
University of St Andrews
University of Tennessee
University of Washington
Western Washington University

Private

Baylor University
Brown University
Bucknell University
California Lutheran University
Chapman University
Claremont McKenna College
Duke University
Eastman School of Music
University of Rochester
Gonzaga University
German University
Harvard University
Lewis & Clark College
Loyola Marymount U, Los Angeles
Menlo College
Northcentral University
Northeastern University
NYU
Oberlin College & Conservatory
Occidental College
Parsons School of Design
Pratt Institute
Rochester Institute of Technology
Saint Mary's College of California
Santa Clara University
Sarah Lawrence College
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Scripps College
Seattle University
The University of Notre Dame
Tufts University
University of Puget Sound
University of Redlands
University of San Francisco
University of Southern California
Vassar College
Whitman College

Community & Trade Colleges

Austin Community College
Cabrillo College
Cuesta Community College
Hartnell Community College
Mesa College
Sacramento City College
Santa Barbara City College
San Jose City College
South Lake Tahoe Community College
Monterey Peninsula College
Butte Community College
CAL S Dental Assisting program
College of The Redwoods
De Anza College
Gavilan College
MiraCosta College
Paul Mitchell San Jose
Ventura College
West Valley Community College

Your Class of 2025 is Highly Awarded.

IB DIPLOMA CANDIDATE
ADELANTE SCHOLARSHIP
OMEGA NU SCHOLARSHIP
DOROTHY EMIGH MEMORIAL
DIANA JO PETERS MEMORIAL
SHS FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP
SENDEROS SOQUEL HIGH FUND
C.E. "DOC" FEHLIMAN MEMORIAL
SANTA CRUZ FLY FISHING SCHOLARSHIP
SANTA CRUZ ELKS LODGE SCHOLARSHIP
SOQUEL HIGH COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP
BOB ENZWEILER SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD
NATIVE DAUGHTERS OF THE GOLDEN WEST
CTE CAREER EXPLORATION SCHOLARSHIP
SANTA CRUZ ROTARY CLUB SCHOLARSHIP
CAPITOLA & APTOS ROTARY SCHOLARSHIP
JEFF WEST BIG STICK SURFING SCHOLARSHIP
ELAC SCHOLARSHIP CALARTS MERIT GRANT
UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND, SCHOLARSHIP
HELLENIC CULTURAL INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIP
YOUR FUTURE IS OUR BUSINESS SCHOLARSHIP
CHARLES WALTERS ENDOWED ART SCHOLARSHIP
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY, BALLET SCHOLARSHIP
RUBY LINDON MEMORIAL (MEDICAL ORIENTATION)
UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND, VISIT SCHOLARSHIP
SKYLINE COLLEGE, PROMISE SCHOLARS PROGRAM
LOUISE AND HENRY PARKER SCHOLARSHIP TRUST
LOREN INGOLS MEMORIAL HOWARD RHEIN MEMORIAL
JACK & LILLIE CHIORINI 4 YEAR \$1,000.00 PER YEAR
BOB NASH & TOM SCHMIDT HOT RODS AT THE BEACH
BARBARA SAMPER STEM SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT
BAY AREA ALL-STAR SCHOLARSHIP TEAM PROGRAM
CABRILLO ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIP
CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY, PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP
JACK WEAVER MEMORIAL VOCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP
HENRY & LOUISE PARKER SCHOLARSHIP (COMERICA)
CABRILLO COLLEGE AMERICAN DREAM SCHOLARSHIP
ALPHEUS GREEN MEMORIAL (VIA RICHARD ALDERSON)
BURT LOWE SCHOLARSHIP PAMF PREMED SCHOLARSHIP
SIGMA ALPHA OF OMEGA NU SCHOLARSHIP - VOCATIONAL
UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND, PRESIDENT'S SCHOLARSHIP
HARBOR HIGH SCHOOL PARENT BOOSTER CLUB SCHOLARSHIP
WHARF TO WHARF HOWARD MARCUS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
CALARTS ACCESS GRANT ROSALES SISTERS' SCHOLARSHIP
O HASTINGS HUTCHINS SCH VIOLET & WALTER WARREN SCHL
ETHEL McDOWELL SCHOLARSHIP TOSTA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP
GINO PANELLI MEM SCHOLARSHIP NEM HORIZON SCHOLARSHIP
MCNELLIS LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP ADELANTES SCHOLARSHIP
CAL LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY, PUBLIC PRICE PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP
SC HIGH - THURSTON SCHOLARSHIP FRANK GEORGE SCHOLARSHIP
ERNEST V. COWELL SCHOLARSHIP WOODPERT FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP
SC SUNRISE ROTARY SCHOLARSHIP LISA LARKIN OR MARK HODGES
CARDINAL CLUB ATHLETIC BOOSTERS EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS
MARIJANE ADAMS EXCEL IN MUSIC A G WILSON FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP
R. H. BEEL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP COUNSELING DEPARTMENT AMARD
BOB & BETSY DARROW SCHOLARSHIP AMERICAN DREAM SCHOLARSHIP
THE SANTA CRUZ HOST LIONS CLUB BILL DOYLE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND, GRANT DISTRICT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
RON ZABALLOS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP CASTAGNOLA FAMILY MEMORIAL
DIANE TRAPIN MEM SCHOLARSHIP F MARCUS KENNETH MARTIN SCHOLARS
BARBARA SAMPER CABRILLO COMMITMENT S4C SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT
SOQUEL CLASS OF 2016 REGENTS UNDERGRADUATE BENEFIT SCHOLARSHIP
KIWANIS CLUB: KEN & RUBY MARION MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR BUSINESS
SANTA CRUZ KIWANIS MAS SUGIMOTO MEMORIAL ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP
SURF CITY - SANTA CRUZ KIWANIS CLUB NATURE 1ST FDN/DINO SCOPPETTON
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SANTA CRUZ - BARBARA J. THOMPSON SCHOLARSHIP
KIWANIS CLUB: JACK WEAVER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SANTA CRUZ - BURTON SCHOLARSHIP & CROCKER SCHOLARSHIP
SCHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION: CLASS OF 1954, CLASS OF 1957, CLASS OF 1962 LUNCH BUNCH

426 certificated teachers
393 classified supporters
45 administrators

CERTIFICATED SALARIES..... \$ 45,591,876
CLASSIFIED SALARIES..... \$ 18,291,072
BENEFITS..... \$ 32,388,739
BOOKS & SUPPLIES..... \$ 4,951,597
SERVICES & OP EXP..... \$ 18,832,774
CAPITAL OUTLAY..... \$ 332,298
OTHER..... \$ 317,589

TOTAL EXPENDITURE \$ 120,705,945

Our Community Partners:

PAJARO VALLEY PREVENTION & STUDENT ASSISTANCE (PVPASA)
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION DIGNITY HEALTH
PACIFIC COOKIE COMPANY PALO ALTO MEDICAL FOUNDATION
OUTRIDE - RIDING FOR FOCUS & THE SPOKESMAN BICYCLES
SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK SUBARU OF SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SANTA CRUZ COMMUNITY HEALTH
ENCOMPASS COMMUNITY RESOURCES ROCKY'S FITNESS
SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES TOYOTA OF SANTA CRUZ
SANTA CRUZ SYMPHONY SANTA CRUZ HOST LIONS CLUB
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY COLLEGE & CAREER COMMITMENT
O'NEILL SEA ODYSSEY BOOKSHOP SANTA CRUZ
WALNUT AVENUE FAMILY & WOMEN'S CENTER
SAFE SCHOOLS PROJECT MONARCH SERVICES
SANTA CRUZ AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
SANTA CRUZ WARRIORS WHARF TO WHARF
SANTA CRUZ & SUNSHINE ROTARY CLUBS
SANTA CRUZ EDUCATION FOUNDATION
SANTA CRUZ CHILDREN'S NETWORK
SANTA CRUZ PARKS & RECREATION
CASA DE LA CULTURA OAXAQUEÑA
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SHERIFF
SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK
THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
THE DIVERSITY CENTER
CITY OF SANTA CRUZ
CABRILLO COLLEGE
UC SANTA CRUZ
SENDEROS
CSUMB

\$1,952,558
in scholarships

Our students are consistently well prepared for Public University, Private University & Professional Success.