

October 12, 2021

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In January 2023, my third term as county superintendent will come to an end. My adult children and I discussed whether I should choose to run for office once more. After serving 51 years in California public schools, 39 of which were spent as a superintendent, we decided it was time for “Dad” to rest and retire. Therefore, I will not seek a fourth term. The past four years have been the most challenging in my career. Besides the academic challenges of the job, I have had to navigate our local schools through three national disaster fires, two mass community evacuations, a federal disaster flood, mass county power outages, school closures due to air quality, and a continuing worldwide pandemic.

I still love the job, but there are many experienced district superintendents that are qualified for this job. I also have an exemplary support team of assistant and deputy superintendent that are also equally qualified.

I am very proud of the fact that our County Office ranks in the 95th percentile for service excellence on the national normed rating system by its client districts and community agencies.

I am proud that through the collective efforts of the County Office and the districts, we have equalized the graduation rates between our Anglo and LatinX students.

I am proud that we have increased the number of first-generation students going to college by 30%. I believe it is because of SCOE’s partnership with 10,000 Degrees that was made when I first entered office.

I am proud of the fact that we have our own County Office School of Education that offers seven credential programs at half the cost of any university program.

I am proud of the fact that we have a million-dollar scholarship program to recruit diverse candidates who want to earn their teacher or administrator credentials and have role models that better reflect our diverse student population.

I am proud that the County Office post-retirement benefits plan will be fully funded by 2023.

I am proud that SCOE was recognized by the White House for its innovation in the MAKER movement and teacher certification.

I am proud that I was able to testify before the House of Representatives and both house chambers of the California Legislature about the impacts of disaster trauma on students and community.

I am proud that our County Office now offers behavioral health and mental health support to our districts to deal with the emotional and recurring trauma of our multiple disasters.

I am proud that SCOE’s two oldest permanent facilities of over 40 years will be completely modernized by 2022.

I plan to continue to concentrate the next 16 months providing coordinated support to get 70% of our 5-11-year-old students vaccinated (currently 70% of students 12-17 years old have met that goal).

I plan to finalize the zoning approval for our new school workforce housing project – a community of 60 townhouse units named Casitas de Amarosa – so that those districts wishing to offer a below-market, affordable housing option to new employees can do so as a recruitment incentive.

I wish my successor my full support so there will be a seamless transition.

But most of all, I wish to thank the SCOE employees and my Administrative Team and Leadership team as well as the County Board of Education for their dedication, loyalty, and hard work for the past 12 years. It has been an honor to serve alongside everyone at the Sonoma County Office of Education.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Herrington, Ph.D.
Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools

SCOE Mission Statement:

The mission of the Sonoma County Office of Education is to foster student success through service to students, schools, and the community.