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From the desk of Charles Weis, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools
Lately, I talk to more and more parents who have found something unexpected in their house: their grown children.

These are tough times for 20-something college graduates. Their unemployment rate is much higher than it has been in the past. And a recent story in The New York Times cited statistics showing that nearly half of college graduates younger than 25 who do have jobs are working in positions that don’t even require degrees.

Certainly, this is due largely to an economy that continues to struggle out of recession. But I believe there’s another reason for the “boomerang” syndrome, in which college graduates return home to live with their parents. These graduates have degrees, but they don’t have the training or skills to do a job.

Career Technical Education -- also known as Creating 21st Century Education Bulletin - February 2011

Districts, teachers meet at annual job fair
Job-hunting teachers will mix with representatives from numerous area school districts next month at the 24th annual Santa Clara County Teacher Recruitment Fair.

Hosted by the Santa Clara County Office of Education, the March 19 fair will introduce credentialed teachers to potential employers from districts across the county.

To participate in the free event, applicants must have a preliminary credential or clear credential, or have worked as an intern for one year.

Candidates who preregister online can enter the fair at 9 a.m. Those who do not preregister will enter at 11 a.m., and must show their teaching credentials to gain admittance. The event runs until 2 p.m. at the SCCOE, 1290 Ridder Park Drive in San Jose.

Check out the fair’s Facebook page and Twitter feed for updates. For more information, call Karen Bacica at (408) 453-6840.

'Head of the Class' focuses on career prep
Career Technical Education helps students link learning to earning, County Superintendent of Schools Charles Weis, Ph.D. said in the latest episode of “Head of the Class.”

Watch the video here.

This month’s episode of the new online COE news program highlights CTE programs offered throughout Santa Clara County, and explores the research that shows these programs help close the achievement gap.
Career Choices for All -- is an excellent solution to this situation.

CTE brings students, educators and employers together to develop and strengthen the relationship between what's being taught in the classroom and its application in the workplace.

The program engages students, increases attendance and graduation rates, and raises grades. It's a key component of our SJ2020 Initiative to eliminate the achievement gap in Santa Clara County schools.

February has been designated as CTE Month, recognizing the program's effectiveness and importance. For more information about CTE programs in Santa Clara County, including video of these classes in action, visit our CTE Department's Web site.

Symposium explores school safety techniques

Teachers, school nurses, counselors and others who work with students in school settings will learn how to understand, formulate and implement school safety strategies in bullying prevention at an upcoming SCCOE event.

Topics at the March 14 "Bully Prevention, Health and School Safety Symposium" will include county data on bullying prevalence, strategies to enhance a healthy school community, and school safety planning.

Co-presented by Project Cornerstone, WestEd, Project Outlet, Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Santa Clara County Mental Health Department, and Palo Alto PTA, the event runs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the SCCOE, 1290 Ridder Park Drive, San Jose CA 95131.

Register online, and contact

“Head of the Class” showcases programs and initiatives at the COE and in school districts throughout the county.

SCCQE recommends 'person-first' terminology

Recognizing the impacts of language and that a disability is just one characteristic of a person, all SCCOE communications will practice 'person-first' terminology, according to the office's recently amended “Communication Style Guide."

In short, the practice places the person before a label. For example, say "a boy with autism" instead of "an autistic boy."

This simple but significant change acknowledges that a person has qualities beyond a disability. It also recognizes that terminology has the dual ability to empower, or reinforce stereotypes and misconceptions.

The policy aligns with the SCCOE's goal to be a central and active leader and voice on critical education issues, said Janice Battaglia, director of the Inclusion Collaborative, an SCCOE program that works to ensure children with special needs receive the same educational opportunities as other children.

"The SCCOE's voice should be one of equity, acceptance, and respect," she said.

Board honors employee, hears SJ2020 update

Here's a summary of the Santa Clara County Board of Education's actions at its Feb. 2 and 16 meetings:

- Recognized Monica Dvorsky as February's Employee of the Month
- Approved a resolution supporting February as National African American History Month
- Board President Joseph Di Salvo announced Advisory Council for Eradicating Bullying
- Heard an update on SJ2020

The Board of Education is the elected governing body of the Office of Education. Its seven members serve four-year terms and are elected by different regions of the county. Learn more about the members, and view their meeting schedule, agendas and minutes.

'Fog' rolls in over Silicon Valley readers

An SCCOE-sponsored program designed to inspire community literacy and discussion kicked off its ninth edition
late last month with an appearance from the author of "The Year of Fog," the featured work for **Silicon Valley Reads** 2011.

The Jan. 26 conversation with author and Bay Area resident Michelle Richmond marked the first in a series events, workshops and discussions scheduled through March that focus on the book and its themes, as well as three children's companion books chosen to encourage family reading.

Check out an online **calendar** for a complete listing of upcoming SVR-related events.

Silicon Valley Reads is presented annually by the SCCOE, Santa Clara County Library and San Jose Public Library Foundation, with funding from community groups, corporate and individuals donors including, in 2011, the Cupertino Library Foundation and the Michael and Alyce Parsons Foundation.

**Conference teaches online safety techniques**

About 150 educators recently got a sneak preview at the SCCOE of a new **program** designed to help schools navigate the safety obstacles of student's increasingly digital world.

The pilot program, **iKeepSafe Generation Safe**, provides schools with skills and resources needed to help students and staff feel more connected and protected in the school community.

Attendees of the two-day conference earlier this month learned litigation-minimizing response tactics to digital incidences, and how to engage school and community stakeholders.

**Since 1852, the Santa Clara County Office of Education has provided vital services and resources to the county's 31 K-12 public school districts and more than 250,000 students. The COE strives to provide: advocacy and leadership on education issues, student programs that are models of excellence, and indispensable services to schools and community partners. The COE takes pride in being a premier employer and a champion for children, schools, and community.**
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