Monterey County Office of Education

Leadership, Support, and Service to Prepare All Students for Success

Dr. Deneen Guss
County Superintendent of Schools

November 22, 2024

MONTEREY COUNTY EDUCATIONAL LEADERS JOINT LETTER OF SOLIDARITY

We, the undersigned, write to acknowledge the climate of concern within our community amid recent national events and changes in leadership. As educators and advocates for students and families, we recognize that many may feel deep apprehension about potential policy changes, concerns we understand.

In these uncertain times, we want to assure our community that we remain steadfast in our commitment to standing with all students and families, regardless of their background, identity, or citizenship status. As leaders in education, we reaffirm our dedication to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where trust between students, families, and local institutions, including schools, healthcare providers, and community organizations, remains strong and unshaken.

A relationship of trust is essential to the success and well-being of our students and the broader community. This trust allows all individuals to feel safe, valued, and supported in their pursuit of education and opportunity. We are committed to preserving this trust and protecting the dignity and rights of every student and family in Monterey County.

Through existing protections at the state and local levels, and through the collective efforts of educators, leaders, and community organizations, we will continue to uphold justice, equity, and transparency. Monterey County has long been a model of compassion and collaboration, and we remain determined to build on that foundation for the benefit of all students.

Whatever challenges that may lie ahead, we stand prepared to meet them with resiliency and unity. Together, we will ensure that our schools and community remain places where all individuals are valued for their unique contributions and can thrive without fear or discrimination.

In solidarity,

Dr. Deneen Guss, Monterey County Superintendent of Schools
Dr. PK Diffenbaugh, Monterey Peninsula Unified
Randy Bangs, Soledad Unified School District
Dr. Catherine Reimer, San Ardo Union Elementary School District
Dr. R. Espinoza, Mission Union School District
Dr. Caroline Cota, South Monterey County Joint Union High School District
Dr. Melissa Alderman, Santa Rita Union Elementary School District
Dr. Linda Adamson, Pacific Grove Unified School District
Lizsette Jimenez, San Lucas Union Elementary School District
Dr. Matt Turkie, North Monterey County Unified School District
Jennifer B. Taylor, King City Union School District
Dr. Zandra Jo Galván, Salinas Unión High School District