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SANTA CRUZ CITY SCHOOLS

Board extends contract for superintendent

By J.M. BROWN

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SANTA CRUZ — Trustees for Santa Cruz City Schools approved a contract extension for Superintendent Gary Bloom on Wednesday that will extend his agreement through 2014 but provide no raise.

Bloom, who earns \$155,000 annually, said the district was in no position to afford a salary increase. Bloom hasn't had a raise since he was hired in 2008 and took a \$6,200 pay cut last year as part of district-wide furloughs.

An evaluation of Bloom's work began in the spring, and although



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specific findings are confidential, board President Cynthia Hawthorne said "we are offering Gary not only kudos for his leadership but we added an additional year to his contract."

Also Wednesday, the board voted to join a regional agreement to better prepare students for college and eliminate achievement gaps between whites and historically underrepresented minorities, as well as the wealthy and lower-income brackets.

The resolution in support of the Santa Cruz County College Commitment stems from a new collaboration established among local school districts, UC Santa Cruz, Cabrillo College and Cal State Monterey Bay. The resolution calls for increasing the number of Cabrillo College students who transfer to four-year schools and earn bachelor's degrees.

At City Schools, parent and student education will begin in the fourth grade. Four-year plans will be developed for all high school students and graduation requirements will be reviewed.

Bloom said only 27 percent of degree-seeking community college students in the Monterey Bay region complete their degree or certificates within six years.

"If the outcomes were better, we'd be sitting pretty, but the outcomes are not acceptable," he said.

Bloom said the district and its families suffer from "a certain amount of complacency" about access to Cabrillo College, where entrance requirements and costs are lower than at four-year state schools. But Bloom said 90 percent of first-time students enrolling at Cabrillo College are not ready for college-level work in either math or English.