

Schools - Staff
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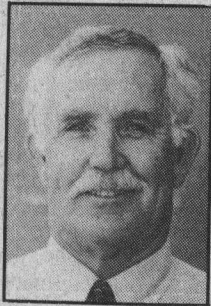
✓ Harbor principal will take over at Soquel

By DENISE FRANKLIN

Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — Ken Thomas, principal at Harbor High School in Santa Cruz for the past eight years, will become interim principal at Soquel High School beginning Monday.

The Santa Cruz City Schools Board Wednesday night agreed to the change. Soquel High School Principal Mary Lou Mendoza Mason stepped down last week after receiving a



Thomas

vote of no confidence from 35 teachers earlier this month and facing a walk-out by students last week.

Mendoza Mason has been granted a medical leave of undetermined length, according to Superintendent David Sklarz.

Thomas will be at Soquel until June 30 while the district searches for a permanent replacement. He said he has no plan to apply for the position because he wants to return to Harbor.

"I hope that my skills and what I have learned and been able to do at Harbor High School will be of some assistance in the transition that is taking place at Soquel," said Thomas, who was a teacher and coach at Soquel High

for 17 years before going to San Lorenzo Valley High as vice principal and then to Harbor.

Janet Fogel, one of two assistant principals at Harbor High, will be interim principal at Harbor. Robert Rieber, a teacher at Harbor, will take Fogel's place temporarily as an assistant principal.

Mendoza Mason's salary will be paid through the district's self-insurance plan for the time being, according to Sklarz.

She announced last Thursday that she was stepping down as principal, a position she held since 1993. White students in particular alleged she favored Latino students, created racial tensions and was unapproachable and dictatorial.