

# Coulter To Quit SC Post

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Jim Coulter is resigning as superintendent of the Santa Cruz City Schools and plans to retire.

Coulter, 60, told The Sentinel he has been considering retirement "for quite some time" and that no particular incident prompted him to retire at this time.

The superintendent, who has worked for the district for 15 years, said he is resigning "for a lot of personal reasons." The resignation, which he plans to give to the school board at its Dec. 8 meeting, will be effective July 1, 1981.

"I have lots of things I'm thinking of doing, but nothing firm," the superintendent said of his retirement plans.

Coulter grew up in New Jersey, where he earned a reputation in athletics by playing hockey, basketball and football. He also swam, which he continues to do.

After serving in the Navy during World War II, Coulter came to California where he supplemented his degree from Southern Methodist with teaching credentials from San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley.

As dean of boys at Santa Cruz High School, his first job with the school district, Coulter developed a reputation as a tough administrator.

The School Board then appointed him principal of Mission Hill Junior High School, where, as he later said, "They were having a little trouble."

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The trouble lessened after two years of Coulter's administration, and he was made Soquel High School's principal in 1968.

In 1974, the School Board sent him to Santa Cruz High School to solve problems of racial tension and faculty dissatisfaction.

In 1978, the board chose Coulter as superintendent over other applicants whom trustees said were technically better qualified but lacked Coulter's on-the-job experience.

"He came in at a difficult time," School Board Vice Chairwoman Erva Bowen said.

"It was in the throes of Proposition 13, with all the financial difficulties, and we also had problems with collective bargaining and negotiations," Bowen recalled.

The past two years have been particularly difficult for the district because of personnel and budget cuts, Bowen noted. Teachers feared for their jobs during the 1978-79 school year, following Proposition 13, and their morale was low in 1979-80, which they worked without reaching an agreement with the district.

Last year, the district was threatened with a lawsuit when it instituted fees for extra-curricular music activities. Charges for after-school events and closure of pools during part of the year were among several unpopular board decisions Coulter was instructed to implement as superintendent.

"It was kind of a morass he had to wade through," Bowen said.