

Latinx Leadership Panel

June 8, 2020

6 to 7 p.m.

Facilitator: Dr. Fabiola Bagula

Panel Members

- Corinna Contreras, Member, Vista City Council
- Armando Farías, President, Chula Vista Elementary School District Board of Education
- Dr. Carmen García, Superintendent, San Marcos Unified School District
- Cipriano Vargas, Member, Vista Unified School District Board of Education
- Lou Barrios, Member, South Bay Union School District Board of Trustees

Questions Overview

1. How are you proactively thinking about addressing the disproportionality of the COVID-19 impact on the community you serve?
2. What are some immediate needs that are also emerging because of this data?
3. How might we all contribute to these efforts?
4. How is your identity as a Latinx leader showing up?

Bagula: Welcome, everyone, to our Latinx Leadership Panel. How do we pro-actively — or how are leaders leading pro-actively to address the disproportionate needs of our Latinx Southern California students?

I want to start off with gratitude for you welcoming us to your home this evening. Buenas tardes y muchas gracias por acompañarnos. [*Good afternoon and thank you very much for joining us.*] Because of the large interest, we had to hold the webinar piece. So I know you have been muted, and this is a totally different Zoom call that we are on. I do want to make sure that you know that we will be recording this. When we release all this information, it will not only be recorded, but it will also be transcribed in Spanish. We want to make sure our Latinx community who speak Spanish only are able to access this information. You will be receiving it shortly.

Why is this topic important? Before we begin, I want to say a couple of things. Dr. Gothold released a statement this week that was really important for us last week, and I want to read you what he wrote. He said, “This is our moral obligation. Many of our students and families are deeply hurting. This pain comes on top of the stress from the pandemic, which has exacerbated inequities that disproportionately hurt our historically underserved community.” So, I think that that is really important, and what you will see in this panel is that this session was designed to address these exacerbated inequities and the disproportionate ways that COVID is impacting our Latinx population across our county. I am also very certain that our panelists here today would describe it as a moral obligation. Our equity department has been working very diligently

ensuring that there are resources for our students, for our classrooms, for our districts that would help mitigate learning loss across special populations — not only to address the current COVID pandemic conditions, but also to address the civic unrest that is currently happening in our country. I want to thank Dr. Gothold for all his support for putting this session together and also for our county school board that has also been very supportive of our work.

So why is this topic important? Here on the screen, you are going to see just a few of the headlines that are very current in the news. Now, our Equity department has been curating a list of these headlines around the disproportionate ways that certain populations are experiencing COVID. I will tell you that, at first, it became a curated list, and now it is getting into this seven-page document about just how disproportionately African Americans, Latinx and Native American populations are experiencing this. I want to read you a couple of the trends and themes that are happening because — as we are collecting them — we are also pulling out the trends and the themes. We are seeing the rates that people get COVID. We have higher rates of death. We have a higher risk of getting COVID. We have a higher job loss according to Newsweek. There's a 65% job loss for the Latinx community. There is a loss of employer provided healthcare. More Latino businesses have been closing. We are the people that have the low-paying, essential-worker jobs, such as healthcare aides, bus and delivery drivers, grocery store workers, meat plant factories, and migrant workers. We are out there exposing ourselves. We've lost savings. We've lost our retirement. There is a fear of not being able to make the rent. The access to healthcare: we have low-quality or no access to health care. Then there is also immigration status. We have a lot of families that are afraid to receive help, especially even a laptop from a school district, because they feel this is going to go against them trying to get citizenship in this country. There is a lot of complexity within the Latinx label, of course, because we have transnational students. We have migrant students. We have English language students, and so there is complexity behind that label. We're currently also working with the Mexican Consulate in order to ensure our transnational students, while quarantining in Mexico, also receive the appropriate support — and that we are able to mitigate learning loss there.

Dr. Gothold was going to join us. Dr. Rodriguez-Chien will be the one that is welcoming us today.

Here are the numbers as of Friday. As of Friday, as you can see, if you look at the disproportionate ways in which certain populations are getting COVID here in San Diego, Hispanic or Latino is at 65% with a rate up to 364. So again, the disproportionate ways that the Latino population is experiencing COVID is a lot larger, especially in our county, and this was why it was imperative for us to ensure that we are addressing this and have this panel.

As I said, Dr. Gothold will not be able to join us, but I hope Dr. Rodriguez-Chien will be able to. And I also want to say, "Thank you," before I begin to introduce our panel members, to two of our county board members. We have our board president, Alicia Munoz, present here today and listening. So, thank you for being here and for always supporting the work in the Equity department. Also, board member Guadalupe Gonzalez.

On hand first, we have Dr. Carmen Garcia. She is the Superintendent from San Marcos Unified School District. Dr. Carmen was born in Tepatitlán, Jalisco, México, and grew up in Escondido, California. She is indebted to her public-school education and aims to continue to 'pay it forward' in order to make a difference in the lives of ALL students so they, too, can reach their highest potential. Her moral compass guides her to ensure that school systems provide access and equity for all students in order to prepare them to be successful members of society. Dr. Garcia's twenty-three-year career has allowed her to observe the educational sphere from the perspective of a teacher, researcher, assistant to superintendent, Dr. Carl Cohn, principal, lead principal, and superintendent. She is married to Dr. Gabriel Gutiérrez and, together, they are raising three beautiful children who are proud to be bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Thank you, Dr. Garcia, for joining us tonight.

We also have Armando Farías, who is the School Board President Chula Vista Elementary School District. Mr. Farias has dedicated over 20 years to public education. He has primarily served communities with

majority Latino students. His experience as an Elementary School Principal has a clear record of excellence in education in urban school settings. He sees himself in the stories of his students as a first-generation college graduate. He continues to be interested and active in serving as an advocate for vulnerable youth. Thank you, Mr. Farías, for being here today.

We also have Corinna Contreras, Vista City Councilmember for District 1. Corinna Contreras is the first queer Latina to serve on the Vista City Council and currently represents District 1. Her passions include building community, advocating for local resilience, designing regenerative systems, increasing biodiversity, and participatory inclusive governance.

She was elected in 2018 after defeating a two-term incumbent and serves a four-year term ending in 2022. Corinna is recognized in her community as a grassroots activist and community advocate. Thank you, Council Member Contreras, for being here.

Cipriano Vargas, Board Member for Vista Unified School District. Cipriano Vargas is a graduate of California State University San Marcos, where he was the first in his family to graduate from college. After graduating from college, he taught Kindergarten in the urban core of San Antonio, Texas at a Dual Language School. In 2016, he returned home and was successfully elected to the Vista Unified Schoolboard at the age of 24. Cipriano is a proud graduate of Vista Public Schools, where he is pushing topics on educational equity and to increase K-12 funding. In addition, Cipriano is an organizer with SEIU 221, serves on the CSUSM Alumni Association, and is a board member of ACLU Next Gen. Thank you, Board Member Vargas, for being here.

Mr. Lou Barrios School Board Member of South Bay School District Area 4. Mr. Barrios is proud to have called San Diego home for the majority of his life. He developed a passion for social justice in college and moved to the Bay Area to begin his career in public education as a math and science teacher. Since then, Lou has taught in middle school and high school in Escondido, San Diego and San Ysidro. He also has a level of expertise in athletics, investments, and building bridges for first-generation college graduates as an upward bound instructor.

As you can see, we have a very esteemed panel. All have dedicated their lives to not only representing the Latino population, but also to making sure that we have the most beautiful conditions for all of our students. I'm thankful for all of them.

I'm wondering if Dr. Rodriguez-Chien is now available.

Rodriguez-Chien: Hi, everyone. Welcome to our summit. We are so happy that you can join us. We know it is late in the evening; however, we have lots of important messages for you this afternoon from, again, a very esteemed panel of educators that are going to share their thoughts, their ideas, and their leadership with you this afternoon. Again, we just want to make sure that we recognize that the work that we do for our students is critical, especially now during this pandemic, and with the civic unrest, and the virus going around. We know that our students need our support more than ever. This is a very important conversation that we are going to be engaged in. We want to thank again the panel for being here this afternoon. We encourage all of you to continue the conversations as we move forward. Thank you, Fabi; I'm going to hand it back over to you, so we can get started with our questions.

Bagula: Thank you so much. All right, so let's get started with our questions for our distinguished panel. Dr. Garcia, I'm going to pose the first question for you as soon as I stop sharing this. The first question that we have up for discussion is: How are you proactively thinking about addressing the disproportionately of the COVID-19 impact on the community you serve?

Garcia: Good evening, everyone. It's a pleasure to say hello from San Marcos, CA. San Marcos is unique in that — when you look at the total number of COVID-19 positive cases as of June the 6th — we only had 99 cases. That's really a night-and-day difference compared to our colleagues in the south county, especially the

counties and the cities that are bordering the U.S–Mexico Border. In spite of that, though, our community is affected by an incredibly high percentage of unemployment. One of my zip codes (out of four zip codes in my district) is one of the top 15 zip codes that is affected with unemployment. It's a zip code that is immediately adjacent to Cal State San Marcos. Just the juxtaposition of that is quite interesting. As an educational leader, we often tend to be about 10, 15, 20 steps ahead, and so as soon as we made the decision to close our schools, we knew that schools are our community hubs...and so, we needed to figure out a way in order for us to continue to provide those resources. To date, we have provided over 500,000 meals, and we're serving about 10,000 meals a day. The third day after we closed our schools, we began distributing Chrome books. We were able to dispatch about 8,000 Chrome books, which also highlights an incredible need. We also were unique as a district in that we were able to provide fixed hours of instruction so that we could provide our communities, our families, and our faculty a sense of normalcy by providing these fixed hours of instruction. We are also very unique and blessed. We have social workers in our schools. The social workers became an additional layer of support for our families, and so, as a school system, we are all about being systemic and systematic. We are all about creating multi-domain tiers and systems of support. Based on those tiers — tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3 — we knew who our tier 2 and 3 students were, and we knew where to deploy resources in order to support our families in need. We are seeing an academic regression, and we are getting prepared. That is also a proactive measure. We are fully empowering our design teams to come up with a new way of educating our students so that we are able to deliver — and continue to deliver — on the promise of public education so that all kids are successful. So our schools— (even though we physically closed them), our social workers, and our family liaisons, our principals, our assistant principals, and our teachers, continue to conduct home visits in order to ensure that we can do a warm handoff between a family in distress, a family in need, and connect them to the resources they need, to the food banks, providing EBT, access to EBT cards, connecting them to churches that were able to provide some support. We were able to show our families how to log into our schools' platforms so that students could have access to education. We know that a lot of our families are in distress. We understand that many of our families, and you talked about this earlier, about the public charge. We have a lot of families that are undocumented. So, this added layer of fear is very concerning to our families, and so many of them want to continue to remain in the shadows. As a superintendent, and as an educator, it has never been my call to promote this sense of shadows. If anything, it is about empowering our parents [to know] that they, too, have a voice, regardless of their immigration status. They are valued. They have a voice. Their children are valued in our school system — because, after all, that is why we are here: to support them. Those are just a few of the things that we are doing in San Marcos Unified to proactively think about ways to support our families.

Bagula: Thank you for being very clear that the disproportionate ways that it's hitting the Latinx community in San Marcos is more about employment. Of course, that comes with its own issues. Thank you for not only providing food, but also providing and leaning into the community resources. I'm going to stay with northern San Diego — to board trustee, Cipriano Vargas. Cipriano, same question to you: How are you proactively thinking about addressing the disproportionate ways that COVID-19 is impacting on the community you serve?

Vargas: Absolutely. Thank you all for being here, and thank you for the invitation. To continue off of what Dr. Garcia was mentioning — COVID-19 came at us, a punch right in the face. We weren't planning for a pandemic. Nobody was prepared to know how to deal with schools being shut down and distance learning. With that, how do we quickly move our staff from providing essential services to making sure that we are bridging the gap — whether it was the social-emotional gap, through our counselors and through our staff that provide those services. But also, at the first line of defense, are our family liaisons. We were fortunate that we have had these family liaisons for quite some time. They have built relationships with our families. By knowing the need, where the need was going to be right away, was definitely something that we were proactive on. Also, recognizing the digital gap — one of the things in this pandemic. These inequities have

always existed, but now they are more amplified, and people are recognizing some of the areas we need to look at in education and what we need to do to make sure that — when we provide a quality education — it is not just for some students, but we provide quality education for all students. It's not just what happens in the classrooms; it's what happens in our communities. So, with that, we were fortunate to work with partners and community organizations. This is also in the time that we were trying to work with the census, so I know that our school board is committed to making sure that everybody is counted because these are vital services and money that our community could benefit from. From food insecurities to the digital divide to making sure that many of our families who are either working or who have children who may be at home — the learning environment is not the same. It's not the same as being in the classroom. Trying to build those systems, we know we are not going to be at that same level, but we know that, as educators, and school board members and superintendents, we have a duty to bridge that gap. We have a duty to make sure we are proactively advocating and having these conversations. It's not just something that one individual can do alone. It's not just the superintendent's job. It's not just our social workers. It's not just our teachers. We all play a role in bridging the gap and finding what our community needs and making sure we act proactively. The last thing I'll mention is ...we were early in meeting with our legislatures...because this pandemic, as we are seeing, is not only impacting this academic year, but it's going to impact the next 2 or 3 years. So, what does the state and federal government needs to do to make sure that we are able to continue and that we have the funding that we need? Those are ongoing conversations. I am thankful for our board colleagues and different advocacy organizations that have been at the forefront of having these conversations. That is going to help us in the fall and the next couple of years.

Bagula: One of the things that I was very clear with what both you and Dr. Garcia mentioned was leaning into the extra supports, right? I heard parent liaison. I heard social workers. I heard now legislation. We are lucky to have a council member with us. Council member, Corinna Contreras. Same question for you about leading proactively in order to address the disproportionate ways and what I'm assuming is that unification that both board trustee Vargas and Dr. Garcia mentioned.

Contreras: Yes, definitely. Taking the perspective of a city, where it's not necessarily written anywhere in the city that the city should be taking a role in equity. That is actually a difficult concept for some of my colleagues to understand when we are looking at the city of Vista that has such a high percentage of Latinos. Prior to COVID, people in power were basically like, "hey everything's going fine. The economy's roaring." Yet, I represent a district where people were still hurting and trying to get back on their feet from the last recession. You can see that economically. One of my wishes at this point would be to have a political majority where we can institute quick policy to capture anybody that has been left behind. When we are looking at rental assistance, when we're looking at a moratorium on evictions — those are just not politically feasible at this moment. That is a lot of the immediate assistance that my community is asking for, and we are not able to get it through because, as you know, with the council just like with the school board, you need to have a majority. The city actually has a long way to go when it comes to bridging the divide. Even when you drive through Vista, it's two different cities. I wanted to just kind of frame how I'm going to talk about this through that lens of it seeming like everything was fine when there were these issues, systemic issues in the community already. And then COVID comes. Unemployment it's a little over 30% in the city of Vista. Latinos are being disproportionately affected. The Latinx community is where are we seeing the job loss in the service sector—and those are typically not necessarily living wage jobs, right. So, you already had someone struggling every day and then COVID hits. And then, the local municipality isn't there to hear the community and implement some quick policy reforms. When I think about my role and where I'm at in a political minority to make change at this moment...when I think proactively, one of the things we know with the climate crisis that we are in: it makes it that much more probable for a pandemic in the future, unfortunately. It makes it that much more probable that kids in district 1, the district I represent, are going to have issues with asthma, and have all these

other issues. So, how does the city, at this point, build the type of structure to help our kids right now who are going to go into the workforce? When I think about being proactive...I'm on the Vista Economic Development Strategy Committee. That's one of my big pushes. How do we connect our kids to a workforce that can't be outsourced? Because, right now, the discussion is, a lot of it is we are going to need training. We have little workforce development going on. We're training for skills manufacturing, but then there's no money for retraining if those go away. We need to really address the economic systemic issues. I really believe that the city could take a huge role in partnering with Vista Unified School District to really up the game of our workforce development — because we need to be able to bring our community into different, tier 1 jobs. That way you can have access to healthcare. You can have time off. All those things that we're seeing that are so crucial right now — that our community lacks access to. Really, that's the way I see it, and, unfortunately, like I said, I don't have a political majority where we can put these quick policy reforms into play right now to help people right now. That's how I see it.

Bagula: Thank you for bringing that lens, too. That even before this pandemic hit, there were things that we were concerned about as a community. I appreciate you taking us back to how to take a look at this whole picture. So, thank you. I'm going to move south to our south county: Mr. Armando Farías, board trustee Farías. How are your districts proactively thinking about how to addressing the disproportionate needs that COVID is impacting on our community?

Farías: Thank you for the question, and good afternoon, everyone. I'm really honored to be here. Fabi, thank you again for creating this space to really engage in these dialogs. As you have stated, and based on data that is available by means of articles, newspapers, and on the news media everywhere, we really have disproportionately higher number of COVID-19 cases in the South Bay. To add to this, not all cases are accounted for different reasons, especially in the 91911 zip code where I live and 92154. A solution to this goes beyond providing 2,000 hotspots for our students, and feeding our kids, or just engaging in digital learning. My way of thinking regarding this is the following: we really need to be able to look at data, and look at our community, and find the why or the whys this is so. Why are our numbers so disproportionately higher than other places? We know that in the Latinx community, we live in extended families, and, many times, we are taking care of our elderly, our families, our extended families. After we do some research, in my opinion, the best way to address this pandemic is through the power of communication. We need to be able to address this issue head on with a real sense of powerful communication. We must also be careful, very careful actually, not to create a sense of panic. This is an issue that can be addressed in a collaborative way. As you know, I have always believed in the power of the collective. Putting in place a task force that includes representation from all groups of people: parents, teachers, health experts, legislators, elected officials. We also need to ensure our leaders and elected officials are part of these conversations and solutions. We need to include; we need to ensure that we really connect with as many residents as possible with data and information in hand...that we really communicate in the language that they understand. I just had a communication a few minutes ago with Dr. Escobedo, who's the superintendent for Chula Vista Elementary School District, and one of the highlights was: how are we communicating with over 20,000 families that we serve? I was very clear to make sure that he understood that this isn't about just teaching and learning. It's about health. It's about the health of our communities, not only in Chula Vista, but beyond.

Bagula: Thank you. Thank you for that answer. When you say communication, I immediately to the space of how I have to communicate with my mom about COVID, and even though she is Latina, and I'm Latina, I still have to be very mindful of the cross generations. Now you're talking cross-generational and cross-race dialogue that needs to happen, especially in our school leadership across the county. Mr. Barrios, final person for this South Bay: What are the ways your district is looking at addressing the needs of COVID-19, proactively addressing those needs?

Barrios: Yes, in terms of the educational side, I can speak for what we are doing. I do think that Armando brings up a really good point: this is a really complicated issue because it's beyond just what happens inside the classrooms. We just finished our school year, but before that, we really wanted to make sure that we were supporting teachers, and what it looks like to teach via zoom. I've been a teacher for a long time, but I don't know what it's like to teach 30 kids in a classroom where you are all on the internet. Making sure students are having equal access was really important. Getting to the point of the impact here in South Bay: our school district borders Tijuana. We are impacted at a much higher rate. I think from the health care prospective, not only do you need a higher, like a greater access to health care, but you also...one thing that gets lost is that some of these numbers and some of the data is showing that part of the reason why Latinx communities are more impacted is because of current health. If you look at heart disease, if you look at diabetes, and you look at the rate in which Brown and Black people suffer from those things, a lot of it has to do with not having the access to the information. I can tell you a lot of my Tias [aunts] and my Tios [uncles] a lot of them have high cholesterol. The doctors explain to them the traditional ways in which they cannot have high cholesterol. They sign them up. They take out their pharmaceutical pad, and they write them a prescription to whatever. It is going to bring their numbers down or help reduce that cholesterol, but it's actually not solving the problem. It's not helping people understand that there's a nutritional component missing here that people aren't being taught. Finding ways to get that into our schools — so that students really understand the impact of why it is their immune systems are not as strong. We can really increase the access to healthcare. I think that that's really important, but there's also an impact of why Latinos, why black and brown people are getting this virus at a much higher rate. There has to be something going on for us to have the ability to fight off the virus that we aren't actually winning. It's not a competition. It's happening in a lot of places. This isn't necessarily on topic, but I would be remiss if I didn't mention that I stand in solidary with Black Lives Matter, and what is happening with the protest around the country. I think that any chance I get to speak to anybody or any group of people, I mention qualified immunity. In the United States of America, qualified immunity is what allows police officers to unjustly kill another human being and have almost a 100% chance of not serving any jail time and no justice being served. This is a conversation that is starting to get to the Supreme Court, and there's bills that are starting to happen, but I think it's something that most people don't have the access to or don't that this exists. Under qualified immunity, unless there's a previous case where a police officer has done that exact same thing, it's almost 100% likely that that case will be thrown out. In the United States of America, if someone, if a police officer unjustly kills a person, there a 99% chance they're serve no prison time.

Bagula: I appreciate that you brought that up. Thank you also for addressing that. I also think that you brought up the issue that I read an article today that in Latinx and in Black communities the access to healthy grocery stores beyond like a mom and pop liquor store, they're not in our communities. This kind of feeds into the systemic and historical oppression of a community and just really how healthy can we be in those conditions. Thank you for bringing that up as well.

I want to remind the audience who's out there listening on the webinar that if you would like to post a question, you can click on the questions tab at the bottom of the screen and join the chat. We have a couple of members from the equity department that's monitoring that, and they'll make sure that we ask those questions.

I am going to move on to the second question here. The second question is really because we were seeing that there are exacerbated needs that are coming out, especially from the pandemic, but I'm wondering especially because we are in kind of different spaces in the county...What are some immediate needs that are also emerging because of this data? You already started to answer that question, especially when you started talking about health care, when you started talking about unemployment rates, but just in general there are

some other things that maybe we aren't paying attention to as a county. Really, the effort of this panel is that you're not alone in San Marcos, and you're not alone in Vista, and you're not alone in South Bay. We're actually united, and, together, we help build that coalition. Council member Contreras, that is what you're talking about, right— unification for efforts to represent our community? What are some immediate needs that are also emerging because of this data? Dr. Garcia, I'll swing back to you.

Garcia: You know, throughout my 23 years in education, I have always stood for all means — even before it came into vogue, and that's also directly translated into each and every student. I am for each and every student. How do we meet students that I call it the i plus one? How do we meet the student at their level of need, assess their next steps, and create conditions where we can help them lead toward that next step and then beyond? That's part of being, that's part of creating a multitiered, multi-domain systems of support. What we are finding is that we have a lot of families that we've known this in school or wherever. We have a lot of families that are school-dependent. With COVID, with the forced nature of closing our schools, with our ability to identify the level of need, we understand the need is there, but the need has now tripled, has quadrupled. Our immediate need is to ensure that our students are not falling through the cracks. How do we continue to provide multi-tiered systems of support? By doing so, we leverage each of these schools with their MTSS plans. At all of our schools, we have the level 1, level 2 and 3 implementation with respect to level of support and level of need. In terms of immediacy, we are finding that our social and emotional needs have escalated. They have escalated beyond anything that I have seen in my years in education. In our home visits, what we are finding, we are finding parents who are depressed. We are finding parents, even as we go through the homes around noon, we're finding that the parents are asleep. We're finding that the siblings are taking care of each other. We're finding that some families have to continue working and many of them are continuing to work 2,3 jobs and are then relying on, further parentifying our students to take care of their younger siblings. In one particular household, there is a high school student who is taking care of his six-year-old sister and his two-year-old brother while, at the same time, trying to complete his assignments online. The level of social-emotional supports has certainly quintupled. For us, we talk about systematic support. We have to go beyond our social workers that are in our class and in our schools. We have to go beyond our counselors that our in our schools. How do we create a web of, within the city of San Marcos, my district also includes itty bitty parts of Vista and itty bitty parts of Escondido and itty bitty parts of Carlsbad? How do we create this interconnected web that becomes then the net, the safety net that catapults our students to safety? At the end of the day, education either opens or closes doors of opportunity. I would rather be on the side that opens doors of opportunities— in spite of pandemics, in spite of live and death situations. Education is so important, and we need to be able to deliver on that promise. That also includes ways to bridge the food insecurity gap with our families, we all talked about it. Our families are hungry. What else can we do beyond the food banks, beyond the EBT cards, and beyond the partnerships with our churches? What else can we do in order to be able to provide the basic needs for all of our families because not having, not meeting those basic needs, those lower levels, there's no instruction? There's no learning and at the end of the day, and I'm sorry that I keep going back to this: education is so key. It is important that we continue to invest in our schools so that each and every student is successful.

Bagula: I appreciate that you brought up the importance of the school social emotional space that we're all in. I'm going to do a commercial here, but the Equity department is going to put out a 15-minute webinar on trauma because right now all of us are currently experiencing trauma and there's four layers of trauma. There's personal trauma. There's vicarious trauma. There's collective trauma, and there's historical trauma. We are living in all four, and that's actually kind of unprecedented in general. How we're taken care of each other, especially how we're taking care of our little ones who are coming up in these times is really important. So, thank you for bringing that up.

I'm going to go on to board trustee, Vargas. What are some immediate needs that are also emerging because of this data?

Vargas: Two things. The first thing is a question and a reflection for our own staff, especially as it relates to the digital learning and making sure that we provide a quality education, not just a at one school or just within one classroom, but how can we support our staff to make sure that the learning is happening across and that it's a quality learning. With the flexibility built in that empathy that a child may not be able to log into a class from 10 to 12 because that may be the time that they're trying to get lunch from the local church or from the local food bank. That child may have a better learning environment in the evening because that's when everybody's sleeping and that's when they have the best time of concentrating. With that, how do we practice empathy and be flexible as it relates to this learning environment and where our students are able to learn. Carmen talked about the child that's taking care of the younger sibling, but also the families that live in multiple, multiple families living in a single house so with that creating some of the challenges and complexities. As we look into the fall, how we deliver information, creating multiple systems. The other thing is as we look into this budget and as we look at what's happening at the federal level is that we cannot do more with less. We have never been fully funded. What that means is that we absolutely have to look at our budgets, get more creative, but at the same time for our parents and our community, making sure that we advocate to get that additional funding to make sure that our staff, our students have that proper PPE equipment. Making sure that we are able to sanitize our classrooms so that if a hybrid model continues in the fall, we have safe conditions for learning to continue. The last thing I'll mention is that if a child or a family member is impacted by the COVID-19, that is not just an impact on that individual student, that is an impact on the entire family. We talked about the trauma and making sure that we recognize that that may impact a student for 2 to 3 weeks, maybe a month, maybe beyond that if there is a death. Recognizing that this is an impact that is beyond this single student and that it impacts the entire family and the members that are within that proximity. We are going to look at how we support our students in the fall. Regression is going to happen. As educators you know, we are going to step up and do our best to provide those learning opportunities and advocate at the state level so that we provide those meaningful opportunities for our students to continue learning. Definitely recommend summer school. Maybe not this summer and some districts are moving into that direction, but we are going to need to provide those opportunities to make sure our students are caught up.

Bagula: Thank you all for bringing up the variability of the experiences and the variability that we have to be flexible with because of those conditions. You brought up a good point, that this might be the time that they are going to go get their lunch and coming back and so being a zoom call at 10 in the morning might not be the best time. Thank you for bringing up that voice.

Councilmember Contreras, what are some things that are emerging, some immediate needs that are emerging.

Contreras: Sure, one of the things that comes to mind immediately is Vista Community Clinic, which has been asking the city for a vulnerability study— and that's not something that has been taken up. When we're looking at the population in the city of Vista, I think it's absolutely necessary to know where our vulnerable populations are and why they're vulnerable. Whether it's a pandemic, whether it's an increase in the fire risk — all these other factors can come into play. We, as a city, need to be able to address any issues. There's really no reason why we can't forecast that. We do it for economic development. We look at what different threats there are, but we don't take that level of seriousness and put value in the actual people that create the economy. We don't know where our vulnerable populations are. We don't know whether it's city infrastructure that needs to be fixed because it's missing or its inadequate. Board member Vargas talked

about multiple families living in a single-family house and the overcrowding. So, when we look at a situation like COVID, well an immediate need, is what is the proximity to outdoor space to open space and it's missing. It really is missing — even to try and get shade somewhere. If you want to take your kids out, have them get some fresh air... where do you take them? How do you get there? And all the while, in the situation that we're in with very little income. Either individuals that lost their jobs or that are just not able to pull in the type of income necessary to get all the basics and then to be able to also access the beach, access all these other spaces. What's really missing? It's blatantly clear in this crisis that it's not the city and its policies are not centered on equity. When we get to the point where we can really have an honest discussion as a community about what equity looks like in our own backyard, then we can start addressing some of these systemic issues and systematic processes that lead us to, a by-product of more Latinos succumbing to this virus. More Latinos succumbing to environmental injustices. What I really think we're seeing is that cities need to start centering around equity.

Bagula: Thank you for bringing up the outdoor space. I was a principal for 10 years, and most of my students live in apartments. That's been weighing on my mind — how important sunshine and grass and just play is, especially for children. In thinking about I might then help if I were still in that space.

Board trustee, Farías, same question: What are some immediate needs that are also emerging because of this data?

Farías: Something with I'm really struggling with is the fact that we're calling these new needs. I don't believe these needs are new. The needs have always existed within us and our communities. The difference is that they have been really highlighted by this health, social and economic pandemics because I believe we are living three of them at a single time. I come from deep and generational poverty as you know, with eight kids and a dad that worked in the fields for minimum wage. We had the same needs that our families have now. The difference is that it has been really taken to a whole new level by the level of news. I'm sorry; these needs will never really change unless we elect the right people into office. These needs will never go away unless we as leaders within our communities keep working at changing them — and at the same time, we engage others. Others in numbers that can help us out in really making a movement that has power for the right reasons. There has always been a need for social justice for equity, for quality healthcare, and for economic equity. Systemic oppression, as we all know, has always existed, and it's really up to us to change it.

Bagula: Board member Barrios: Lou, go ahead.

Barrios: I was thinking about what Cipriano said earlier — about full funding in education and it's something that doesn't exist in California — or at least it hasn't been that way for a long time. We're struggling with it as it is, and these state budgets have not been good to us in terms of what we're projecting right now. So, we'll have a chance in November for people to have an impact on that. I do know that that's one of the things that across California, declining enrollment is a real thing. Generationally, millennials are not having kids at the same rate that their parents did, and that has a big impact on schools. Every year there are a greater number of salaries that have to be paid, so it creates a lot of difficult decisions. I will say also, touching on what Carmen Garcia mentioned, I do think education is so key. I do think that there is a fundamental missing piece in education when it comes to nutrition and really understanding how that impacts your body. I will tell you, I took quite a few classes in my 12 years of education, and I never really understood how nutrition had an impact on me. I remember being a child and having difficulty with overeating. I remember thinking, you know what will be great, I'll get a tortilla, and I'll put some mantequilla [*butter*] on it, and it's a light meal. It's such a small amount of wheat, but that is actually a terrible thing for a child to eat if you're trying to be nutritionally conscious. There was no way that I was ever going to learn about that —not with the current 12K education. I

think one of the needs, and like Armando mentioned, this is not a new need. Nutrition is not something that was taught in schools. The same way that financial literacy is not something that is taught in schools. We talk about a lot of Latinos having generational co-living spaces. A lot of it has to do with the fact that it's difficult to actually leave the home because — if you don't really understand how credit works and you make bad choices when you're very young — it's difficult to ever find that landlord that's going to rent to you. There are a lot of things in education we should think about: how we best use time and what our students really should need when they graduate — not just the access to going to college, but what they really need to be successful in life and beyond their time in college. Those are the things that I think are needs that don't often get addressed enough or get talked about. It creates a vicious cycle during a pandemic like this to really...I'm looking at these numbers: 65.6% of the entire county are Latinx members. That's a huge amount. That's a much higher number than our actual numbers — our percentage of actual Latinx members in the whole San Diego county. We're very disproportionate. I think a lot of that has to do with the real lack of education.

Bagula: I'm checking in right now with our participants to see if there's a question. Please know, I am aware of the time. We are at 6:50, and we have a lot of questions. I think we are going to take those questions to inform our next webinar so that we can hold another space. There's obviously a need for us to come together and answer these questions for all of our community. Xochitl Gonzalez. She says, "a line from Armando Farías feedback: the hotspots, free meals, teaching and learning is not enough." The question for the panel members, "What would enough look like specifically?" So, anyone who wants to take that question.

Farías: I'll start the question. We don't know when enough, is enough. What we know right now is that what we're doing is not enough due to the numbers that are impacting our communities, especially in the South Bay. Like I just mentioned a little while ago, coming from generational poverty myself, I know that my parents really struggled with the communication that was coming from the school site. My parents didn't speak any English and most of the communication was in English, so they didn't have a choice as to participate or not to participate because they didn't know what they were reading. They could hardly read themselves. There's another need that we really need to address: making sure that communication goes in the way our community can understand it. If you are Latino or Latinx, whatever you want to be called, we know that beyond communication, verbal and reading, there is a different level of communication, especially if you come from more social economic environment. I don't know if I'm making myself understood here, but I have always worked in low socio-economic communities, and I feel like I have that ability to truly communicate and get my point across when it comes to those families, because that where I come from. We need to learn how to communicate with them. That's another need.

Bagula: I'm going to go to another question. The second question, "Aurora says are Latinx students in expanding and emerging levels. Are they being serviced? What is the plan to close the gaps caused by the weeks without instruction when schools closed at the beginning of COVID-19? How are we addressing those?" Dr. Garcia, I see you coming in.

Garcia: I think city council member Contreras mentioned this earlier when she talked about equity. I have some kind of schools in my district, and we are very cognizant of the regression. As we fast forward, and as we plan for launching into the next school year, we understand the importance of assessing the level of need diagnostically and creating plans: multi-level plans to ensure that we remediate and accelerate at the same time. With respect to equity, we are in the process of creating some additional enrichment opportunities for our families and for our high-need students so that we can extend our academic interventions into the summer. We're also in the process of developing a summer school program, of sorts, for our English learners and creating it, positioning those interventions and enrichment activities as a bridge. We're hoping to offer those right before the beginning of the next school year so that again we can assess the level of need, try to

remediate as much as possible during that, and launch to the following school year. Ultimately, education is the story of love. Education liberates. Education empowers. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for the adults in our school system. We need to wrap our arms – intertwine our arms – in pursuit of supporting all our students so students are successful. Board member Farías mentioned that he comes from generational poverty. I am who I am thanks to my parents. One of ten kids, the ninth out of ten. Our parents left Mexico in pursuit of a better life, and that is interwoven into my DNA, and I aim to pay that forward to ensure that our students are successful. The history of our students, or the color of their skin, or whether their parents went to college or not — none of that matters. None of that matters. It is literally up to the those in the school system to get with the school board and, as a governance team, work very closely with the superintendent and design a vision around excellence for all. How empowering is that? COVID or no COVID — ultimately, the charge is the same, and so, as a school system in an ideal world, and if I had all of the dollars to my name, or at least in our school budget, let me think big. Why can't we create our schools as community hubs? It's worth it. We can't understand that the basic needs are not being met and our students and families are currently experiencing a fight or flight. How do we mitigate that? How do we meet those needs and use our schools as those havens? Do we need doctors there? Do we need dentists there? Do we need beyond food pantry? How do we mitigate and blow up this food desert that you were describing earlier, Dr. Bagula. How do we understand the variables that are getting in the way of our students' success? Blow them up; create systems. Pass laws. Let's partner with our partners in our local cities. How can we work together to support our kids? It's not a lofty goal. In a nutshell it's quite simple. Let's do whatever it takes to ensure that our kids are successful. They are worth it and our future as a country is worth it. Enlighten student population. I'm biased; I come from an International Baccalaureate world where it's so important that our students are well-rounded beyond the core. The world languages are just as important as history and math, and the arts and so on and so forth. So that ultimately, we can create a more understanding and a more respectful inter-cultural environment. We can do it. It's not as lofty as it seems. We can do it. Si se puede.

Bagula: I love that. First of all, we are getting close to our time ending here, but I want to ask one final question that maybe we can do in one sentence each. Also, I want to make sure that our audience that's out there that I honor your questions. I will definitely put another panel together to address these questions that you posed and that we didn't get to. I heard council member Contreras say that we need systems that are rooted in equity as a number one thing. The last question to ask you for our message for all of the audience members that are here spending their evening with us is: How might we all contribute to these efforts? No estamos solos; we're not alone. How might we all contribute to these efforts? Who wants to start?

Contreras: First and foremost, know who represents you locally, and have a conversation with them. Reach out. You'll probably hear silence, and you're going to have to press. As a community, we have to press. We have to get engaged, and then, when you get engaged, you can teach other people and then it spreads. That's accountability. The vote is the beginning. We have to hold our elected officials accountable.

Bagula: Thank you. How about you Board Trustee, Farías?

Farías: I really believe that the power is in the collective. We all need to be able to represent multiple groups and to ensure that we all collaborate so we can move with force and power and that every decision is based with data in hand and in the benefit our students.

Bagula: Thank you. Board trustee, Vargas.

Vargas: I would say by opening up conversations. I'm looking at my inbox, and I have an email from one of the parents. Having this notion of inequities and not realizing some of the issues and things that are happening with this pandemic. Six months ago, a different point in time, a different conversation. So, you know having those opportunities to have these conversations and moving it forward because at the end we all want a better public education system whether you live on the west side of town or the east side or whether you live in a single family household or if you live with all of your family and your parents, we all want a quality education for our children. Until we have these conversations and have a critical conversation about race, about inequity, about oppression, about the impacts of the pandemic, if we don't have a conversation then we can't get to these outcomes that are really going to help pivot this forward.

Bagula: Beautiful, Dr. Garcia.

Garcia: I would say be a student advocate and keep the student in the center of every decision that we make. Sometimes adult interests tend to cloud our vision, but at the end of the day – it is what is best for students, and they deserve the best from us.

Bagula: Board Trustee, Barrios.

Barrios: I'm going to echo some of the other sentiments shared by the other members that are here. I was just going to say that I think the civic engagement is really important. Show up to board meetings; show up to city council meetings. Share what you have to say. Share what's there, and also, just be actively engaged. I know as far as our school boards go, we are going to have some stuff on the ballot in November that would make a huge difference for our kids and make a big difference in the south bay.

Bagula: I heard: know who represents you, how they are accountable, lean into the collective, join the space to dialogue, and have these kinds of conversations that are aimed also toward action. Be a student advocate, make student centered decisions, and be civically engaged. I know personally, just in the matter of weeks, we saw the power of unity and collective: when we flattened the COVID-19 curve in San Diego and across our state; when we shifted our educational model that we gave to our students; and also the civic unification that's happened these last two weekends in the protest. So, I know, that it's possible to lean into the collective and to do all the things that you just said. I want to thank you for your time, and I also want to bring back Dr. Rodriguez-Chien to help us close this meeting.

Rodriguez-Chien: Thank you, Fabi, and thank you, panelists, for being with us this afternoon. On behalf of Dr. Gothold and board members of the county office of ed, we really appreciate the time that you spent with us and for sharing your insights.