“Supporting Student Success During a Pandemic”

Enrique G. Murillo, Jr., Ph.D., Professor, College of Education

Executive Director, LATINO EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY DAYS (LEAD) ORGANIZATION

Faculty Director, DOCTOR OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

California State University, San Bernardino

CSUSB WE DEFINE THE *Future*

Thank You for the Invitation

- **The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, an economic recession, and a renewed national recognition of systemic racism have only compounded the toll of rampant educational inequity.**
- K-12 school closures, colleges pivoting to remote instruction, large anticipated budget cuts, and extraordinary stress, place families at an educational crossroads. Without urgent action, this moment will exacerbate barriers to opportunity for students (particularly of color and students with higher needs), including students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, and students experiencing homelessness, foster care, or engaged in the juvenile justice system.

Education is a right not a privilege

- Education is of economic imperative, and the Civil Rights issue of our generation
- For the purpose of broader context: the competitive strength of the U.S. in a global economy depends, and will continue to depend to a large extent, on the positive educational outcomes of students at all levels
- We must achieve a dramatic and powerful change in our communities

To create a positive future it will require a citizenry that is:

- Equipped to compete in a global economy
- Part of a literate and well-educated labor and consumer base
- A pool of linguistic and cultural talent that would serve to strengthen ties with International partners
- Significant component of a highly productive work and business force that contributes to the tax base and therefore the economic well-being of the U.S.
- Poised to participate and shape the U.S. political landscape through voting and civic engagement

COVID-19:

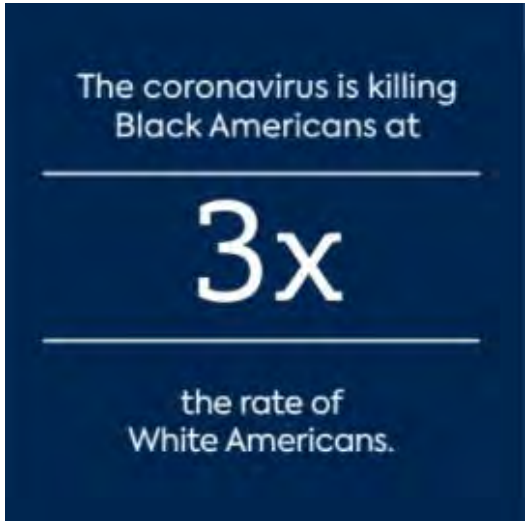
Hard for Everyone, Worse for Some

COVID-19:
Hard for Everyone, Worse for Some

- African Americans are the most likely to have suffered actual layoffs, while Latinos have experienced the most widespread reduction in income through job loss, reduction of wages or work hours, or lost income to their businesses.

The COVID-19 crisis is affecting everyone, but it is not affecting everyone equally.

BIPOC are more likely to be impacted by the health and economic impacts of COVID-19.



- These statistics mean that African Americans and Latinos are more likely to face stress and anxiety as family members disproportionately lose jobs, get sick, face food insecurity, put themselves at risk of exposure in order to make ends meet, or even pass away.
- Even knowing that these threats could befall loved ones can have a profound impact on a students' emotional wellbeing and subsequently, their ability to learn.

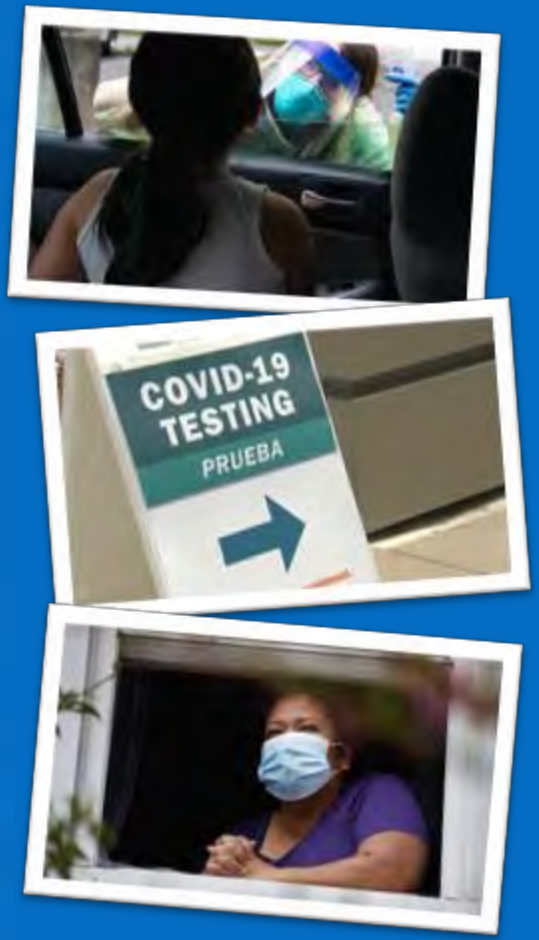
Sources: The Washington Post; The Guardian

The pandemic has helped expose the inequities, that have long existed before

- Many BIPOC are shouldering a disproportionate burden of the pandemic, NOT because they are not taking personal responsibility... It is structural, more closely related to income and access, not genetic, and primarily a factor of decades of policies that have ignored our communities

The pandemic has helped expose the inequities, that have long existed before

- Marginalized communities are ill-prepared for their battle against the coronavirus and thus are among the worst hit by the crisis because our communities are among the least able to access the healthcare systems and unemployment benefits that could bring relief



In short:
economic disparities go hand in hand with health vulnerabilities. The poorest people always pay the highest cost.

- BIPOC have the highest uninsured rates of any racial or ethnic group in the US.
- Lack of, or insufficient health insurance. Some are wary of seeking medical care due to medical costs, and in some cases fear that going to a hospital will expose them to immigration authorities. Consider who have access to testing and who's getting into the hospitals.

In short:
economic disparities go hand in hand with health vulnerabilities. The poorest people always pay the highest cost.

- Latinos in particular work in low-paying front-line jobs…more Latino/as work disproportionately in the country's 10 lowest-paying jobs . . . grocery store staff, restaurant workers, caretakers, cleaners and delivery workers. Also, Latinos are heavily represented on farms and warehouses, and those essential businesses that remain open during the shutdown. 84% percent of Latinos in the United States don't have jobs that allow them the privilege to stay home.

In short:
economic disparities go hand in hand with health vulnerabilities. The poorest people always pay the highest cost.

- In these jobs there is often crowding together, or interacting with the public (and unfortunately often without proper safety gear or PPE). Plus likely no paid sick leave either.
- Multi-generational families or households living in close quarters.
- Impoverished families crowded into small apartments or multiple families living under one roof.

In short:
economic disparities go hand in hand with health vulnerabilities. The poorest people always pay the highest cost.

- Lack of savings and wealth. The economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic is dealing a hard-hitting blow to those who barely recovered from the hammering they took in the Great Recession, raising the possibility of a setback from which many may not recover. Millions of families were just bouncing back from losing 66 percent of their household wealth, lagging far behind their white peers. During the Great Recession, for example, Latino median household wealth plummeted from $18,359 in 2005 to $6,325 in 2009, the largest of any racial or ethnic group (according to Pew Research Center).

Impact and Responses during COVID19

- Key Themes - Research, Surveys and Focus Groups cite most frequently;

a) BIPOC are experiencing higher rates of infection and mortality

b) Decline in Mental Health

c) Loss of Socialization

d) Loss in Emotional Support

Impact and Responses during COVID19

- Key Themes - Research, Surveys and Focus Groups cite most frequently;

e) Insecurity: Housing, Income, Food

f) Lack of Recreational Activities

g) Access to Basic Resources, including Medical Care and Equipment

Bridge to a Post-Pandemic Future

- BIPOC are the bridge to a post-pandemic future, as well as a post-pandemic economy. We are the growth population in this country and so what happens in education and in the workforce development has profound and significant implications for everyone, whether or not they are in that population.

Bridge to a Post-Pandemic Future

- So Education is one of the keys – as it has always been!!!

At the onset of pandemic anecdotal evidence painted a bleak picture for both students and universities!

- According to the American Council on Education, enrollment was likely to drop by 15% in Fall 2020

- While at the same time many institutions had to confront demands for large tuition cuts if classes pivoted toward virtual (and were to remain)

At the onset of pandemic anecdotal evidence painted a bleak picture for both students and universities!

- Students faced an increasingly uncertain environment, where financial and health shocks (for example, lack of resources to complete their studies or fear of becoming seriously sick), along with the transition to online learning may have affected their academic performance, educational plans, current labor market participation, and expectations about future employment

Educational Responses - Higher Education

- Switch to virtual instruction & student services
- Digital divide (race & class); need hardware & software, need internet & hotspots
- Institutions have had to tap into their financial reserves
- Increased assistance from philanthropists right now
- Operational Costs - CARES ACT

Educational Responses - Higher Education

- In higher education, the inequality is seen as some low-income, first-generation college students of color are struggling to meet the challenges they face. Some are helping to put food on their families' tables. Some are newly homeless, having been asked to leave a rented room or dorm. Still more are balancing their own college classes with home schooling their elementary-school-age children or siblings and translating for English learners in their families. Others do not have access to the technology, such as laptops, they need or a quiet space to study.

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

- The Impact of COVID-19 on Student Experiences and Expectations: Evidence from a Survey, Esteban M. Aucejo, Jacob F. French, Maria Paola Ugalde Araya, and Basit Zafar, NBER Working Paper No. 27392, June 2020, JEL No. I2,I23,I24

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

- 1,500 students surveyed at Arizona State University
- Quantitative evidence showing the negative effects of the pandemic on students' outcomes and expectations

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

- negative economic and health impacts of COVID-19 have been significantly more pronounced for less advantaged groups, and these are partially responsible for an underlying heterogeneity in the impacts

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

- 13% of students had delayed graduation due to COVID-19
- 11% planned to withdraw from classes
- 12% intended to change majors
- highly heterogeneous effects: for example, lower-income students were 55% more likely to delay graduation compared to their higher-income counterparts

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

- Working students suffered a 31% decrease in their wages and a 37% drop in weekly hours worked
- 40% of students lost a job, internship, or a job offer
- 61% reported to have a family member that experienced a reduction in income

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

Survey conducted by Global Strategy Group on behalf of The Education Trust – West, May 2020.

THREE IN FOUR CA COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT BEING ON TRACK TO GRADUATE, WITH CONCERNS EVEN HIGHER FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

75%

of students are concerned about being on track to graduate from their program

95%

of students have had their classes canceled for the semester

85%

of students say most or all of their classes are now being held virtually

CA COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE FACING SEVERE FINANCIAL INSECURITY AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC

33%

of students report skipping a meal or reducing how much they are eating as a result of the pandemic

34%

of students report their colleges have provided food support, like access to food pantries.

54%

of students are uneasy about their personal finances over the coming few months

49%

of students think they will be able to afford basic expenses like food, housing, and tuition if the crisis persists for two more months

THE PANDEMIC IS A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS FOR CA STUDENTS

67%

of students report higher stress than usual

66%

of students say they are concerned about experiencing anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues when they return in the fall

36%

of students say they are concerned about their risk of developing substance abuse or addiction during the pandemic

"My anxiety has gotten so bad that I have gotten severe panic attacks and I'm depressed"

"I miss not living in constant fear"

CA STUDENTS REPORT MAJOR GAPS BETWEEN THEIR NEEDS AND EXISTING SUPPORTS

WOULD BE HELPFUL	SCHOOL IS DOING THIS	
87%	48%	Virtual office hours or other ways to connect with faculty
86%	47%	Virtual office hours or other ways to connect with academic or career advisors
85%	31%	Emergency financial aid or other financial support
85%	31%	Tutoring, advising, or other academic support
85%	24%	Career advising and job prepartion
83%	46%	Virtual office hours or other ways to connect with administrators
78%	34%	Food support, like access to food pantries
76%	35%	Mental health services, counseling, and emotional or psychological support
75%	47%	Coronavirus safety and risk reduction information
75%	26%	Forums, portals, or other ways to connect socially with other students
74%	25%	Well-being services, like mindfulness and meditation services
66%	11%	Alternative housing arrangements

Early systematic analyses of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education

STUDENTS REPORT FEELING DISCONNECTED FROM KEY CAMPUS SUPPORTS

The Pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted what was already "in play" and has given us a real opportunity to think afresh about our education systems

- Lessons learned from the emergency pivot to remote classrooms revealed that many students lack the necessary infrastructure to maintain continuity in their college experience.

The Pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted what was already "in play" and has given us a real opportunity to think afresh about our education systems

- Persistence of Exclusion: education segregation, which reinforces stereotyping, discrimination and alienation.
- Exclusion of learners in education systems include background, identity and ability, gender, age, location, poverty, disability, ethnicity, indigeneity, language, religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression, incarceration, beliefs and attitudes.

The Pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted what was already "in play" and has given us a real opportunity to think afresh about our education systems

- Alienating Learners: When learners are inadequately represented in curricula and textbooks they can feel alienated.
- Chronic lack of quality data on those left behind.

Most Pressing Questions . . .

- What contingency plans have educational leaders designed to better support these students?
- How to establish the policies and institutional requirements to keep student success at the heart of a college's mission, even in unprecedented times.?

Most Pressing Questions . . .

- What can college leaders do to make sure the new and continuing academic year is as responsive to students as it is to the emergency?
- What resources are available to students to ensure they receive the best learning conditions during these challenging times?
- What support systems are needed to help instructors achieve equitable teaching experiences?

Things Campus Leaders can continue to do:

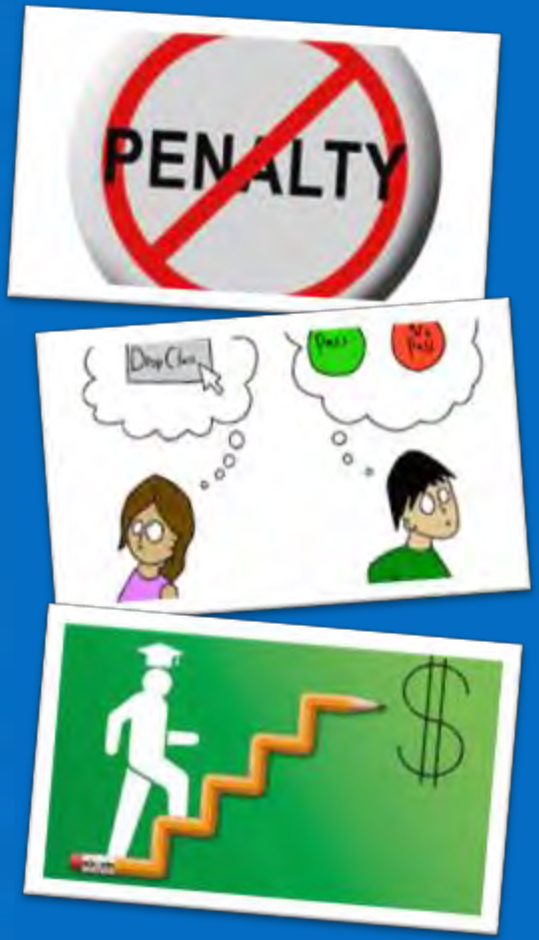
- First, given the Pandemic, help ensure health and well-being of Students, as well as Faculty & Staff; make sure we are all Safe and Protected
- Maintain Access to Supports for College Students
- Ensure Oversight of Federal Funding, make sure Federal Funds are Not Used to Discriminate, that Funds are Targeted to Marginalized Students

Things Campus Leaders can continue to do:

- Preserve Civil Rights Protections, Ensure Marginalized Students Have Access to Distance Learning
- Ensure Students Have Access to Food; given the Insecurity
- Cancel Student Loan Debt

Things Campus Leaders can continue to do:

- Extend no-penalty windows for dropping courses
- Grant students greater flexibility with alternative grading options
- Adjust Satisfactory Academic Progress thresholds for financial aid eligibility
- Permit out-of-state students to maintain residency for in-state tuition



Things Campus Leaders can continue to do:

- Maintain and build relationships
- Make available mental/emotional help
- Make available Equity Counselors for wrap-around services and supports your campus offers that students and families are no longer receiving
- "Simplify the curriculum" and work from there
- Create and maintain culturally-responsive instruction

Things Campus Leaders can continue to do:

- Keep LEARNING and DEI at the forefront
- In this period of uncertainty, we must remain committed to accelerating student success as a key to ensuring our collective future. By sustaining our commitment to identify, support and promote institutional practices that choose to intentionally serve students and confront structural barriers, we are setting the pace for much needed institutional transformation.

DEI as a Disposition

- DIVERSITY is the presence, recognition and engagement of people of social, political and institutional identities from the wide range of human experiences, and the complex ways these identities intersect and are lived.
- EQUITY names a process of dismantling and creating structures and practices that have intentionally or unintentionally advantaged or disadvantaged groups of people; it is a process that responds to unjust structural outcomes to create laws, policies, practices and traditions that support just outcomes for all.

DEI as a Disposition

- INCLUSION is a process and practice of active, intentional and sustained engagement of each person in an environment that values and respects their perspectives, multiple identities, experiences and contributions.
- BELONGING is a basic human need that is met by active acceptance and validation of a person's lived experience, perspective, and ways of learning and understanding and includes a community of persons with shared social identities, supportive and challenging environments, and climates with high levels of encouragement.

DEI as a Disposition

- An INCLUSIVE CLIMATE is evidenced by practices, policies and traditions that include diverse people and perspectives, that intricately considers those from historically and systemically oppressed, underrepresented and underserved populations for the purpose of social justice.
- SOCIAL JUSTICE is the work to eliminate historic and systemic oppression and to build systems and cultures of human dignity where rights, accountability, equity, inclusion and access creates conditions for people and groups to realize their full potential.

#1: Meet the Basic Needs of Students

- Rationale: Many of California's students were experiencing hunger and housing insecurity before the COVID-19 crisis. As in many areas, the pandemic raised the visibility of these issues and made the problems worse.

#1: Meet the Basic Needs of Students

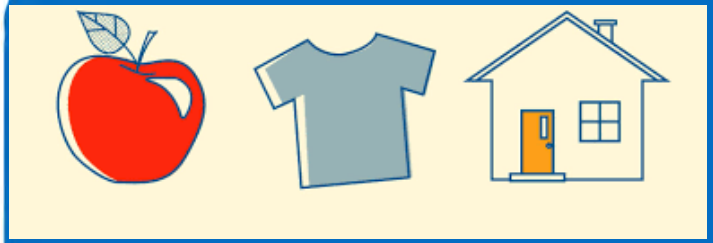
- Recommendations

Expedite the implementation of the Pandemic-Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT). California has submitted a plan to the United States Department of Agriculture to participate in the P-EBT. If approved, rollout of and communication about the program must be swift.

#1: Meet the Basic Needs of Students

- Recommendations

Seek a federal waiver to temporarily suspend rules that make college students ineligible for the CalFresh Program, federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), simply due to their status as a college students.



#1: Meet the Basic Needs of Students

- Recommendations

Preserve students' Cal Grant eligibility. California should ensure that students' academic performance during COVID-impacted terms does not result in being identified as failing to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), and aid received during the Spring 2020 term should not impact lifetime Cal Grant eligibility because of campus closures

#2: Focus On Racial Equity

- Rationale: We must work toward climbing out of this crisis with a focus on racial equity so that the state and the hardest hit communities – especially Californians of color and low-income Californians – can recover. The educational systems in our state must be rebuilt so that they facilitate access and opportunity much more evenly than ever before.

#2: Focus On Racial Equity

- Recommendations: Disparities in access to healthcare, preexisting conditions, and an over representation in high-risk service jobs that continue to expose workers to the public, will likely leave communities of color hardest hit by the pandemic. California will need every tool at its disposal to recover from this crisis, including the ability to direct resources to marginalized communities of color.

#3: Close the Digital Divide

- Rationale: California serves as a global center for the tech industry yet the digital divide persists and is even more evident as schools, districts, and colleges across the state grapple with the COVID-19 crisis. Our digital divide map highlights districts with populations whom are likely to have the least access to the internet and digital devices – students from lower-income communities, students of color, English Learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness. Students unable to participate in distance learning will be left further behind. College students also face uneven access to technology, despite common assumptions about access to devices and the internet in the home.

#3: Close the Digital Divide

- Recommendations:

Define the problem by estimating the number of students – pre-K through college – who have not been reached since districts and colleges have moved to distance and online learning.

#3: Close the Digital Divide

- Recommendations: Encourage the California Department of Education to issue guidance for Local Education Agencies, or LEAs, to develop Distance Learning Plans and to allocate federal stimulus dollars towards improving distance learning accessibility for English learners, students with disabilities, undocumented students, and students living in poverty. Incentivize public-private partnerships so that broadband, technology, and digital providers provide additional services to students and families in high-need communities.

#3: Close the Digital Divide

- Recommendations: Urge Congress to modify the federal E-rate program to grant students from lower-income communities access to technology and the internet. This program already provides access for schools and libraries in low-income communities. It should be modified to serve students from lower-income communities in their homes to adapt to distance learning

#4: Address Learning Loss

- Rationale: We need the Governor and the Legislature to lead the way in helping local education agencies, colleges, and universities to support students recovering from learning loss, particularly students from lower-income communities, students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities.

#4: Address Learning Loss

- Recommendations:

Direct school districts and colleges to make distance learning plans publicly available via an easily accessible, user-friendly, multi-lingual platforms.

Require distance learning with quality standards and strong supports for teachers, and discourage collective bargaining agreements that permit teachers to opt-out of online instruction.

Provide flexibility for LEAs to use summer learning and/or supplemental instruction to address learning loss.

#4: Address Learning Loss

- Recommendations:

Define how schools should measure student learning during this crisis and how this information should be used to allocate district- and school-level resources and tailor supports to help students catch up on missed material.

Provide emergency funding to higher education programs such as summer bridge programs and co-requisite courses that support students of color, students from lower-income communities, and first-generation students, especially incoming college freshmen, to thrive academically.

#5: Protect Education Funding

- Rationale: COVID-19 will have a devastating impact on the state's economy. One of the most important things the Governor and the Legislature can do to help students from lower-income communities and students of color succeed in the face of the crisis is to protect education funding, from early learning through higher education. If cuts are necessary, avoid making them across-the-board– students who are the most in need should be prioritized for funding and should be cut the least.

#5: Protect Education Funding

- Recommendations:

Provide financial resources to early care and education programs to prevent closures as a result of losing tuition.

Preserve funding for the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the statewide system of support, UC, CSU, and the Student-Centered Funding Formula at the California Community Colleges.

#5: Protect Education Funding

- Recommendations:

Prioritize funding for student support services at colleges and universities in order to serve the students hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis and avoid cutting categorical funds focused on closing attainment gaps.

Maintain California's reputation of having one of the country's most progressive and generous financial aid systems to help our lowest-income students move into a postsecondary education

#6: Support Educators

- Rationale:

Teachers are on the front lines in the fight to ensure high-quality teaching and learning during the crisis. We need the state to do as much as possible to support teachers who are adapting to delivering online instruction for preschoolers through high school seniors.

#6: Support Educators

- Recommendations:

Ensure teachers receive training and tools to adapt to distance learning, virtual space to collaborate on planning and co-teaching, and peer support through coaching and affinity programs.

Ask LEAs to minimize teacher layoffs if budget cuts are necessary

#7: Do Not Abandon Accountability and the State Longitudinal Data System

- Rationale: During fiscal downturns, the negative impacts fall disproportionately on students from lower-income communities. The Governor and the Legislature should maintain minimum levels of budget transparency so the public can monitor delivery of services to students most affected by the crisis.

#7: Do Not Abandon Accountability and the State Longitudinal Data System

- Recommendations:

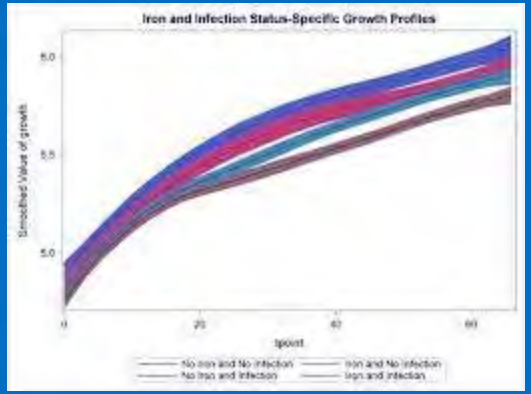
Require LEAs to complete a smaller LCAP that discloses use of LCFF supplemental and concentration funds, and federal and state emergency funding.

Enact AB 1834 (Weber) and AB 1835 (Weber) to require reporting and state tracking of supplemental funds, and ensure continuation of spending rules for these funds when they are spent over multiple years.

#7: Do Not Abandon Accountability and the State Longitudinal Data System

- Recommendations:

Protect funding allocated for the development of the state longitudinal data system. When it is fully operational, this system will be a valuable tool in identifying the state's biggest disparities regarding learning loss and measuring the effectiveness of strategies for recovery for preschool through post-secondary students.



#8: Plan for the Future

- Rationale: The COVID-19 pandemic and the associated disruption to the pre-K to college school systems may be the biggest education equity crisis in our lifetimes. In addition to the immediate crisis of helping students continue learning during school and campus closures, we call on the Governor and the Legislature to plan for long-term educational recovery and focus on families and communities who have been hit the hardest by the crisis.

#8: Plan for the Future

- Recommendations:

Work with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond to develop a plan for the structure of the 2020-2021 school year, taking into account learning loss and possible additional shelter-in-place periods.

Incorporate into the 2020-2021 plan, strategies for using summer months to address socio-emotional learning and learning loss to help students catch up and integrate back into schooling.

#8: Plan for the Future

- Recommendations:

Maintain access for families in lower-income communities to high-quality early learning programs to mitigate opportunity gaps before children even enter kindergarten.

Ask the State Board of Education to adopt a student growth measure as a state indicator on the California School Dashboard to measure individual student growth and recovery.

Para Los Niños

Enrique G. Murillo, Jr., Ph.D.
emurillo@csusb.edu

#8: Plan for the Future

- Recommendations:

Create a plan to ensure students' social-emotional and mental health needs are met to get them ready to learn as soon as possible.

Encourage colleges and universities to develop robust "re-engagement strategies," outlining specific outreach strategies to reach students who stopped attending as a result of campus closures.