



News Release

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Contact: Janice Rombeck
Office of Supervisor Dave Cortese
70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, CA 95110
408-299-5030; 408-803-2095 (cell)
Janice.rombeck@bos.sccgov.org

Board Approves Supervisor Cortese's Proposal to Help Bridge the Digital Divide for Families across Santa Clara County

Late Tuesday night, the Board of Supervisors approved Supervisor Dave Cortese's proposal to invest \$7 million in Internet access and technology devices to help bridge the Digital Divide in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Final approval of funding for the project, which is a partnership with the Santa Clara County Office of Education, will come to the Board through the 2020-2021 Budget process in August.

"I called for this report in response to a critical need for information on fighting coronavirus to get out to communities where the impact is the greatest," said Supervisor Cortese. "But bridging the digital divide in Santa Clara County is long overdue."

Shelter in Place orders have forced school districts to shift to online learning, which leaves out an estimated 15,000 students in the County's 31 school districts who need laptops or tablets and the 9,361 families are without access to the Internet.

Not only will this not only provide distance learning to more students but will also connect their families to vital COVID-29 information, medical appointments, employment opportunities, food resources and housing aid. The proposal received strong support from residents and organizations that advocate for social and economic equity.

“The need for connectivity to the Internet is as basic as the need for food, clothing and housing,” Supervisor Cortese said.

The action came during a nearly 14-hour meeting, the last of the fiscal year, that can be viewed at this [link](#). To read the report on the digital divide, click [here](#). The next Board of Supervisors meeting will be on July 21.

For more information, contact the Office of Supervisor Cortese at 408-299-5030.