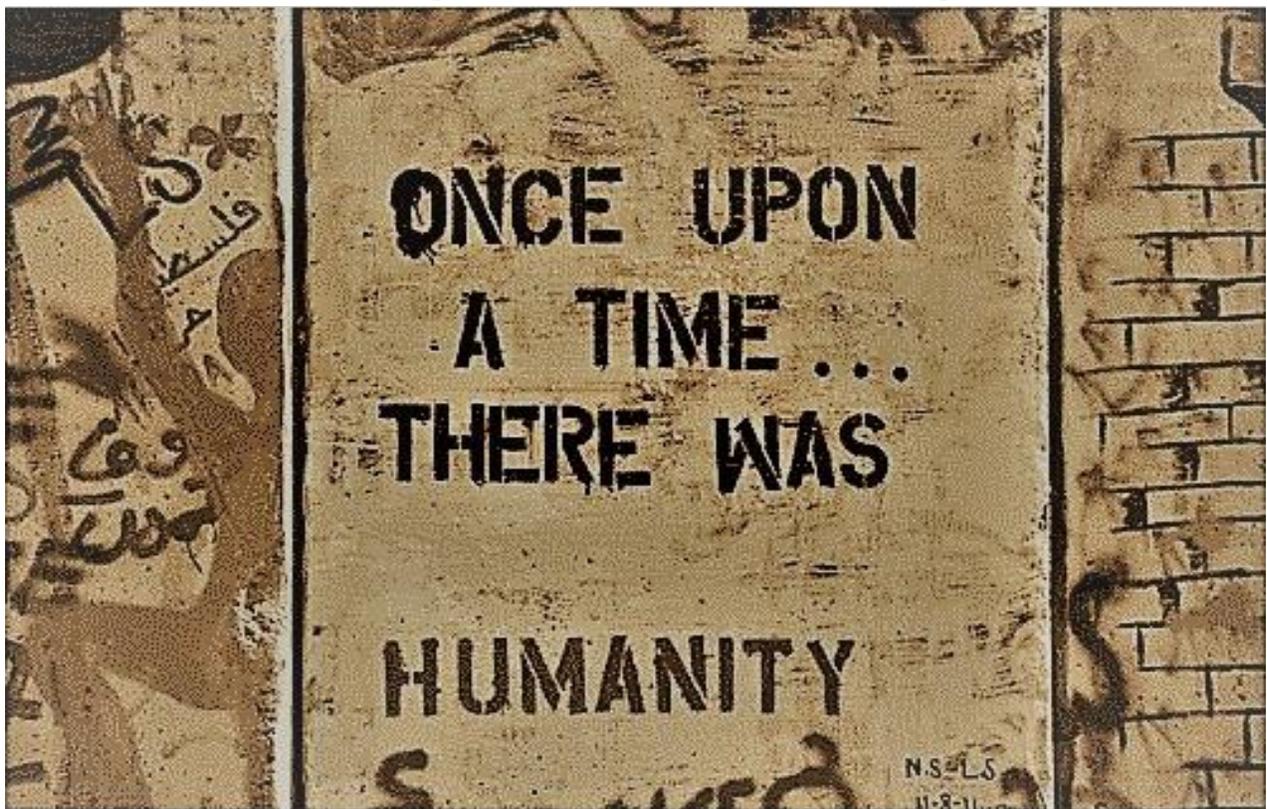




**PROMOTING EQUITY AND ACCESS**  
THROUGH CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

## Humanizing Virtual Learning Guide



May 2021



## **Foreword by Tonette (Toney) Salter**

Distance education was developed in 1892 by the University of Chicago Extension Division with the ideas of engaging with the community and enhancing accessibility. In 2018, the National Center for Education Statistics reported 6,932,074 enrolled in distance education in the post-secondary realm.

The COVID-19 pandemic expeditiously elevated digital platforms to the primary education source for students. Educational practitioners' level of experience with technology demonstrated the vast inconsistencies in how educational content was developed and delivered. In one word, the process was "kludgy."

Some practitioners embraced the change with excitement and exhilaration, and others with fear and frustration, which are valid human emotions when treading in a new territory of instructional delivery. The message of "humanizing" was especially perceptible to me given the heightened acts of racism acts during 2020, combined with the health crisis. This prompted me to reflect upon my ancestry.

Four hundred years ago in the South, a formal education was obsolete for my ancestors. However, they found alternative learning paths. The pursuit of education was a communal effort to include parents, spouses, family members, and fellow slaves. This reflection period made it very clear where the California Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee (JSPAC) content focus was going to be- it was going to elevate humanity in order to level the playing field. It would not look at race, gender, sexual identity, societal identities, funding classifications, special populations, minorities, marginalized, underrepresented, social-economic class, but rather the human learning needs.

This 45-page guide covers the importance of human capital as our nation's most valuable asset. The urgency to rebuild and change the narrative to provide authentic educational learning experiences in new ways ensures each human has an opportunity for their future growth. The return on investment in the human is a better and stronger economy of diverse knowledge and talent.

The guide is inspired by the work from Paul Emerich France (*Humanizing Distance Learning: Centering Equity and Humanity in Times of Crisis*) and grounded in the idea that Humanizing Virtual Learning (HVL) is an evolving practice. JSPAC has created a cross-functional (secondary

and post-secondary) HVL guide that embeds the critical need to create an authentic human virtual learning experience.

There was no doubt who JSPAC would partner with in the creation of this guide-Renee Marshall. It has been a pleasure to know Renee Marshall since 2012, from a professional associate relationship, friendship, to partners in the practice of equity, inclusion, and diversity in Teacher Preparation Programs, advocacy for Strong Workforce Program funding, and in a community of practice. The creation of the guide is a professional and personal journey of working, collaborating, and requiring transparency, humbleness, and vulnerability from Renee Marshall and me.

The delivery of virtual learning was new territory for most TK-12, adult education, and higher education institutions in California. Most 2020 virtual instructional needs were reactive and were delivered in crisis mode, which addressed accessibility, software, equipment, professional development, and creating safe virtual spaces. The ending of the 2020 fiscal year for institutions was a movement to intentional remote learning based on human needs as well.

The reality is that many institutions were doing their best to deliver virtual instruction with no time to train in virtual pedagogies and methodologies but were expected to deliver meaningful, engaging, relevant, and relational authentic learning experiences (MERRI). The mere terms, practice, approach, distance education delivery, remote learning, online learning, and correspondence learning have a different meaning depending on the parent, student, faculty/teacher, institution, district, class/courses.

This guide advises and adds value for TK-12, adult education, and higher education practitioners in California with a centralized place of content, input, resources, survey responses, student experiences, administrators, parent, and instructor experiences, evolving strategies, definitions in the context of humanizing virtual learning, and introduces MERRI as a framework cycle to create an authentic student learning experience.

The guide will evolve as we move forward in rebuilding and reimagining the delivery modes of instruction to create authentic student learning experiences. The first phase of the JSPAC HVL guide is to acquire buy-in and feedback from practitioners. Therefore, we refer to this guide as a living document because of the growing evolution of virtual learning and human needs.

I promise there is a take-away from this guide for all practitioners.

In partnership,

**Toney Salter**

Toney Salter, JSPAC Equity Analyst

*Equality welcomes everyone. No exceptions. Equity supports individuality.*

**-MAUREEN WHITE**

### **Executive Summary**

The Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee (JSPAC) has engaged in nine months of study on the concept of *Humanizing Virtual Learning*. Inspired by the work from Paul Emerich France (*Humanizing Distance Learning: Centering Equity and Humanity in Times of Crisis*) and grounded in the idea that Humanizing Virtual Learning is an Evolving Practice.

The word Humanize is defined as: To make someone or something kinder, gentler, or more agreeable (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>). Synonyms for Humanize include words such as

Improve	Educate	Civilize	Uplift
Better	Enlighten	Refine	Humane

Education in 2020 has seen a revolution unlike any other time in history. In spring 2020, a worldwide pandemic required education to be moved out of physical school buildings and into student homes. States across the nation made the difficult decision to have students learn remotely as the world battled the Covid-19 virus. As we move into summer 2021 and continue in virtual, hybrid and face to face learning settings, educators and stakeholders in higher education want to emphasize the humanity in education, and to support this through a concentrated effort to understand key models of virtual learning, understand essential principles of Universal Design Learning, delve into aligning professional and personal development and humanity competencies, and to focus on concrete strategies for connecting HUMANLY within a virtual learning setting.

*Humanizing Virtual Learning* has focused on connecting key leaders and stakeholders in online learning, while promoting a calling to weave humanity throughout online learning platforms, curricular areas (including an emphasis in Career Technical Education), and across all populations (with an *extended emphasis on special populations*) with the foundational goal that meaningful human interaction can take place virtually and that students of all ages can engage in quality, individualized, virtual instruction that focuses holistically on the whole student.

*Humanizing Virtual Learning* has LEARNING at the core, with student engagement and student success also foundational. This Equity-focused study of Humanity based education is a work in progress and a project that is on-going. With a focus on Social-Emotional Learning within all Humanizing of student curriculum, and with an equity minded focus on special populations, the practices of Humanizing Virtual Learning are evolving. Through JSPAC's vehicle of professional development for equity leaders in TK-12 education and higher education, education systems have come together to review policy and practice in the virtual space and to dive deep on ways to make the learning experience HUMAN and authentic for students.

Through the use of the JSPAC tool MERRI, students can engage in reflection and self-awareness of their student identity. MEANINGFUL, ENGAGING, RELEVANT, RELATIONAL and INSIGHTFUL

educational practices help students from all populations to engage in their education with a self-autonomous awareness and drive.

*Humanizing Virtual Learning* brings together leaders in TK-12 education and higher education, and stakeholders from the field of education and industry, with one common goal: compile and share evolving humanizing practices in the field of virtual learning, while supporting students, teachers and faculty through the exploration of *Humanizing Virtual Learning* through surveys, interviews, professional development, presentations, and authentic engagement as a Professional Learning Community.

Join JSPAC as we explore *Humanizing Virtual Learning*, and take a deep dive to the voices, and stories from the field of education, teaching and learning during a world-wide pandemic.

Over the course of this Humanizing Virtual Learning guidebook, we will reference a variety of terms related to virtual learning. These terms are defined below for context and deeper understanding.

### **Definitions of various models of virtual learning:**

**Crisis Learning:** Focused on access: Addressing access needs – broadband, computers, laptops, internet and devices, connectivity, faculty/teachers/instructors training of online instruction. A temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternative delivery mode due to crisis circumstances. Involved the use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses that will return to that form once the crisis or emergency has abated. The primary objective in these circumstances was not to recreate a robust educational ecosystem but rather to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional supports in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis

**Intentional Learning:** Focused on learning needs. Provides flexibility for students to learn from anywhere and for parents to support their children. Allows students who want to explore enrichment opportunities to learn more independently. Offers additional ways for teachers and students to collaborate. Is executed (from design to practice) with *intention* and includes SEL (social-emotional learning) check ins throughout the curriculum

**Synchronous/Real time:** A course where most of the content is delivered online and students can participate in courses from anywhere. There are real-time online meetings and students login from anywhere but at the same time to participate in the course.

**Asynchronous/100% online:** A course where most of the content is delivered online and students can participate in the online course from anywhere and anytime. There are no real time online or face-to-face meetings.

**Hyflex/Concurrent:** HyFlex is designed as a model where the student is given the option to either attend on campus or online.

**Blended:** A course with a combination of face-to-face and asynchronously online delivery with a substantial portion of the course delivered online. Blending of both online learning types, where students can participate in anytime, anywhere learning during the asynchronous parts of the course but then participate in real-time for the synchronous sessions

**Distance Learning:** a method of studying in which lectures are broadcast or classes are conducted by correspondence or over the internet, without the student's needing to attend a school or college. Also called *distance education*.

**Remote Learning:** where the student and the educator, or information source, are not physically present in a traditional classroom environment. Information is relayed through technology, such as discussion boards, video conferencing, and online assessments.

**On campus/On ground/Face to face Learning:** The traditional classroom experience is one where you attend classes in person, in a physical location.

**Hybrid:** a way of combining traditional classroom experiences, experiential **learning** objectives, and digital course delivery that emphasizes using the best option for each **learning** objective

- 1:1 Blended Learning Model

- Staggered Hybrid Model

- Gapped Hybrid Model

- Alternating Hybrid Model

**What's next? What other models are evolving?**

## **Introduction to *Humanizing Virtual Learning***

### **JSPAC Overview:**

The California Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee (JSPAC) is committed to empowering educators with equity and access resources to address barriers to opportunities for Career Technical Education students related to special populations. We Empower with Equity and Access to enhance the Career and Technical Education field, encourage girls, women, boys, and men to explore and enter into training programs and careers that are non-traditional by gender as well as high-wage and high-demand. JSPAC is a committee of educators from the K-12, adult education, community colleges (CC), and public and private sector. Our members are equity-based capacity building leaders. Together these members have invested a long-term commitment to make and sustain progress of empowering with equity and access for educators.

### **WE CULTIVATE EQUITY**

Equity is a process which involves creating and sustaining progress. Our committee members are active equity-based capacity building leaders setting high expectations, engagement, expansion and professional growth for educators.

### **OUR ACTIONS**

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 State Leadership funding supports our ongoing efforts to:

- Identify and disseminate specialized curriculum materials and resources to support services to Special Populations.
- Expand linkages with other programs for which equity and access to Special Populations is mandated by funding sources and for which that service is critical to program success; share information on best practices; coordinate and leverage resources to maximize the number of students who can be served; and incorporate the expertise, resources, and support those having a stake in ensuring all students succeed in school and the workforce, including business and labor, and community-based organizations.
- Continue to expand the strong relationship between the CCCCO and CDE in service to students who are members of special populations and involve other Special Populations staffing in all Perkins VTEA planning and implementation.
- Create linkages with other state and federal agencies serving the identified Special Populations and offer jointly developed professional development and technical assistance opportunities.

### **Crisis Remote Learning/Emergency Remote Teaching:**

In the spring of 2020, education was swiftly forced to pivot into the virtual space literally over a weekend. What was thought to be a temporary move into the virtual learning space, turned out to be an extended time of learning in a virtual model. The initial period of crisis remote learning/emergency remote learning:

- Focused on access: Addressing access needs – broadband, computers, laptops, internet and devices, connectivity, faculty/teachers/instructors training of online instruction



- Created a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternative delivery mode due to crisis circumstances
- Involved the use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses that will return to that form once the crisis or emergency has abated
- Provided temporary access to instruction and instructional supports in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis

### **Intentional Remote Learning**

In the summer and fall of 2020, education systems geared up for an extended time of virtual learning for students in all education systems. During this shift, priorities changed. The second phase, intentional remote learning:

- Focused on learning needs
- Provided flexibility for students to learn from anywhere and for parents to support their children
- Allowed students who want to explore enrichment opportunities to learn more independently
- Offered additional ways for teachers and students to collaborate
- Is executed (from design to practice) with *intention* and includes SEL (social-emotional learning) check ins throughout the curriculum

As education systems throughout California once again shift models of learning, students are learning in a variety of contexts, learning both virtually and gradually returning to face to face instruction. While the next shift in education occurs, it becomes apparent that the Education that was, is not the education that will be (moving forward).

The conversation on Humanizing Virtual Learning began with a JSPAC webinar (in partnership with the CA Department of Education) titled: *A Conversation in addressing the Needs of Special Populations in CTE Remote Learning* (September 2020). The recording of this session can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFOP6qJTaGo&list=PLOCTA-8Ov62zz2RH5b2P4ZVM7HV4DKupt&index=14>

In 2020 the shift from crisis remote learning to intentional remote learning brought professional development opportunities for the field of education. Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee responded with a series in Fall 2020, the *Humanity Forward Series*.

### **HUMANITY FORWARD SERIES**

#### **UNLOCKING DELIBERATIONS OF HUMANITY: A Lifetime of Sustainable Action**

December 2020

**Active Humanity** is the active process of bringing about a more humane world. It requires bravery, tenacity, humility and the ability to be introspective. Are we moving towards change by keeping the mirror present? What do you see in your reflection as an educator? Are you a part of the problem? Were you born as the problem? Were you born into a problem?

In December 2020, JSPAC hosted three days of virtual deliberation sessions that focused on the narrative and journey to active humanity, an approach that is an essential component to achieving educational equity.

Each deliberation session had a different area of focus and a variety of expert facilitators. Over three days, TK-14 education leaders and advocates engaged in a series of sessions that specifically focused on moving humanity forward. Attendees engaged in 1-3 days of professional development focusing on issues of active humanity in education.

### MEET OUR DELIBERATORS



**Berké Brown**

**Renee Marshall**

**Ricardo Romanillos, Ed.D.**

**Ashley Conrad**

### DELIBERATION SESSIONS

#### **The Humanity Approach**

December 2020

Deliberator: Berké Brown

This deliberation session was for administrators, faculty, staff, teachers, counselors, equity coordinators, diversity, equity and inclusion officers, and K-14 student leaders. The session introduced attendees to The Humanity Approach. The Humanity Approach orients participants to taking on small acts of activism in their professional lives; helps build progressive movements that can lead to massive activism that opposes present practices and policies that are not considered “active humanity.” The session focused on constructive solutions for students.

#### **Humanizing Data**

December 2020

Deliberators: Ricardo Romanillo Ed.D., NAPE Senior Director of Programs and Ashley Conrad  
NAPE Associate Director of Programs

This deliberation session focused on recognizing the human story that is told by data. Using key performance indicators (secondary and post-secondary), this deliberation session brought to the surface the voices, narratives and experiences of students that inspire and drive actions that address institutional and programmatic equity gaps.

#### **Humanizing Virtual Learning**

December 2020

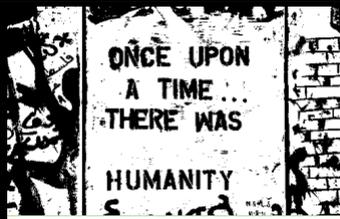
Deliberator: Renee Marshall

This deliberation session emphasized the humanity that must exist in virtual educational environments, one that is inclusive of special population students - the marginalized, underrepresented and LGBTQ+ students. Attendees explored the difference between crisis

remote learning and intentional remote learning, the key models of virtual learning, essential principles of Universal Design for Learning, and strategies for connecting HUMANLY within a virtual educational environment. In addition, this session introduced an authentic learning experience model, MERRI (Meaningful, Engaging, Relational, Relevant, Insightful), designed by JSPAC.

After the shift to intentional learning in mid to late 2020, Spring 2021 was a time of professional development. JSPAC responded with a variety of offerings for TK-14 educators and administrators.

The JSPAC **Humanity Forward Webinar Series** focused on a humanity forward approach, with an emphasis on moving us to effectively contribute to the "Education to End Hate" initiative by the California Department of Education and the diversity, equity and inclusion work of the California Community Colleges. Through a series of small group sessions, attendees explored concepts of Humanizing Learning in a deeper dive. The JSPAC series of professional development (below) was offered to anyone interested in Spring 2021:



Joint Special Populations Advisory Committee Presents  
**Humanity Forward**  
Spring Professional Development Series

It is time for human-centered education. An understanding of the future of education requires a look into the past, chemistry of the brain, an outward look at the students, and an inward look at who we are and who we aspire to be. The Spring Professional Development Series, **Humanity Forward**, focuses on a humanity forward approach, with an emphasis on moving us to effectively contribute to the "Education to End Hate" initiative by the California Department of Education and the diversity, equity and inclusion work of the California Community Colleges.

**Free**  
**Limited to 50 participants**  
**Offered via Zoom**

**Humanizing Data, Equity Focused Data Analysis**  
Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
10:30am-12:00pm (PST)

**Humanizing Data, Equity Focused Data Analysis**  
Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup>  
10:30am-12:00pm (PST)

**Conscious Leadership Leads to Humanity, Part I**  
Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>  
4:30pm-6:00pm (PST)

**Conscious Leadership Leads to Humanity, Part II**  
Tuesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>  
4:30pm-6:00pm (PST)

**It is an Education Affair: Humanizing Virtual Learning Briefing**  
Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup>  
4:30pm-6:00pm (PST)

For workshop descriptions, [click here](#).

To register, [click here](#).

**COUCH DISCUSSIONS  
BETWEEN STUDENTS**

*An open dialogue among students about reimagining education.*

**Discussions with Our Black/African Male Community College Students**

Date: Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>  
Time: 11:00am-12:30pm (PST)

**Discussions with Our Latinx Female Community College Students**

Date: TBD  
Time: TBD

**Discussions with Our Inclusive High School Students**

Date: Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>  
Time: 3:00pm-4:30pm (PST)



### **Humanizing Data, Equity Focused Data Analyses Part I**

Presented by Ricardo Romanillos and Ashley Conrad, NAPE March 2021

*Student data can be a powerful tool to address equity gaps within our institutions. The lens we apply and the assumptions we make however will dramatically alter the effect of data analyses for marginalized students and families. Join NAPE in these first sessions where we'll unpack how to process student data sets while also assessing their inherent limitations to guide our interventions.*

### **Humanizing Data, Equity Focused Data Analyses Part II**

Presented by Ricardo Romanillos and Ashley Conrad, NAPE April 2021

*Interventions to address barriers for students within our schools and colleges are well documented within the literature. Knowing which to employ is the most important question! Join NAPE in this second session where we'll share three research-based resources targeting the needs of special populations. These resources will include actionable strategies and national support organizations that can further support the work.*

### **Conscious Leadership Leads to Humanity, Part I and II**

Presented by Lisa M. Wilson and Kim Barker, C.A.R.E. April 2021

*This workshop will provide opportunities for learners to engage in interpersonal methodology, reflections, and exchanges pertaining to racial consciousness education, through large and small group discussions. Learners will practice identifying and connecting personal experiences of systemic racism, as they begin developing a roadmap to dismantle systemic racism, supported by the 14 Priorities to Dismantle Systemic Racism in Education.*

### **It is an Education Affair: Humanizing Virtual Learning Briefing**

Presented by Renee Marshall May 2021

Key stakeholders in education formed a statewide professional learning community where they synthesized their experiences in the virtual education space and shared significant contributions to the development of the Humanizing Virtual Learning Guide. Attendees will learn about the JSPAC Humanizing Virtual Learning project, including significant discoveries and take-home messages. Attendees will learn about the Humanizing Virtual Learning Guide including a tool developed by JSPAC, MERRI, which helps inform the Humanizing Education process. We will reflect on the role Humanizing Virtual Learning has on issues of equity and access and share examples of students from special populations that have been positively impacted during their virtual learning experience.

In addition to the Humanizing professional development that JSPAC offered in spring 2021, a new series that puts the student voice at the forefront was introduced. This series included powerful discussions with groups of high school and community college students and their experiences as Black, Latin or Inclusive Students. These session recordings can be found on the JSPAC YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLOCTA-8Ov62zz2RH5b2P4ZVM7HV4DKupt>

## COUCH DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS

Students have the greatest stake in their education but little to no say about their authentic learning experience. These webinar series is led by students on their views of reimagining education and is for administrators, faculty, counselors to listen to their perspectives of reimagining education in areas of shaping policy, technology, teaching practices, recruitment and enrollment, curriculum content and delivery and inequities/equity in education.

### **Our Black/African Male Community College Students** February 2021

An open dialogue among Black and African Male Community College students about reimagining education.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3spckfy9qE&list=PLOCTA-8Ov62zz2RH5b2P4ZVM7HV4DKupt&index=3>

### **Our Inclusive High School Students** April 2021

An open dialogue among Inclusive High School Students about reimagining education.

### **Our Latinx Female Community College School Students** May 2021

An open dialogue among those who identify as Female Latinx Community College Students about reimagining education.

All programming developed by JSPAC is created in an effort to support equity (all types of equity: LGBTQ, race, gender, multiple groups, etc.) throughout education systems. JSPAC professional development seeks to align professional and personal development and humanity competencies. As one seeks to reimagine education, the pandemic has taught education practitioners that basic needs must be met before curriculum can be learned. Education during the pandemic shifted to a redesign model of education where social emotional learning is at the forefront of all educators do. We have been reminded that we need to look at “Maslow before Bloom”

*Maslow > Bloom*



*All for Equity, and Equity for All. Embrace Equity to Extend Equality.*

**-JAN SWINTON**

Throughout this investigation on *Humanizing Virtual Learning*, student engagement and student learning act as the North Star. JSPAC leadership developed MERRI, the Authentic Cycle of Student Learning Experience in response to what was learned about the shift in education to the virtual space and the need to capture student voice and experience.

**Project lens: MERRI**

**The MERRI Authentic Cycle of Student Learning Experience**

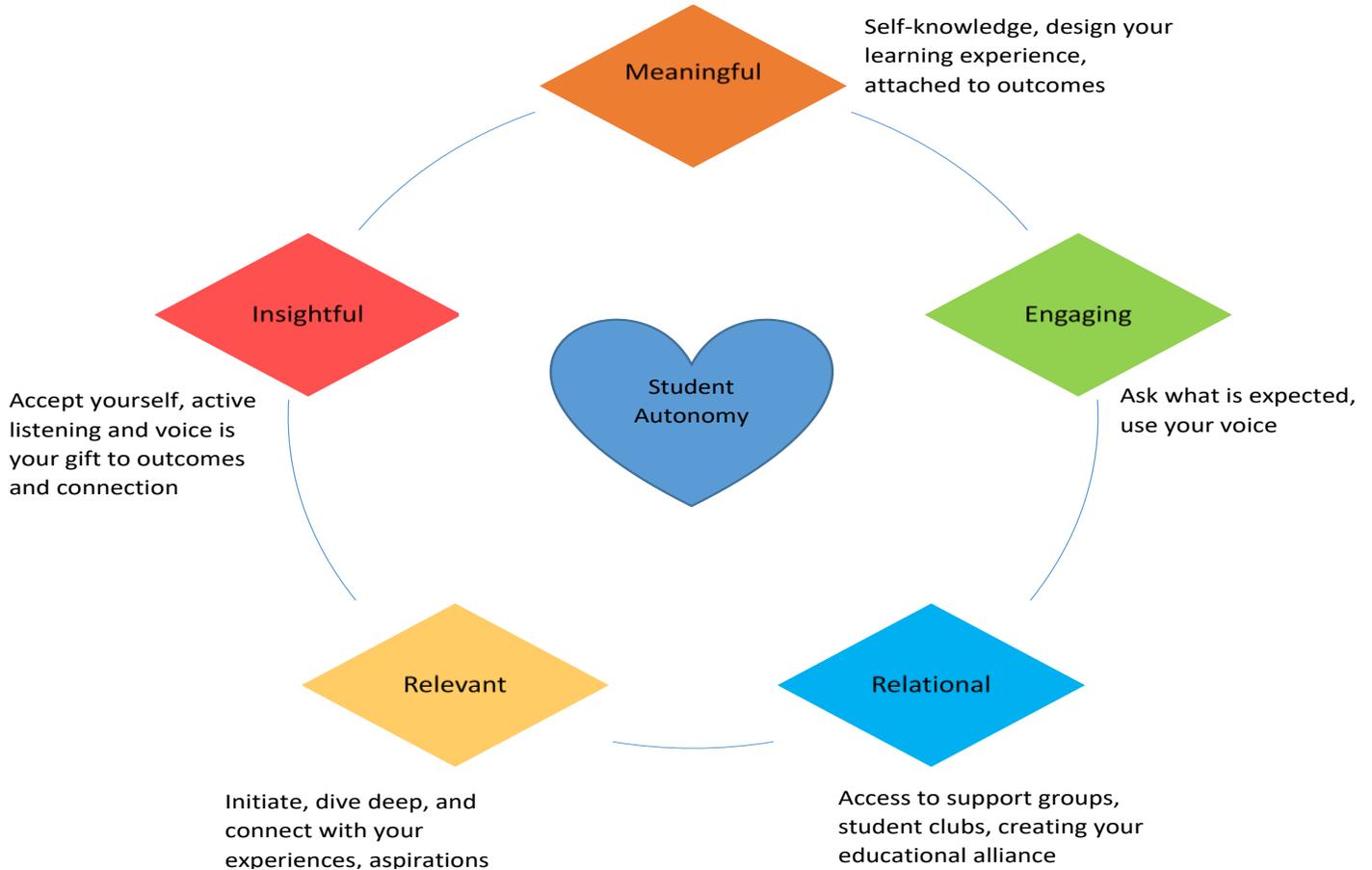
MERRI seeks to engage students as active participants in their learning. Through reflection and thoughtful analysis, students intake the variables that make learning meaningful and reflect on their own individual learning experience. They are asked, How is your education...?

- Meaningful: Design your personal learning experience tied to outcomes
- Engaging: Voice is encouraged throughout
- Relevant: Connects with personal experiences, goals, passions
- Relational: Creating an education alliance of support
- Insightful: Amplify sense of self and power of voice/perspective

*My learning needs should not be viewed as fixing  
but viewed as my unique set of assets to my learning creation.*

**-TONEY SALTER**

**Framework of Creating an Authentic Student Learning Experience**



*Cultivating equity is every educators' personal responsibility.*

**-ELIZABETH WALLNER**

The Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community began with a series of interviews to find out who in the field of education has been working on the concept of humanizing learning in the virtual space. Leaders in Online Education Resources (OER) within California's Community College system shared their perspectives (through a series of interviews) on humanizing virtual learning during a pandemic.

### **Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community:**

#### **How to create a Professional Learning Community from an EQUITY focused lens**

##### Identification of key stakeholders

The process of identifying key stakeholders in Humanizing Virtual Learning was intentional. JSPAC leadership identified the variety of voices needed to be represented within the Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community (PLC). These groups included: business, school board, parents, teachers/faculty, principals/district leaders, counselors, students, non-profit organizations, and Online Education Resources (OER) leaders in higher education. The Humanizing Virtual Learning PLC also included representation from groups that engaged in impressive online delivery shifts during the Covid-19 pandemic. Stakeholders represented TK-12 and higher education systems. Stakeholders' group associations were also analyzed in an effort to ensure special population representation. Each person that was invited to participate in the Humanizing Virtual Learning PLC was intended to provide voice and representation. The Humanizing Virtual Learning PLC began meeting in January 2021 and have consistently met through Spring 2021.

#### **Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community members:**

Chris Bojorquez, Facilitator, iLEAD Agua Dulce

Dr. Mariane Doyle, Director of Human Resources and Equity Services, William S. Hart High School District and Faculty CSU Northridge

Erin Oxhorn-Gilpin, Teacher Castaic Union School District

Holli Kalaleh, College Career Readiness Specialist William S. Hart High School District

Laura Pearson, Board Member Castaic Union School District

Jackie Hartman, Santa Clarita Valley Education Foundation

James Glapa-Grossklag, Dean Educational Technology, Learning Resources and Distance Learning, College of the Canyons

Jennifer Paris, Faculty, College of the Canyons and OER Lead

Lisa Wilson, Director of Equity and Outreach, Zero to Three and Founder, Coalition for Anti-Racist Education (CARE)

Matt Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, Boys & Girls Club of Santa Clarita Valley

Mia Young-Adeyeba, Teacher, Los Angeles Unified School District and Founder, Distance Learning Educators

Mike Mansfield, Teacher William S. Hart High School District, Education Faculty College of the Canyons

Niamani Richards, Founder STREAM Global Innovations

Renee Marshall, Consultant, Renee Marshall Education



Sam Frank, Facilitator, iLEAD Lancaster  
Tonette Salter, Director JSPAC  
Yadira Arellano, Education and Early Childhood Education Faculty El Camino College

**Supporters of the Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community include:**

Shannon Turmon, Faculty West Hills Lemoore College  
James Preston, Vice President of Educational Services, West Hills Lemoore College

**RESULTS**

**Humanity based education in the virtual space**

Over the course of the Humanizing Virtual Learning project, qualitative and quantitative data was gathered through online education stakeholder interviews, teacher/faculty interviews, student interviews, a stakeholder survey, student surveys, and through a classroom focus group. Additionally, the Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community met numerous times to discuss the debates of virtual learning, plus the benefits and challenges of virtual learning from an asset based mapping model.

**Survey results:** Students, teachers/faculty and stakeholders engaged in surveys over the course of the Humanizing Virtual Learning project. All survey questions and answers are located in the guidebook appendix. The surveys helped to capture the voices of the pandemic learning experience.

High school students in the College and Career Readiness Education Foundations courses invited Humanizing Virtual Learning into their classroom for a focus group and survey. Students expressed their thoughts about learning in the virtual space with such voices as:

“The virtual experience can be meaningful in the way that it allows students to interact with their teachers and each other. It's much different than the way students would normally interact with their surroundings, typically because social media is such an important factor now.”

“The little things have been meaningful in the virtual world. All those personalized conversations with teachers always mean so much and getting to talk to others that we may not have in class has been great to participate in!”

“Virtual learning has allowed me to see the more human sides of my teachers that I wouldn't have been able to see as much if I was in the classroom.”

“I enjoy the close relationships I have built with teachers due to successful communication and flexibility. It feels as if we are united while we are all going through this virtual experience together.”

Students also expressed concerns on the surveys distributed:

“I want adults to know that our plate is full to the point where it’s overflowing. Mental Health takes a big toll on us especially when we are stuck at home 90% of the time. I personally think there is learning loss but not to the extreme that people are saying. I also want them to know that just because we are home 90% of the time does NOT mean we are available for that 90% of the time, and also does NOT mean we have all the time to do school work or homework.”  
Grades are less important than mental health.

“Our learning loss shouldn't be the main focus at the moment, it should be our mental state. But adults use solutions to help students that don't feel like the right ones.”

“Statistics, charts, graphs, are all they want to look at. It seems that adults of higher authority(board) focus on education and not really the kids and their lives. We are human beings too. We are trying our best. We are trying to stay positive in such a crazy time. Many of us are juggling work, and personal life along with hours of school. We are growing up faster than we should.”

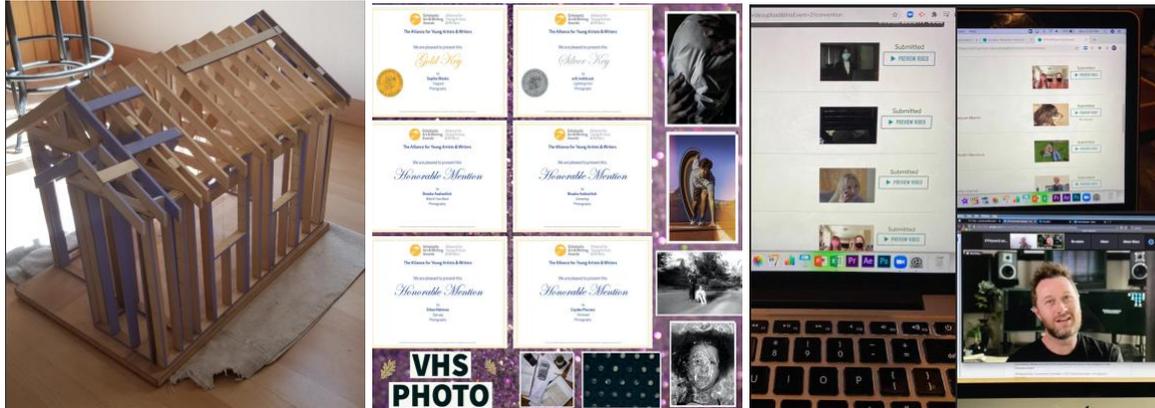
“I’ve thrown up from the stress. No 16-year-old should do that. I think that the adults pushing grades on us shows that they don't care of the children, and only care about their jobs. All of us are tired, mentally and physically. There are times I can’t even get out of bed, but I'm expected to write an essay within 40 minutes. It's stressful and the amount of anxiety it creates is crazy. Instead of focusing on grades, focus on the students. Show us that you care about us as people and not a grade.”

These surveys help to spotlight student voices. Students are asking teachers, faculty and education stakeholders to listen and to truly hear students’ needs, concerns, etc.

## Profile of CA Schools/Non-profits: Humanizing Learning examples

Education systems and communities have taken notice and created school based and community based Humanizing efforts to support students.

The **William S. Hart High School District** created Grab and Go CTE projects with all the supplies needed to complete CTE labs. Students also engaged in CTE pathway specific competitions in the virtual space.



The **Boys & Girls Club of Santa Clarita Valley** partnered with the City of Santa Clarita and non-profits to bring Peace Bags to the community. Each PEACE bag included a list of multi-age level activities and all supplies needed to engage and encourage people in positive community engagement.



**Castaic High School** has students engage in WIN time. WIN time stands for What I Need, and it is an opportunity for students to work on individual targeted skills with teachers. The school is standards-based and students are given the opportunity to relearn and resubmit assignments until they receive the grade desired. Students are encouraged to meet with their teachers in an informal setting where needs can be discussed and resources can be allocated.



**iLEAD Agua Dulce** (Virtual Outdoor Classroom and Projects) offered “tinker boxes” to students in order to increase student engagement. Each week, hands-on science content was delivered on their social media platforms and both students and families were encouraged to share the projects they are engaging in and the concepts they are learning. When the school pivoted back into face to face learning, they were well prepared with an extensive outdoor learning classroom model of education.



**West Hills Lemoore College** offered Canvas Commons Coaching for beginning, moderate and advanced learners. Mentees were paired with mentors, provided training, and were given support as they transitioned into the virtual learning space. People are missing the connection. This program was one way to connect. CARES Act funding was utilized to fund the program.



Humanizing was evident at the statewide level as well. Educators explored the concept of non-essential assignments and the best methodologies to deliver engaging, information rich content. Agencies such as the Commission on Teacher Credentialing worked with the stakeholders from a variety of education systems to determine flexibilities to support teachers and future teachers. CTC Flexibilities: <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/covid-19-commission-action-related-to-covid-19>

Innovation soared and the need to develop community became evident. Mia Young-Adeyeba and Michelle Touceda, teachers for the Los Angeles Unified School District co-founded the Distance Learning Educators group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/distancelearningeducators>). This site brings together almost 30,000 educators around the world to support each other with content, strategies, and community support. It was created as a response to the pandemic and continues to be a robust teaching and support community.

The CA Community Colleges Teacher Preparation Programs developed two Communities of Practice to support those in the Community College system who train CA teachers. These

Communities of Practice involved Education and Early Childhood Education faculty and stakeholders from across education systems and throughout the state.

ECE/EDU Communities of Practice: <https://www.ecefacultycollective.com> and <http://teacherprepprogram.org/events-and-calendar/ece-and-edu-communities-of-practice-cop/>

Though the rapid shift to online learning caused initial disequilibrium, there have been many 'silver linings' that have come out: collaboration, community, and a sense that we are not alone.

### **Interview Silver Linings**

Through interviews with faculty, teachers, administrators and students, we know:

- "Everyone uses Canvas now"
- Summer 2020 there were many Canvas trainings offered
- Students are used to seeing themselves on camera now
- Things are never perfect in the classroom. Anything can happen online. It is human.
- At first learning online felt strange and now it has shifted to the norm.
- Recorded zooms, captured and build into a library
- "Humanizing is happening and (due to Covid) it became the norm."

Through *Humanizing Virtual Learning*, the benefits and challenges of virtual learning have been identified, and categorized by parents/families, students, and teachers/faculty.

### **Benefits of virtual learning: ASSET lens vs DEFICIT lens**

#### **Parent/Family Benefits**

- Parents as co-creators of education/ Increase of parent/caregiver involvement
- Increase of flexibility
- Location does not matter
- School's essential role even virtually
- Home-school connections have reached a new level

#### **Student/Students in Special Populations Benefits**

- Abilities of non-traditional students have improved
- Some students with special needs have flourished in the virtual space
- Students with ADHD have space for the movements/sounds that may have normally distracted in a traditional classroom
- Autistic children have flourished
- Target needs, including self-regulation
- Zoom is a "safe space" for shy students
- Opened up a different world for many students
- Opens up possibilities that did not exist before
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills
- Students are resilient
- Students gain computer literacy starting at a young age
- Reading skills increased this year
- Learning/whispering into the computer as their cousin is sleeping next to them

- Pandemic exposed inequities
- Building your personal learning network

#### **Teacher Benefits**

- Creativity with teaching/execution of content
- Meet students on their terms/where they are
- Finding time together where there normally would not exist
- Non-essential assignments got thrown out
- Targets needs
- Being able to connect on the human level – casual conversation increased
- “Zoom is a safe space” – teacher
- Teachers got creative
- Zoom gives teachers context with students background
- See struggles
- Level of humanity/respect
- Meeting students on their terms
- Sharing resources
- Step outside your role – increased empathy

#### **Benefit/Challenge (Based on perception) These are related and often an equity issue**

- Exposed inequities within the education system (some of which are now being addressed)
- Gives context with students background
- Home-school connection
- More to the picture than meets your eye
- Infrastructure
- Societal issues
- Mute button (teacher uses to silence voices, then become natural muting of student)
- Only 1 person gets to share (Banking model)

#### **Challenges of virtual learning**

##### **Parent/Family Challenges**

- Devices (including completing work on phones)
- Broadband
- Power outages
- Some parents/caregivers cannot help their students
- Systems not created by parents and students
- Equity issues with Wi-Fi
- Hot spots not as reliable
- There has always been issues with kids that can't sit. Parents are now in the classroom and what they want.
- Parents are struggling to help their kids
- Chromebooks – process in place in order to distribute devices. Some students went to restaurant parking lots in order to have Wi-Fi.
- Wind storm systems
- Parent prompts are needed: How to talk to your student about school (How do I check grades?, Tips to connect with teachers).

### **Student/Students in Special Populations Challenges**

- Students are grieving a way of life
- How do you get to your happiness? How do we get to students' why? What makes you most come alive?
- Some students need to look at multiple LMS systems daily (no consistency)
- Shaming/trust ("Who is completing your work?")
- No coordination of LMS systems
- Tools required for success vary by subject area
- Getting the internet
- May not have access to learning space
- Understanding LMS platforms and who can offer support
- Can't sit in front of the computer all day
- Some students need to look at 6 different teacher systems
- Way some teachers speak to students
- When one high school (junior) student was asked about engaging in ice breaker activities in her classes this year, she was able to recollect only 1 icebreaker this year.

### **Teacher Challenges**

- Connectivity: School based and personal
- Student participation
- If a person needs a break, it needs to be okay.
- "What time is the best time for him?"
- People are resilient
- Engagement refusal
- Essays on the phone – cannot be sustained
- LMS systems and no coordination
- How does a parent advocate?
- Parents do not know how to ask the question.
- Pick your battles
- Shaming needs to be addressed. "Is mom or dad doing your homework for you?" – move towards humanity
- Trust needs to be established and ongoing
- Effective virtual redirection strategies for optimal learning – FEEL empowered
- Appropriate communication
- Encouraging students to participate
- On paper it looks as though tech is adequate: Used Old Car versus a New Car
- Band-Aids for much of the pandemic
- "We planned thinking it would be a short-term crisis."
- Now we need to look for ongoing sources of funding to support emerging technology needs
- The uncertainty is the hardest
- Continuity - what is working? How are we educating?
- Skills for teachers/faculty to have: How to connect with students when they are off task. How to engage and re-engage students.

**Through the *Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community*, we have seen that educators must:**

- Reflect on how critical the need was to be a part of this
- Step outside the current role: What considerations must we keep in mind?
- Lead with empathy
- Model grace and kindness
- Provide continuity of instruction
- Promote continuity of learning
- Remember Maslow before Bloom: Basic needs need to be met before curriculum
- Know that the pandemic has been similar to a natural disaster – it is impossible to introduce curriculum when basic needs are not being met.
- Remember people are starved right now: They want to belong, feel loved, feel community, have a common standing ground
- Question: How do we get to a student's why? What makes you most alive?

### **Conclusion**

*Humanizing Virtual Learning* shows us that there is the need for changes in California's education systems. It is time to rethink and reimagine education with a Humanity Forward charge with emphasis on equitable learning, that prioritizes social emotional learning at its core. We have been asked to tackle the tough question: How do you flip your classroom when the world is flipping around you? During the pandemic, education has seen a significant shift in pedagogy, grading practices, the sharing of resources and a boom in professional development opportunities. What does the future of education hold? What work is still needed? How do we move forward with this?

Educators must evaluate course content to include the tools required for student success. Education is moving to an individual model where schools will meet students where they are (not the reverse). Innovation is at the forefront with online learning, and we continue to discover the balance of how we provide content and instruction, while Humanizing the learning experience for all students.

The next steps in *Humanizing Virtual Learning* will be determined after JSPAC spring 2021 programming concludes. Through thoughtful analysis of surveys, discussions, and the Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community, JSPAC will continue to explore the concept of Humanizing Virtual Learning in order to best meet the needs of all California students, with a consistent emphasis on equity and students in special populations.

*Equity is not equality – it is providing personalized support designed to mitigate social, cultural and environmental challenges encountered by all students.*

**-GEORGE ESSEL**





### ***Humanizing Virtual Learning***

JSPAC

CCCAOE March 2021

Presentation slide deck

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1PjN6G3ab3Uyla4U8AcLS8QqtiePjX3boHNHPXjWv-A/edit?usp=sharing>

### ***Authentic learning in the virtual environment***

College Student Interview: Destiny Islas, CSU Long Beach

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aE3UtxeOjObrEX3JTOb6l\\_AscAB7i6H1/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aE3UtxeOjObrEX3JTOb6l_AscAB7i6H1/view?usp=sharing)

### ***Humanizing Data: Showcasing the experience of high school students in the virtual space***

High School Student Interview: Zach Marshall and Lily Marshall, Castaic High School

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PgYjtyQQ694y2MO3biq66diqBr63U65F/view?usp=sharing>

### ***Creating a Community During a Pandemic***

Education and Early Childhood Education Communities of Practice

CA Community Colleges Teacher Preparation Programs

CCCAOE March 2021

Session Recording

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jV53cgtUXBhtHOUjVUscMPU1CxB2yeNd/view?usp=sharing>

Presentation slide deck

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DX0yBNTToXrILK7TEqmen3kKNKijIACv0/view?usp=sharing>

### ***It is an Education Affair: Humanizing Virtual Learning Briefing***

Presented by Renee Marshall

May 2021

Key stakeholders in education formed a statewide professional learning community where they synthesized their experiences in the virtual education space and shared significant contributions to the development of the Humanizing Virtual Learning Guide. Attendees will learn about the JSPAC Humanizing Virtual Learning project, including significant discoveries and take-home messages. Attendees will learn about the Humanizing Virtual Learning Guide including a tool developed by JSPAC, MERRI, which helps inform the Humanizing Education process. We will reflect on the role Humanizing Virtual Learning has on issues of equity and access and share examples of students from special populations that have been positively impacted during their virtual learning experience.

**<http://www.jspac.org/professional-development>**



**Want to get involved with the JSPAC Humanizing Virtual Learning project?**

**Go to: <https://forms.gle/kTL0VszEMbiFPmxF9>**

**to join the**

**JSPAC Humanizing Virtual Learning Professional Learning Community**

## APPENDIX

### STUDENT SURVEYS and RESULTS

#### Survey 1

##### Student Voices: Survey/Lesson (in class)

Primary Themes Present in Student Responses

Lesson Name: Your Experience, Your Wisdom

February 2021

Grade Levels: 11-12, 9th grade added at the bottom

Inspired by <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/opinion-students-respond-to-adults-fixation-on-learning-loss/2021/02>

##### Lesson Format:

Teacher presented a few headlines of articles about learning loss during remote learning, and then briefly discussed the article that inspired this lesson. Students were asked to discuss the same three questions presented to students in Boston, as outlined in the above article. Student responses were captured in Zoom chat messages and a Google form. Some students also shared verbally during Zoom class, and their responses were captured by the teacher. However, many of those responses were also submitted in written form by students, and so the teacher's notes were discarded.

##### Student guidance:

So many people are talking about your experience right now when what we should be doing is listening. What you share will guide us. Discuss each question, and answer individually.

#### 11th & 12th Grade Responses

##### Question 1: During the pandemic, what are things that you feel like you've lost?

Students communicated:

- Immense grief and loss for people who've passed, social circles (and social skills), activities, relationships with teachers, and some loss of their own identity.
- Loss of strong emotions and a feeling of emptiness and numbness.
- Loss of understanding and empathy from adults and space to process the loss ("I'm expected to be positive and productive, and get good grades.")
- Loss of motivation and energy (due to loss, fear, seclusion, loss of freedom, loss of extracurriculars and fun experiences).
- Loss of routine and sleep.

##### Question 2: During the pandemic, what are the ways that you have seen yourself grow or learn new things?

Students communicated:

- Gains in self-understanding, self-reliance, confidence, organization, and self-care.
- Gains in time-management and responsibility.
- Starting new hobbies, jobs, and businesses.
- Gaining closer and more authentic connections with family and friends.
- Gaining perspective on life and no longer taking things for granted.

**Question 3: Many adults in education right now are very focused on the idea of “learning loss.” They think that students are falling behind academically during the pandemic. What do you want those adults to know about you and your experience during the pandemic? (During the conversation, I added that one idea to deal with learning loss was to extend the school year.)**

Students communicated:

- Online school is not easy. You think we have more time, but we don't. Everything takes longer and we are overwhelmed with work, dealing with the pandemic and the loss of normal life, friends, family members, etc.
  - “It seems like teachers are piling on more work because they think we have more time.”
  - “Students are getting more of a ‘just get it turned in before its due’ mindset instead of ‘I’m actually learning’ mindset. And even then, students turn things in late.”
  - “I want adults to know that our plate is full to the point where it’s overflowing. Mental Health takes a big toll on us especially when we are stuck at home 90% of the time. I personally think there is learning loss but not to the extreme that people are saying. I also want them to know that just because we are home 90% of the time does NOT mean we are available for that 90% of the time, and also does NOT mean we have all the time to do school work or homework.”
  - Grades are less important than mental health.
  - “Our learning loss shouldn't be the main focus at the moment, it should be our mental state. But adults use solutions to help students that don't feel like the right ones.”
  - “Statistics, charts, graphs, are all they want to look at. It seems that adults of higher authority(board) focus on education and not really the kids and their lives. We are human beings too. We are trying our best. We are trying to stay positive in such a crazy time. Many of us are juggling work, and personal life along with hours of school. We are growing up faster than we should.”
  - “I’ve thrown up from the stress. No 16-year-old should do that. I think that the adults pushing grades on us shows that they don't care of the children, and only care about their jobs. All of us are tired, mentally and physically. There are times I can’t even get out of bed, but I'm expected to write an essay within 40 minutes. It's stressful and the amount of anxiety it creates is crazy. Instead of focusing on grades, focus on the students. Show us that you care about us as people and not a grade.”
  - Stop telling us what’s best for us and listen to us.
  - “My learning is fine, even online I've worked so hard to keep my grades up and while other students may not have my self-motivation to do their school work, there are more important things in life than school. All the adults express how worried they are about our mental health but I've heard about 3 adults actually tell us that if we are struggling with our mental health to tell them. Teachers have been piling on all the school work because they are more worried about our education than our minds. I feel like I'm drowning but I feel more worried

about school work than myself because that's what I've been taught and told by so many adults. Another thing so many adults tell us we don't understand, news flash we are experiencing the same thing you are. Just because we aren't adults doesn't mean that we are idiots. We understand more than you'd think and we feel things more than you'd expect. We are just as frustrated as every adult is and yet adults think they have the right to speak for us. We can speak for ourselves just fine, the problem is adults don't listen.”

- “Nobody ever expected for any of this to happen and we didn't expect to be doing school from home for most of the day. We were never prepared on what to do if this were to ever happen. Everyone has their own struggles and difficulties. A lot of kids are struggling mentally and are having a hard time getting the motivation to do their work. A lot of kids don't have the supplies that they need and some just don't have a way to get them. I just want the adults to know that we are trying our best, this is a very confusing time and everyone deals with it in their own ways. Some embrace it, but some have a hard time staying focused. Just be patient and know we are trying our best, although it may not seem like it.”
- “I know so many people who think it's now normal to have a breakdown daily/weekly, or to feel burnt out, or simply can't find happiness anymore. and when we have weekends or breaks to rest, they aren't resting. they're either doing schoolwork, or TRYING to rest but can't because of the weight of their schoolwork.”
- “I really want to go back, but it's not safe. They've let sports go back, but it's not safe. People are missing out because they are being smart and not exposing themselves by going back yet, but it isn't fair that they are missing out because they're doing what's best to stop the spread of the virus.”

**Question 4: (Posed during the Zoom meeting as a follow up). What should be our focus when we go back to campus?**

Students communicated:

- Focus on mental health not learning loss.
  - “I want school to have teachers who are more mindful of what we are going through mentally. I don't want them to expect that we can take on all the information that we lost into our head really fast. I want schools to sit and think in a student's perspective and not in an “adult” or teacher/ administrator mindset.”
- Focus on repairing social connections and enjoying each other's presence.
- Focus on extracurriculars.
- Students should have the choice to stay home.
  - “At this point, as a senior, I don't want to deal with another adjustment back to campus. Just let us finish the year.”
  - “I feel only those who need it should go back. I'm happy being home.”

## 9th Grade Responses

Several statements highlighted some unique challenges facing our 9th graders.

- “Everyone says talk to your counselor, but most kids won't reach out to a counselor they've never met. Someone needs to reach out to us.”

The most striking difference with freshmen was their response to Question 4.

Students communicated:

- Focus should be on safety -- from COVID.
  - Students expressed fear about getting infected, or having friends or teachers become infected.
  - Students reported needing a slow, carefully introduced transition to being together in one room. They want to know what to expect before coming to campus.
  - Students also expressed fear about being in the presence of so many students since Valencia is so much larger than their jr. high schools.
- Focus on slow transition to academics
  - Students expressed fears about the rigors of high school work given the other emotional challenges they'll face when they come to VHS for the first time.
- Invite us to school before instruction starts.
  - Students expressed enhanced fear of being at a big school and not knowing their way around the school.

## Survey 2

### Student Survey: After *Humanizing Virtual Learning* presentation in class

Students in College Career Readiness Courses for Future Teachers, 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades

10 students responded

**Describe how your learning experience in the virtual world has been meaningful. OR Describe what a meaningful learning experience in the virtual world looks like to you.**

- One thing I like as a student, an athlete, and a junior (who has to think about getting a job) is that virtual learning is more flexible with a lot of our busy schedules and I do appreciate teachers being more understanding during this tough time.
- The virtual experience can be meaningful in the way that it allows students to interact with their teachers and each other. It's much different than the way students would normally interact with their surroundings, typically because social media is such an important factor now.
- The little things have been meaningful in the virtual world. All those personalized conversations with teachers always mean so much and getting to talk to others that we may not have in class has been great to participate in!
- I like doing jam boards because it's fun and work together with classmates.
- My virtual learning experience has been very meaningful to me. It has been meaningful to me because I have a few teachers that have made distance learning enjoyable and has shown that they care about their students.
- I think something that has been really meaningful about virtual learning is what Mrs. Mann does which is question of the day which really makes us students feel understood and really connected with each other.

- Virtual learning has allowed me to see the more human sides of my teachers that I wouldn't have been able to see as much if I was in the classroom.
- A meaningful experience is actually learning material instead of temporarily storing information for an end goal (test, project).
- I enjoy the close relationships I have built with teachers due to successful communication and flexibility. It feels as if we are united while we are all going through this virtual experience together.
- I think the most meaningful thing teachers can do is show that they understand that distance learning can be more difficult and give students leniency. I think this helps teachers form more personal relationships with students which can be very meaningful when many students feel isolated in the virtual setting.

**Describe what is expected of you in the virtual world of learning, from your teacher and your parent/guardian.**

- I think that the hardest thing about virtual learning is that a lot of teachers expect us to almost teach ourselves. With a lot of the content that would normally be taught in class, over virtual learning a lot of teachers assign it after class or as homework because there is not enough time.
- The expectations are very similar, do your work, get high grades, graduate. There is a little more leniency overall, but nothing outrageous.
- I think the main thing that is expected of us right now is to keep our grades up. I also think it's expected for us to reach out to someone with the resources we've been given if we are struggling.
- My parents expect me to do what my teacher's ask me to do, but they also expect me to take care of my little sister while they are at work.
- I think what is expected of me in the virtual world of learning from my teacher and my parents are obviously to be successful in any class that I am taking.
- In virtual learning I am expected to be present and participating just as much as in normal class.
- Even though I turn in my work on time, there is now really no excuse as to why I would turn in my work late.
- I am expected to attend class and participate in class. My parents are expected to answer emails and calls from the school.
- I am expected to engage and participate as much as I possibly can.
- I am expected to log onto class every day with my camera on and to pay attention to the best of my ability. Some other things differ from teacher to teacher; for some teachers, getting work done on time is very important and they are hesitant to give much late credit, but other teachers are willing to.
- If you were teaching a class, what is the one thing you would do to make it more engaging for all students?
- As a quieter student I really loved kahoot because it allowed me to compete and learn at the same time without having to discuss it with multiple people. I really loved when teachers accommodated for students who may be too shy to want to speak in public.

- All the work and lecturing would have to maintain relevancy. Relevancy is the one of the only ways to keep students engaged and interested in learning about the world around them.
- Like I mentioned in the panel, not only are teacher-student relationships important but so are student-student relationships just as much. I enjoyed student of the week last year in person and even our Guess Who game is so much fun online!
- I would like it if each teacher started class with a jam board question but without names because it seems fun and you can say anything without putting your names on.
- When I was younger in second grade to be exact I remember my teacher handing out treats to the students that helped her out around the classroom or that would get good grades on their report card. When I become a teacher I would want to take that idea from her and apply it in my classroom so that students know that I will praise them every time they do something right.
- One thing that I would do to make the class more engaging is copying the question of the day idea. This idea has made me feel so heard and included. Even though they are silly questions it helps everyone in that class get to know each other.
- The treasure box is something I have been familiar with since I was a little kid and is something I want to implicitly put into my own classroom one day since a lot of kids work better with positive reinforcement.
- If I were teaching a class I would make google forms to check in on students and get to know them more. I would also make breakout rooms with only one student in each so they could work independently and I would come in and do academic and personal checks.
- If I were teaching a class, I would make sure to stay updated with all the latest trends, popular shows, popular movies etc. to provide lessons that incorporate what is in. For example, for my mini-lesson project in Mrs. Mann's class, I am creating an Among Us game for my imaginary first graders to teach them how to solve word problems with numbers 1-20.
- I would try to get to know my students beyond their name and how well they do on assignments. I would like to get to know each of them personally; their personalities, likes and dislikes, interests, what is going on in their lives, etc. I think this would make class more engaging because rather than seeming like a distant, cold teaching machine, I would seem more like a human being who wants to share the information with students and wants them to learn. This could also allow me to reference things I know they are interested in while teaching, which will also make my material more engaging.

**Do you have access to virtual learning groups, student clubs? If so, what?**

- I do not have much access to virtual learning groups outside the classes I already attend.
- I do have access to various campus activities/clubs, but I don't particularly engage with them.
- Yes! I am majorly involved in our Associated Student Body so through that I am able to connect with many other groups of people.
- They do offer clubs but I didn't go there.
- I think I have access to them if I reached out and tried to but it is just not my thing.
- I joined the "Granny's Kitchen" club at my school



- Yes, I am involved in clubs and sports.
- Yes, I am on my school's dance team and on several clubs such as NHS and Community Caregivers.
- I do have access to the clubs at my school, however I have not joined any such groups.

**How do you find groups related to what you are experiencing and/or what you enjoy?**

- It is definitely really hard because the groups I was in like cheerleading is very limited and covid really changed my schedule so even the in person practices I would attend don't line up with my schedule.
- You utilize social media, which requires a little technological intuition.
- We all have a commonality of being online so I feel like that immediately bonds us to one another and we immediately have something to share if we chose too.
- I chose to not participate because I'm too shy.
- I feel as if every time my teachers break us into breakout rooms it gives the students the chance to talk to each other and find people that relate to one another or that I enjoy what others enjoy. I personally think that being in breakout rooms is a good opportunity to meet new people and to find groups that relate to me.
- I think that social media is probably a really good place to kind of reach out and see what other people are going through
- The breakout rooms are a great tool to use, the only problem is that people don't really want to talk to people they don't know unless they have to.
- If I am looking for assistance I will ask my friend and if they can't help me then they might ask one of their friends.
- I find groups that I can relate to through social media such as tik tok, Instagram, and snapchat.
- I have not found many new friends (people that I've never talked to) during distance learning, however I have gotten to know people I was only acquainted to a little bit better. Since I have already established contact with them, it is easier to talk to them via text or email. I do have one experience where a student in one of my classes had a virtual background that I loved. I had never talked to them before but had seen them at school previously, so I decided to just email them and tell them that I love their background in that class. I think small ways in which students can show their personality or interests during class can be very helpful when forming connections.

**Is the content you are learning inspiring you? How or how not.**

- Honestly it is a struggle to be inspired by my teachers right now over virtual learning. I feel like I complete my assignments just to complete it, without really understanding what I am learning. I also find it hard to ask teachers questions during the zoom because it would end up being a conversation with everyone in the class listening instead of a private one with just my teacher and myself.
- Not particularly, I'm in my senior year, so what I'm learning is concepts I'm quite familiar with (for various reasons).
- Certain things that some of my teachers do are incredibly inspiring! I can't imagine how much of a change it must've been for them to transition online so I think it's incredible

that they're still able to form some connections within the groups by doing a variety of things.

- The CCR and ASL were inspiring to me. I watched the video about a kindergarten teacher in CCR. I watched a deaf girl in a hearing family in ASL. I love these videos from the class.
- I feel as if the content that is most inspiring to me is the content I learn in my foundation's CCR class. I think this because my foundation class is a class that is going to help me in the near future and it inspires me to become a great teacher.
- I can say that the content in my Education Pathway class has been inspiring along with my Forensic class but no other class has been inspiring. This is probably because I am interested in those two paths as a future career but the other classes are not.
- Indeed. It has given me so many ideas that I could use when I become a teacher myself as well as some useful tips and tricks that will make the job easier.
- Yes, I feel like in every class there is a common project or assignment about the benefits or cons of distance learning.
- I would say no, but I do feel inspired in a couple of classes such as AP literature and Mrs. Mann's class. In these classes, my teachers teach us valuable lessons instead of just teaching us the material. Through the assignments, questions are asked in a way where we, as students, can reflect on ourselves as well.
- Not particularly, it depends on the class though. The content I find most inspiring is the content that teachers relate to real world applications, because then I view it as meaningful.

**Are you able to use any of your experiences inside the virtual world, outside and related to content? If so, please explain how.**

- However I've learned a lot about how people need their needs to be met in order to really thrive in an environment and I am able to help my friends in that way when they are having a tough time.
- Yes, this will definitely make me more familiar with various ways of educating students.
- Yes through the ability to realize the certain things we are being taught. It may be harder to grasp certain concepts online but if we can relate it to things we've seen than it's exciting to know about something we've been taught.
- Never.
- I personally think that I am able to use all experiences in my foundation class as well as everything I have learned and take it into the virtual world as well as the outside world.
- I have taken a lot of what I have learned in this Pathway class and put forward into my future teachings but when it comes to my virtual world I really try to keep that life and my outside life separate.
- N/A
- Yes, when a conversation runs dry the common thing to discuss is what a person has been doing in distance learning. Maybe they have strong opinions or developed new hobbies.
- In the virtual world, we feel isolated and away from socialization. When given a chance to experience the outside world, I am much more grateful and appreciative of human connection and I have become more social than I was before.

- In one of my classes, AP Language, we learn about how speakers convey their arguments and how to rhetorically analyze texts and to form our own arguments. This has been very relevant especially recently with the election, we even rhetorically analyzed Biden's inauguration speech along with former presidents'. We are also learning about how to find reliable news sources and how to spot bias, which is very useful when learning about important issues in the world.

**How often do you talk about ideas from class?**

- Not often, it's really hard to feel engaged in class while a lot of my teachers are assigning busy work just to fill the hour and fifteen minute period.
- On occasion, it depends on the particular topic and interest at hand.
- Quite often! I enjoy learning about stuff I enjoy so I reciprocate it by telling it to others which I also think is why teaching is so appealing to me.
- Never unless I have to.
- Not so often.
- I talk in the classes that I am comfortable in which mainly are the classes that I enjoy. I think for everyone it really just depends on which class it is and what topic it is about.
- Rarely since my teachers are busy teaching their own things.
- I rarely talk unless I know it is a part of my grade or I am being asked.
- Quite often
- I'd say once or twice a week, it depends on the class and how engaged I am in it.

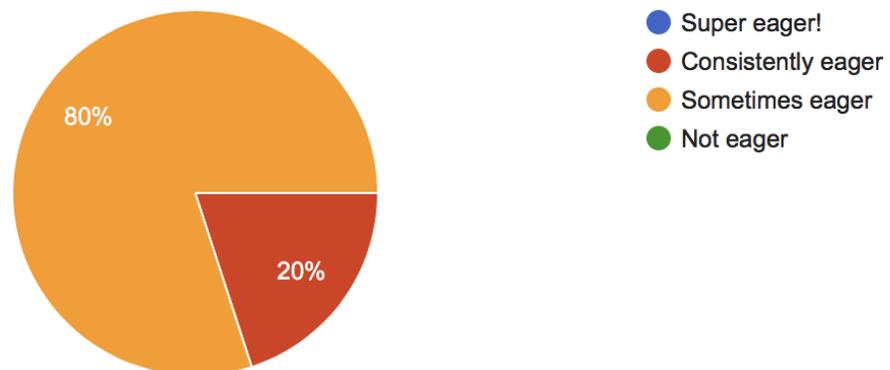
**We are studying about how to Humanize Virtual Learning. What suggestions or tips do you have to share with us?**

- I think having intentional teachers is what makes a difference. I feel like my teachers who take the time to learn about my life and ask questions really make me feel like I'm back in the classroom again.
- Make the work relevant to the experiences that students are living through. We do not want to hear about hypotheticals when there's a more appropriate and relevant example/lesson.
- I think any human interaction humanizes something. I know this is obvious but online is so much more different than physical for this sort of thing. But the things we still have is the ability to see on screen, hear voices, and relate. These are important for keeping everyone sane. If we didn't have these I feel we'd all feel completely alone. So it's important to use these through zoom or messaging systems.
- None, I don't have any idea.
- N/A
- I think that it is really important to Humanize the virtual learning experience and sadly I think that it starts with holding the teachers accountable. I am not trying to throw any teacher under the bus but I have a teacher that speaks for a couple of minutes just to give us our busy work then he turns off his mic for the rest of the class. He constantly is just eating or talking on the phone. When I think about my other classes and how they prioritize participation compared to my other teacher I can tell the difference of what makes a good teacher.
- Encourage more discussion with peers so students can interact with each other outside of breakout rooms.

- I suggest making it known to teachers or reminding them that many students still have Wi-Fi issues and that they are not all bluffing.
- Teachers should respect our privacy and allow us to have our cameras off. Some of us do not have comfortable homes where we have privacy. For example, I share a room with two siblings and it is always noisy and busy.
- This is a small thing but I love it when teachers ask us a non-academic question of the day. I think it shows which teachers really want to know their students personally and are willing to take class time just to do something like that, and usually it is enjoyable for students to answer fun questions. I feel that my teachers who do that on a regular basis know me at least a little, especially when they acknowledge or comment on different students' answers including my own.

### How eager are you to participate in class?

10 responses



Thank you for taking the time to do this!! I think it is also important to remember that every student is in a different situation. I know that I am fortunate enough to have my own room and time to put my schoolwork first, but not every student has that privilege; some have to work or help siblings. Also some do not have access to a private or quiet place to work, so it can be very hard to pay attention in that sort of environment. From my own experience checking in on my friends, staying home can also cause or increase family tensions and the emotional stress or exhaustion that may stem from that. In a way I feel like being in the classroom leveled out the playing field just a tiny bit because we were all in the same learning environment, away from parents or anything else that may add to our stress.

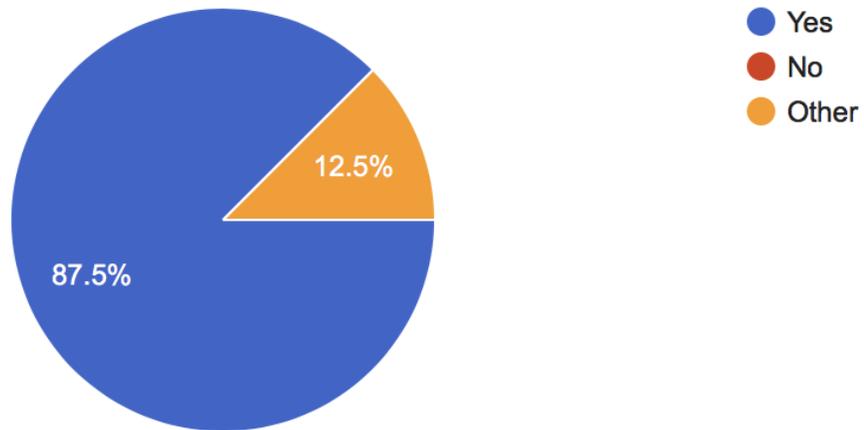
### Survey 3

#### Stakeholder Engagement Survey

16 stakeholder responses

## Does your current role, allow for engagement with TK-14 students?

16 responses



If you answered yes to question 1, please check what students you work with.



15 responses



### How do you work with students?

National level regarding programming and policy to ensure equity and outreach to the most vulnerable populations

As a classroom teacher, I provide daily whole group and small group instruction on Zoom in addition to creating daily asynchronous/synchronous assignments.

First, I supervise programs that directly serve students. Second, I supervise staff and faculty who directly support and teach students. Third, I employ and directly supervise students.

I teach at risk students. (11-12)

Teacher (High School)

I am a college professor, most of the time I end up working with them even after semester ends.

Oversee facilitators of school age programs supporting distant learners

Formal and informal presentations and/or conversations aimed at introducing career-focused options available after high school graduation. Plus, I work with students on access to skills-based courses that lead to certifications and/or fit with their higher education goals.

Provide technology equipment to support their remote learning during the pandemic

Director of Equity Services, Adult Education, and as Lecturer at CSUN

I am the principal of the high school.

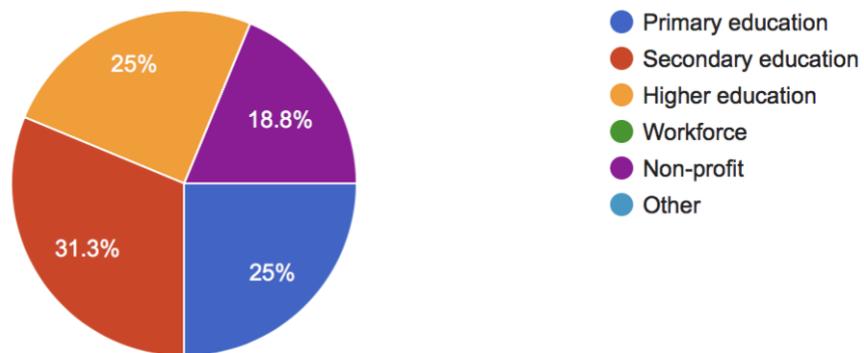
Run childcare program currently focuses on remote learning support, enrichment, and social and emotional support.

I teach college students

I am a general classroom education teacher at a TK-8 inclusive charter school.

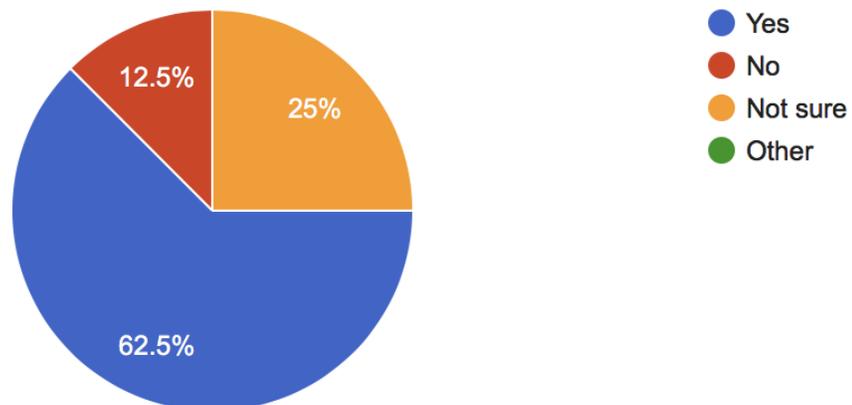
In what setting do you work with children/teens? (check all that apply)

16 responses



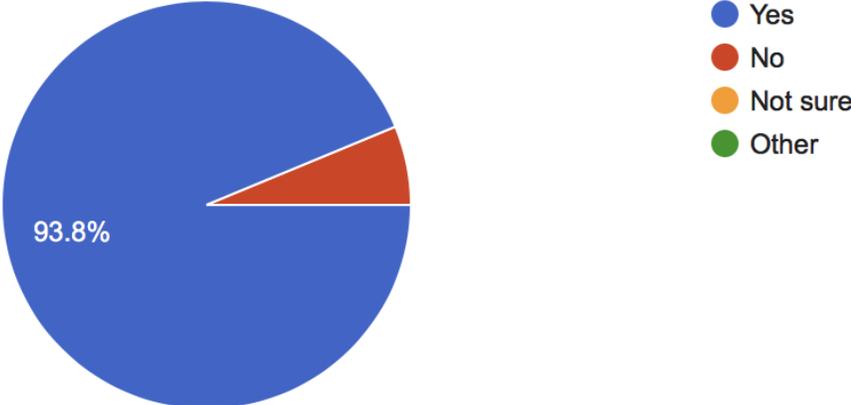
Do students have ubiquitous device access in school?

16 responses



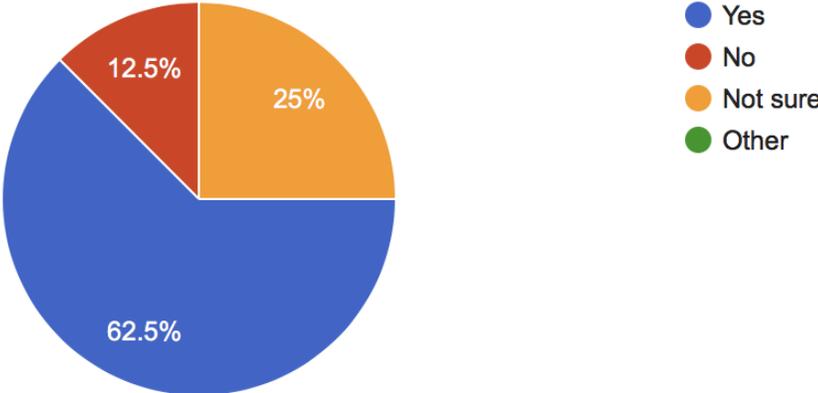
Is Wi-Fi available on campus in all learning spaces?

16 responses



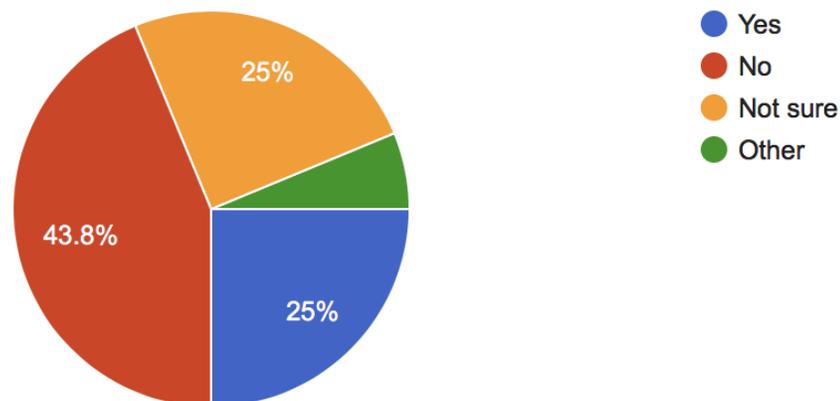
Do students have ubiquitous device access in school?

16 responses



## Do students have ubiquitous device access out of school?

16 responses



### Does your school/district have the technology capacity to deliver content efficiently and effectively? Please explain.

- Yes through the Office of Headstart
- Yes! We are very fortunate to have 1:1 Chromebooks. We had technology resources prior to COVID so we were prepared with a strong infrastructure.
- Yes. We are currently working remotely, and for employees who don't have sufficient technology infrastructure at home, the institution can provide devices and Wi-Fi. In addition, the institution has a license for both a Learning Management System and video conferencing system to deliver content, as well as in-house training capacity for staff and faculty to learn to use the systems.
- Yes. Our site was 1:1 before the pandemic hit. We provide Wi-Fi hotspots to those without internet access and every student has a Chromebook.
- Yes, my school uses an LMS called Schoology.
- to some capacity not completely some students are still working on their phones either because they don't have access to computers or they don't have a way to make it to school to rent out a computer
- Yes, technology is more than adequate.
- Yes. We have Canvas LMS and Zoom available along with software applications in support of classes such as Labster, Beyond Labz, Proctorio, etc.
- Yes. We have a one-to-one technology commitment and an excellent tech department that ensures network connectivity.
- Yes, teachers have multiple screens, in the classrooms, to provide visual access to on-campus students while also providing visual access to distance learners. Teachers have amplification devices to allow all students audio access to their lessons.
- No. All students are equipped with district provided laptops. They do not have enough headphones for all the children.
- I think most faculty are dependent on their own devices to do so. IT will provide district laptops and some hardware and software, but I am sure they would not be able to afford to equip everyone with what they need.



- Yes, we have various options to access the curriculum with technology and programs provided that we have used since the beginning of distance learning. We started the Monday following school closures.

**Does your school/district have the technology capacity to deliver content efficiently and effectively in the virtual space for long term? Please explain.**

- Yes but early Ed teachers need to be face to face with students for the best outcomes
- I think the concern is the lifespan of our current technology. However, additional Chromebooks have been purchased to allow for technology usage while students are enrolled in the hybrid and distance learning models concurrently.
- Yes. Even prior to the pandemic, the institution had a license for both a Learning Management System and video conferencing system to deliver content, as well as in-house training capacity for staff and faculty to learn to use the systems.
- Yes. All staff have materials and provisions available to them to work remotely.
- Yes, my school uses an LMS called Schoology.
- not that I know of students have to attend school to be able to rent the computer most of the time this is the reason my students don't get the computer from school they are either watching their brothers or sisters and or working which prevents them from being able to go get the computer
- The technology is present. Teachers, administrators and support personnel are given access to technology - no issues.
- Yes. See answer above.
- Yes. Students were provided the option to obtain a free Chromebook from their high school (donation, not loan). In addition, hot spots are available to students in need of internet connectivity. In addition, teachers participated in training on virtual teaching and learning through collaboratory professional learning as well as through training with College of the Canyons.
- Yes, we have ample broadband width to support student learning in a virtual world.
- Yes. Teachers have the equipment and support to continue virtual learning.
- Some virtual learning long term is feasible. Keeping everyone virtual for another semester or two is likely feasible. Keeping everyone virtual for long term is probably not feasible.
- Yes, we have various options to access the curriculum with technology and programs provided that we have used since the beginning of distance learning. We started the Monday following school closures.

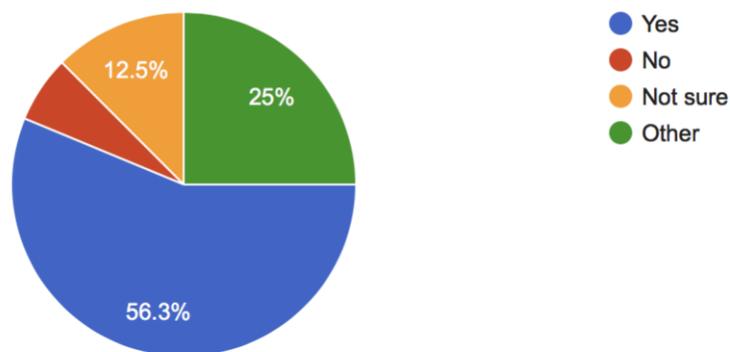
**Will your school's content delivery system/learning management system support student/faculty/parent, institution goals? Please explain.**

- Yes and no. The USA and territories are divided into 12 regions to serve children and families. Some regions have emergency funding to help with purchasing devices
- The goal is always student learning and success. Our current systems can be tailored to meet individual goals, but support in how to access and utilize these tools is critical for all stakeholders. We can't assume that users know how to take advantage of available resources.

- Maybe. We have the infrastructure to deliver instruction. We also have the resources to provide thousands of laptops to students in need. However, we don't know what internet access or living conditions students have.
- This is a very complicated topic. Direct instruction does not allow for the volume of content that typically is delivered in an in person setting. So the question is does our institution allow for the modification of its learning goals during direct instruction. The answer is yes.
- Yes, everyone has access to Schoology, but not all parents are trained on the platform and are not able to monitor their child's progress.
- I believe that we might be able to deliver some quality content however I do feel that there needs to be a more student/faculty/parent approach to this new virtual learning platform. Whether there is technical support or family emotional support
- This is complicated. The district has identified two primary LMS options - Google Classroom & Canvas. Students report a high level of frustration when they must navigate multiple platforms and multiple presentation styles. Both LMS provide the ability to support institutional goals. It is up to the instructor to access and learn the tools and create engaging content & creative delivery of the material.
- Yes. The systems mentioned above support the goals.
- Yes. We primarily use Google Classroom with some programs also using Canvas. Both support the district's teaching and learning goals as well as interaction among faculty, students, and parents.
- Not sure.
- Yes. Canvas is well supported by the CCCC.
- Yes, parents can access and support students.

Do teacher/faculty have the right computer and accessories needed to teach virtually?

16 responses



**How do digital platforms address students with disabilities (outside of closed captioning)?**

- They have closed captioning and one on one teaching but the children and families need more assistance
- Digital platforms definitely do not provide a "one size fits all" experience. Student success on digital platforms is determined by the teacher's ability to effectively use the

platform to deliver content. The platform is only accessible for students with disabilities if the teacher knows how to access and utilize features such as creating audio directions and incorporating meaningful links/tools/visuals. Teacher know-how is key!

- The learning management system and video conferencing system are generally accessible. Prior to teaching remotely, instructors must complete training on accessible design.
- Personalized, differentiated instruction is more available via online learning platforms.
- Teachers are able to upload files with larger fonts, teachers can differentiate instruction by individually assigning work with extended deadlines, students with IEPs are able to go into break out rooms with resource teachers.
- there is not a clear pathway for instructors to follow. Just recently this semester I had a student who was blind, the student had to reach out to me before hand and I had to make sure all of my lessons where done in advance to be able to support her, I still feel I could have been supporting my student in a greater capacity had I been given the tools or support from the school.
- I would need to investigate this further.
- We connect any students who need support with our Disabled Students office. We also provide interpreters and access to equipment and software as needed.
- We provide significant support including tele-health options for speech/language pathology and other services.  
<https://sites.google.com/hartdistrict.org/spedremotelearning>
- We use speech to text and audio amplification.
- Not sure.
- Canvas has accessibility checkers and prompts for a lot of accessibility features (such as alt text). But faculty do need to know how to use the features effectively. Our district requires basic 508 compliance training and training in Canvas.
- We can create modified pages and can give access to education specialists to make work customizable.

### **Do you have anything else you would like to share?**

- Community building is the most important element that is often overlooked in favor of standards based learning.
- The phrase Maslow before Bloom should be the starting point for all distance learning.
- I do believe that there needs to be a more humanizing approach to education now during this pandemic. There is so much need to feel in control, which then we unconsciously transfer to our students which then makes it harder on them. I feel that as long as the student is trying their best we as teachers need to be more flexible and approachable to support our students during this difficult time.
- Yes, technology is available. In some cases, teachers report a high level of frustration with understanding how to use it effectively - this includes software (too many programs and not enough information to determine which program offers the best level of engagement for the lesson or lessons). Our district has provided multiple methods to support teachers learning the technology and software, less support has been provided to support personnel, which instructional aides report a level of frustration when helping special populations. Another issue that is frequently heard: Too much ceiling fan

instruction! In other words, students login for live instruction, but their heads are often down and teachers find themselves talking to ceilings or the top of heads. Some teachers work hard to creatively minimize this scenario, but based solely on comments and observations, they are losing the battle with a large number of students. I am thrilled this conversation is happening and look forward to participating!

- At the beginning of the school year teachers struggled to create their virtual classroom spaces to teach from and purchased extra equipment that they needed out of their own pocket. Also, all students did not receive properly functioning laptops. Since then the students and teachers seem to have what they need for the time being. Some teachers and parents are still struggling to come to terms with the new expectations and capabilities that go with the virtual learning environment.

## HUMANIZING VIRTUAL LEARNING RESOURCES



### **Bakersfield College**

<https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/academics/pathways/education>

<https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/onlineteaching>

### **Bakersfield College EDU Courses**

EDUC B55: Bridge to Online Learning: (.5 unit)

This course is intended for students new to learning from a distance or who want gain skills for success in an online learning environment. Topics include tips for being a successful independent online learning, technology self-assessment, netiquette, digital citizenship, and navigating an online course. Students will practice viewing and completing assignments and assessments in an online learning environment as well as forms of online communication available. This course includes practice in using an online plagiarism detection tool, personalizing Canvas profile and notifications, creating a structured and effective physical space for a successful online learning environment, and learning strategies for becoming an independent online student who is comfortable with using technology and available online tools for coursework.

EDUCB30 : Introduction to Online Learning Environments (3 units)

This course is intended for current and future educators as well as anyone interested in online teaching and instruction such as future administrators and instructional designers. Topics in this course include: Course and Learning Management Systems, effective student contact, key characteristics of successful online learning spaces, online classroom management, relevant learning theories, current policies and laws including, but not limited to, accessibility requirements, types of online learning environments, and current communication technologies.

EDUCB31 : Cultivating an Online Learning Community (3 units)

This course is intended for current and future educators and anyone interested in online teaching and learning such as future administrators and instructional designers. This class examines elements of effective instructional design for the distance learning environment. Topics include tailored instructional models, class management, learning theories, assessment methods, deepening student engagement, meaningful student learning experiences, and current software and multimedia options to enhance the creation and design of online learning environments.

EDUC B32: Equity, Accessibility, and Humanizing Learning in an Online Environment (3 units)

Certificate in Teaching in an Online Environment

EDUCB80NC : Preparation for Standardized Tests for Careers

This course is designed to prepare students for standardized tests such as TEAS, ASVAB, CBEST, and other standardized tests needed to enter certain careers. Students should meet with Student Success Lab faculty to discuss individual academic and career goals.

# How to HUMANIZE YOUR ONLINE CLASS



## What is humanizing?

Humanized learning increases the relevance of content and improves students' motivation to log-in week-after-week. When students relate to an online instructor as something more than a subject matter expert and begin to conceive of themselves as part of a larger community, they are more likely to be motivated, be satisfied with their learning, and succeed in achieving the course objectives (Picciano, 2002; Rovai & Barnum, 2003; Richardson & Swan, 2003).

## FACILITATION

### presence



Don't be a robot.

Create a lively welcome video.  
Provide feedback in audio or video.  
Greet students with a video each week.  
Offer synchronous meetings for those who need them.

### empathy



Sense when students need extra support.

Be approachable.  
Check-in with students individually.  
Support students through difficult times.  
Send a supportive video message to a struggling student.

### awareness



Know your students.

Survey students in week 1.  
Use a fun, low-risk ice breaker to get students connected.  
Build in formative feedback loops.

## COURSE DESIGN

(Turner & Paris, 1995; Wang & Han, 2001)

### choice



Options increase intrinsic motivation.

Allow students to express themselves through writing, voice, and video.  
Provide format and topic options for projects.

### challenge



Get students out of their comfort zones.

Encourage students to try new things - and believe in them!  
Assess learning through content creation.

### control



Involve students in decision-making.

Allow students to:  
- organize groups  
- create a portion of the class content  
- suggest ideas for assessments

### collaboration



Empower students to inspire one another.

Have students learn from each other.  
Use social technologies to design connected learning activities.

### constructing meaning



Have students discover real-world connections.

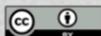
Use video as a catalyst for discussion.  
Invite students to contribute videos, images, links that demonstrate examples of concepts.

### consequences



Design projects that last longer than your class.

Turn students into content creators.  
Have students share work with peers and/or on open websites.



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