Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors,

As a resident and public school teacher in Santa Clara County, I am writing to ask the Board to work with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) to provide devices, hot spots, and data plans for the 15,000 families identified by SCCOE who are currently without Internet access. Please vote to approve the referral submitted as Agenda Item 16: Closing the Digital Divide for Vulnerable Families.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposes the need for online access to critical government services like medicine, housing, food, and education. I am writing on behalf of our most vulnerable students and their families. Students must have internet access in their homes to receive critical government services.

Students also must have Internet access to participate in distance learning and not fall further behind their peers. Current solutions like sitting in a parking lot to access the internet and do your schoolwork from a car are not acceptable. Internet access must be in the home so that students have access to the same education as their peers and can have streamed classes that are so critical to effective learning.

This should be a top priority. If even we, in Silicon Valley, cannot provide internet access to the people in our community who most need it, it is unclear to me what our priorities are. We must use the wealth we have generated here from the internet, to ensure that everyone has access to its resources.

Thank you for your hard work keeping our county safe during this public health crisis. We urge you to vote on Tuesday to facilitate digital equity in our community by approving this referral and working with SCCOE to support vulnerable families. While this short-term emergency solution has the potential to address immediate needs, we also hope the county continues to partner with cities to address broadband gaps through long-term infrastructure development.

Susan McDonald
Instructional Coach
East Side Union High School District
Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors,

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Sincerely,
Kristin Bailey
Resident, Santa Clara County
Parent, Mountain View Whisman School District
Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors,

As a resident of Santa Clara County, I am writing to ask the Board to work with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) to provide devices, hot spots, and data plans for the 15,000 families identified by SCCOE who are currently without Internet access. Please vote to approve the referral submitted as Agenda Item 16: Closing the Digital Divide for Vulnerable Families.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposes the need for online access to critical government services like medicine, housing, food and education. I am writing on behalf of our most vulnerable students and their families. Students must have internet access in their homes to receive critical government services like CalFresh, CalWorks, MediCal, and WIC benefits that fulfill their basic needs.

Students also must have Internet access to participate in distance learning and not fall further behind their peers. Current solutions like sitting in a parking lot to access the internet and do your schoolwork from a car are not acceptable. Internet access must be in the home so that students have access to the same education as their peers and can have streamed classes that are so critical to effective learning.

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Nicole Pillatsch, Parent
Mistral Elementary
Mountain View Whisman School District
Santa Clara County
Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors,

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Thank you for your hard work keeping our county safe during this public health crisis. We urge you to vote on Tuesday to facilitate digital equity in our community by approving this referral and working with SCCOE to support vulnerable families. While this short-term emergency solution has the potential to address immediate needs, we also hope the county continues to partner with cities to address broadband gaps through long-term infrastructure development.

Sincerely,
Amanda Patron, Resident, Santa Clara County
Parent, MVWSD and MVLA
Dear Supervisors,

I am a resident of Mountain View and Santa Clara County, and I’m urging you to address the problem of inequality in internet access for the 15,000 families that the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) have identified as being without internet access.

This is a crucial issue of access. Without internet access, under our current pandemic situation, students just cannot learn; parents cannot access crucial government services, everything from Medical and WIC to libraries.

Furthermore, this lack of access brings down all our fellow residents. Our teachers are forced to ensure that all their students can access the teaching, meaning they’re aiming at the lowest common denominator. We need to make it so all residents of Santa Clara County — the heart of Silicon Valley, arguably the center of technological innovation in California, in the United States and the World — should be able to access the internet.

Please, vote in favor of Agenda Item 16: Closing the Digital Divide for Vulnerable Families. This is a short term effort, but I strongly hope we continue to work to ensure that broadband access is available to all of our residents and community.

I thank you for your attention.

Jofish Kaye, Ph.D  
Mountain View, CA  
Parent, Mountain View Whisman School District
Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors,

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Sincerely,
Elaine Kordsmeier, Resident, Santa Clara County
Parent, Mountain View Whisman School District
Dear valued decision maker,

There are many underepresented students in our county who are depending on you to change their educational shortfall.

Although most of the families in our county are lucky enough to have reliable internet access and can participate in on line learning, too many don’t.

We live in an area known for our wealth, innovative technology and diverse population. IT IS A CRIME TO LEAVE SOME OF OUR CITIZENS WITHOUT REAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION. For most students, getting behind in school lessons can have a snowball effect for years of future schooling. For some, such devastation in school progress can mean being left behind by our school system forever.

PLEASE VOTE TO CLOSE OUR COUNTY’S EDUCATIONAL DIVIDE and deliver reliable 'hot spots' to those students in need.

Thanks in advance for your attention to agenda item #16,

Yinka Bogdan
Parent in Mountain View