

Local

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RACIAL GAPS SEEN IN DATA ON ADVANCED CLASSES

Local participation in AP courses fell during pandemic

BY KRISTEN TAKETA

The likelihood that a San Diego County high school student is enrolled in an Advanced Placement course varies significantly based on their race and on which school they attend, an analysis of nationwide educational civil rights data released this month shows.

Only 19 percent of Black students and 23 percent of Latino students who attended a district high school in San Diego County that offered AP took at least one AP class, compared with 47 percent of Asian students and 34 percent of White students, The San Diego Union-Tribune found by analyzing data from the 2020-2021 school year, a time when schools were largely remote due to the pandemic.

Latino students in particular were underrepresented in AP classes, making up 48 percent of overall county enrollment in district high schools that offered AP but only 38 percent of the students who took one or more AP classes.

The Civil Rights Data Collection, which is typically published every two years by the U.S. Department of Education, provides comprehensive information on students' educational opportunities and discipline in schools, such as suspensions and arrests of students and counselor staffing levels. The collection contains some data that is not otherwise published statewide in

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K.C. ALFRED U-T

Surfers hit the beach at La Jolla Shores on Monday. The San Diego airport has recorded just 0.29 inches of precipitation since Oct. 1.

SLOW START TO RAINY SEASON

El Niño has formed in the Pacific, but so far it hasn't brought the precipitation San Diego County expected

BY GARY ROBBINS

San Diego County has fallen behind in seasonal rainfall. A weak storm could bring a little moisture Wednesday through Friday. But the National Weather Service says the region will then be dry until late next week, and perhaps for much, much longer.

So where's the El Niño that's supposed to turn this into a wet, calamitous winter?

The natural, periodic climate

change phenomenon known as El Niño has formed in the equatorial Pacific, says the U.S. Climate Prediction Center.

It's a strong event that's led to a lot of speculation in the media that California will get walloped this winter.

But recent Climate Prediction Center forecasts say there is just as great a chance that San Diego County will receive average rainfall this season as that it will get the unusually wet conditions of a year ago,

when there was no El Niño.

It is also possible the county will get below-average rainfall.

That's what happened during the yearlong rainy season that began on Oct. 1, 2015. Federal forecasters predicted that an El Niño would hit greater San Diego hard. But San Diego International Airport received only 8.18 inches of rain, about 1.60 inches below the seasonal average.

Since the latest rainy season began on Oct. 1, the airport has re-

corded 0.29 inches of precipitation, which is 0.85 inches below average.

The weather service says that back-to-back low-pressure systems from the North Pacific could drop 0.25 inches of rain at the coast and twice as much in the mountains from Wednesday to Friday.

But the jet stream won't dig far south and deliver the sort of heavy, sustained precipitation it brought on many occasions a year ago.

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NATIONAL CITY OKs DEAL WITH LABOR COUNCIL

City to use union workers on public building projects

BY TAMMY MURGA

NATIONAL CITY

National City will now require project labor agreements, with some exceptions, for public projects with a construction budget of \$1 million or more.

The City Council unanimously approved the three-year deal between the city and the San Diego Building and Construction Trades Council earlier this month. Negotiations began about a year ago.

Under the agreement, building trades and craft unions will set local hiring goals of having San Diego County residents or veterans perform at least 80 percent of the work. Of that pool, 5 percent should be from National City or have graduated or acquired a GED from Sweetwater High School. The unions cannot incite or participate in work stoppages. There are also apprenticeship program

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SURVEY OF JEWISH COMMUNITY SHOWS OPTIMISM, CHALLENGES

Antisemitism, access to religious schooling among worries locally

BY CALEB LUNETTA

SAN DIEGO

A majority of Jewish households in San Diego County have concerns about antisemitism both nationwide and abroad, and roughly 13 percent said they had personally experienced antisemitism in the last year, according to a recently published report about the local Jewish community.

And that level of concern has only risen since Israel declared war against Hamas, a group designated a terrorist organization by the U.S., according to local Jewish leaders.

Titled "A Blueprint for Our Future," the 131-page study published earlier this month by Brandeis University and the University of Chicago paints an optimistic portrait of the community's future, while also highlighting the stark challenges facing Jewish San Diegans.

The study, organized by five local Jewish community organizations, is the first of its kind in 20 years and provides a comprehensive report detailing how their congregations and fellow community members are feeling and what they're experiencing, officials said.

This weekend, a panel of experts and representatives of the organizations will come together to discuss the report and how the



NANCEE E. LEWIS U-T FILE

San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria and Rabbi Zalman Carlebach light a menorah candle at a Hanukkah celebration last year.

San Diego County Jewish community can move forward together.

The report consists of survey responses from 2,104 local Jewish adults given from June to September of last year. According to the findings, the local Jewish community has grown to over 100,700 individuals — a 13 percent increase over the last two decades — with over half of Jewish adults attending at least one religious service in the previous year.

And while 27 percent of the local Jewish population is over the age of 65, in comparison to 23 percent of all U.S. Jews, the population of Jewish individuals ages 18 to 34 in San Diego County is higher than the national average.

"We worry all the time that young people are not connecting Jewishly, but that is not what we saw," said Heidi Gantwerk, president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of San Diego. "They're just doing it differently than their parents do."

Approximately half of Jewish adults volunteered with at least one nonprofit organization — Jewish or non-Jewish — and 70 percent feel some sense of belonging to the Jewish community.

"We have a lot of people getting involved in making a difference in their community, and that just says a lot about the Jews and the notion of 'tikkun olam,' which

SEE **JEWISH • B4**

UPGRADES SET TO START NEXT FALL ON BRIDGE AT I-805, PALM

Congested interchange project includes \$24M in funding from federal law

BY DAVID GARRICK

SAN DIEGO

Major upgrades to the notoriously congested Interstate 805 and Palm Avenue interchange in Otay Mesa will begin next October and are expected to be complete in October 2026, city officials said last week.

The project includes \$24 million in federal infrastructure money. The 50-year-old bridge will be the first in the city to be upgraded with money from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that President Joe Biden signed in 2021.

The upgrades will include a new carpool lane for the northbound 805 on-ramp, metering for north and southbound on-ramps, and lengthened left-turn lanes in both directions on the bridge.

The \$47.1 million project will also include seismic retrofits, realignment of nearby roads and installation of 6-foot-wide sidewalks, separated bicycle lanes and infrastructure for bus stops.

Community leaders say the long-awaited project, which city officials

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MAN SUES DEL MAR, ALLEGING SEAWALL INJURY

BY LUKE HAROLD

DEL MAR
A Cardiff resident is suing the city of Del Mar after he was allegedly injured while standing on a seawall at 29th Street watching the waves earlier this year.

The plaintiff, Christopher Pond, alleges that a wave knocked him to the ground in January, according to a complaint filed Oct. 6 in San Diego County Superior Court. Then the cap on the seawall fell on top of him, resulting in multiple injuries, including his hip

and pelvis.

"The cap was not secured to the seawall, was not built properly, had not been maintained or inspected properly," the complaint reads. "The City had notice of the insufficient and dangerous nature of the cap as the City oversaw the design, placement and installation of the seawall. Further due to the concealed and dangerous nature of the seawall cap and the failure to warn by the Defendant public entities the seawall cap constituted a concealed trap."

Pond filed a legal claim

with the city, which allows both sides to negotiate a settlement without going to court. But Del Mar rejected the claim in September, court records show. Pond also filed legal claims with the county and state governments, which were also rejected, court records show.

When a government agency rejects a legal claim, the plaintiff can still file a lawsuit.

The causes of action in Pond's lawsuit in Del Mar include negligence, willful failure to warn, and dangerous condition of public property.

The lawsuit alleges that he has suffered wage loss, loss of use of property, hospital and medical expenses, general damage and loss of earning capacity.

Del Mar Assistant City Manager Clem Brown said the city could not comment because it is active litigation. Scott Savary, an attorney representing Pond, also declined to comment.

A case management conference is scheduled for March.

Harold writes for the U-T Community Press.

PROCESSION AND MASS IN HONOR OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE SET FOR SUNDAY

BY ALEXANDRA MENDOZA

SAN DIEGO
The annual procession and mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe will be held Sunday, the Catholic Diocese of San Diego said.

This year, more than 2,000 people are expected, said Lucia Gutiérrez with the Confederación Guadalupeana, which organizes the event with the diocese.

"It is a very nice tradition that we have and a celebration that is done in honor of our Lady of Guadalupe," she said.



K.C. ALFRED U-T FILE
Costumed dancers during the 2019 procession.

The procession begins at 11 a.m. at the Morley Field Sports Complex in San Diego and proceeds to the St. Augustine High School gymnasium (3266 Nutmeg St.), where a bilingual Mass will be held at 1 p.m.

The annual procession will include decorated floats, Aztec dancers and representatives from different parishes. The mass will be celebrated by Cardinal Robert McElroy accompanied by auxiliary bishops Ramón Bejarano, Michael Pham and Felipe Pulido. After the Mass, there will be a

celebration with mariachi music and Mexican food.

The celebration has been held for over 50 years at the diocese, organizers said.

The Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe is celebrated by Catholics each Dec. 12. According to tradition, in 1531 the virgin appeared to Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico. Juan Diego was canonized in 2002 by then-Pope John Paul II.

For more information, visit sdcatholic.org.

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JEWISH

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means to 'repair the world,' Gantwerk said. "It's just so much a part of who we are."

However, some trends revealed by the survey were worrisome to Gantwerk and her colleagues, including the level of antisemitism experienced.

"We still have 400 local Holocaust survivors living in San Diego who are a constant reminder of why we need to be vigilant in addressing all forms of hate against Jews and others," said Carole Yellen, senior director for Jewish care at the Jewish Family Service of San Diego. "Because, unfortunately, when we normalize it, it can have devastating consequences."



NANCEE E. LEWIS U-T FILE
Maiya Haberman (left) and Molly Thong load up bags of food at the Center for Jewish Care to bring to seniors to fill their Seder plates in April 2022.

Anti-Defamation League director and CEO Jonathan Greenblatt reported a 388 percent increase in antisemitic attacks nationwide earlier this month, largely driven by the Israel-Hamas war.

"It's a huge worry for our Jewish community, especially in this moment," Yellen said. "But if we focus on only identifying our Jewish community as 'victims of antisemitism,' we miss celebrating the beauty of this tradition."

The study also reported that roughly 1 in 5 local Jewish households is considered low-income in San Diego County, and 6 percent of all Jewish households said they were unable to pay in full an unexpected \$400 emergency expense.

Rabbi Ron Shulman of Congregation Beth El in La Jolla said living on relatively low incomes in the Jewish community often impacts families' ability to enroll a child in private Jewish school, attend Sunday

School or drive a child to after-school Hebrew classes. One-quarter of the 17,770 K-12 children in San Diego Jewish households participated in some form of Jewish schooling during the 2021-22 school year, according to the report.

"That's our opportunity to lay a foundation of solid Jewish engagement and identity," Shulman said, adding: "But there are not enough opportunities in the larger community to provide Jewish educational access that's not about paying tuition or whatever other barrier finances present."

When local Jewish leaders gather to discuss the survey's findings on Sunday, a major focus will be finding

solutions to the issues presented in the report.

For instance, in order to improve availability of cultural education opportunities, Shulman said he would like to see the local Jewish schools working together more to combine resources.

"Why should four different synagogues be offering a religious school program separately, each spending money and hiring people? Why aren't the best and the brightest coming together and centralizing those resources for the benefit of all of the kids?" Shulman said.

To further help economically disadvantaged members of their community, Yellen suggested giving more support to local aid re-

sources and spreading awareness about the work they do.

"I really hope that we will drive toward a small number of community areas of focus, where we can really pay significantly wide attention and invest significant resources to really move the needle," Gantwerk said.

The event "A Blueprint for Our Future Release: A Community Conversation and Reception" is scheduled for 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Sunday at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center in La Jolla. To learn more about it or to register to attend, visit lfjcc.org/about/blueprint.aspx.

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BRIDGE

FROM B1
began discussing in 1996, is badly needed in one of the city's fastest-growing areas.

"It's absolutely ridiculous how congested and dangerous that exit is," said Felipe Nuno, a member of the Otay Mesa Community Planning Group. "You have thousands upon thousands of people getting off work at the same time and people living in the many new homes."

He said congestion is bad on weekdays during typical morning commute hours and again from 3 to 7 p.m.

Palm Avenue is one of only two major streets that move traffic east and west between Otay Mesa and Nestor, Palm City and Imperial Beach. The other is Del Sol Boulevard, three-quarters of a mile to the south.

"These on-ramps connect to Palm Avenue, one of the main thoroughfares in the South Bay," Councilmember Vivian Moreno said. "A significant amount of traffic backs up on these on-ramps and off-ramps."

City officials said more than 37,000 cars use the bridge on a typical day, including 750 freight trucks. Usage is projected to increase to 58,000 cars per day by 2040.

The \$24 million in federal

money is supplemented by a \$6 million contribution from the city, for a total of \$30 million — a 20 percent match is required for projects receiving funds under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The remaining \$17.1 million needed for the project will come from the county's TransNet sales tax surcharge, developer impact fees generated in Otay Mesa and other sources, city officials said.

The project will also enhance the aesthetics of the interchange and Palm Avenue, city officials said.

It will restore decorative arches on the bridge fencing and decorative ashlar tile texture on the retaining wall at Palm Ridge Park, and it will add new irrigation systems and planted shrubs.

Crews are also slated to remove dead and diseased trees and plant more than 40 new trees.

A second phase of the project, which has not been funded, includes widening the bridge to include a third eastbound lane. No estimated date for that phase of project is available.

The interchange, which was built in the early 1970s along with I-805, is located a quarter-mile south of Chula Vista and 2.8 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border. It's the fourth exit north of the San Ysidro crossing.

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ADVANCED

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California, such as student participation in advanced coursework.

The data published this month was collected during the 2020-2021 school year; before that, the last collection of data came from the 2017-2018 school year.

Some experts have cautioned against relying heavily on some of the 2020-2021 civil rights data or comparing it to previous years because it was collected during pandemic school closures, when many students were not on campus for much of the year, which skewed data in areas such as student discipline.

But it's fairer to look at data such as student participation in advanced coursework, because that was not as heavily impacted by school closures, said Dan Losen, senior fellow with the UCLA Civil Rights Project and senior director of education at the National Center

for Youth Law.

Overall, 30 percent of San Diego County district high school students who attended a school that offered AP took an AP class, down slightly from the 33 percent of students who did so in the 2017-2018 year.

The AP participation rates ranged from as low as 2 percent of students at Carlsbad Seaside Academy to as high as 63 percent at San Dieguito's Canyon Crest Academy.

Students' access to AP courses varied depending on their high school's course offerings.

Almost a third of district high schools that offered any AP courses had fewer than 10. And 46 district high schools in San Diego County reported offering no AP courses. Many schools that lack AP classes were alternative schools, continuation schools and schools for students with disabilities.

There were significant disparities among AP course offerings, even among

schools in the same district. Some county districts had one high school with 37 AP courses and another high school with just two.

Schools that had the highest participation rates tended to enroll more students from higher-income families.

It's unclear exactly how student participation in AP classes varied by socioeconomic background, because the Civil Rights Data Collection does not show how many students from low-income families enrolled in advanced courses. The data also does not differentiate between the number of AP classes students took.

While AP course participation for virtually all racial groups declined slightly during COVID-19, the degree of racial disparities did not change significantly.

Multiple factors are likely reducing the access of students of color to advanced courses. A January 2020 report from Education Trust-West, an organization that fo-

cuses on education equity, attributed the underrepresentation of Black and Latino students in advanced coursework to several factors. Those factors included testing and grading biases, poor communication with families about enrolling, and a lack of course offerings and resources at schools with majority Black and Latino students.

Racial biases also play a role when educators decide which of their students they encourage to take advanced courses, Losen said.

"It's the bigotry of low expectations and the many ways that both intentional and implicit bias and racism play into how we make opportunities available to kids," he said.

To explore individual high schools' AP course offerings, participation rates and disparities, consult the searchable table of schools in the online version of this article: sandiegoniontribune.com/ap-rates.

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LABOR

FROM B1
opportunities.

The deal includes a three-year extension should the city and Trades Council opt for one, and the City Council can amend provisions of the agreement.

There are exceptions for certain projects to proceed without a project labor agreement: those that do not receive at least three bids, where all bids exceed an engineer's estimate by 10 percent or more, and if city officials find that the PLA would impact a project's efficiency to get built. According to city staff, an example would be if the PLA jeopardized the city's eligibility to receive grant funding.

Project labor agreements commit contractors and subcontractors to hire unionized workers for their construction projects. Such agreements set wages, safety protocols, local hiring measures and training for the workforce.

Development costs typically increase with PLAs, but

proponents say they ensure livable wages for workers and quality working environments.

National City leaders approved the PLA without public opposition at a Nov. 7 meeting. They heard from several union members and representatives who applauded the local hire and apprenticeship provisions.

Ricardo Sanchez, a representative of the Western States Regional Council of Carpenters, said the agreement would better ensure that local residents can live, work and play without commuting out of the city. He told council members that his father missed his Sweetwater High School graduation and other milestone moments because of work. Sanchez wants to see less of that in his community.

Also under the agreement, workers are not required to become or remain union members or pay dues.

The City Council's vote comes after neighboring Chula Vista leaders approved a similar PLA in September.

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The San Diego Union-Tribune

Life Tributes

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Claude Edwards
March 11, 1954 - November 6, 2023

CHULA VISTA — Claude Edwards, 69, of Chula Vista, CA, passed away on November 6, 2023.

Claude is survived by his spouse, Michael, and his brothers Dwight, Wyatt, Stacy, and Allen.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Claude's memory can be made to the Glioblastoma Foundation and the American Cancer Society.

Please sign the Guest Book online obituaries.sandiegouniontribune.com

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NOTICE OF SALE OF ABANDONED PROPERTY
Notice is given that pursuant to sections 21701-21713 of the business and professions code, section 2328 of the commercial code, section 535 of the penal code that **Vail Ranch Self Storage, Inc. at 43980 Mahlon Vail Rd Temecula 92592** will sell by competitive bidding on **or after December 12th, at 10:00 a.m.**, property belonging to those listed below. Auction to be held at the above address. Property to be sold as follows: miscellaneous household goods, furniture, personal items and clothing and etc., (other items) belonging to the following:

Unit	Name
#412	Higdon, Jeff
#419	Blake, Diana
#538	Villalobos, Nolan
#669	Drexel, Riley
#676	Taylor, Ray
#677	Bell, Steven

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: JOY HERMINE SPURLOCK CASE NO. PRMC2301224

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of: **JOY HERMINE SPURLOCK**

A Petition for Probate has been filed by **PATRICIA TRUAX-KJEDERQUIST** in the Superior Court of California, County of **RIVERSIDE**.

The Petition for Probate requests that **PATRICIA TRUAX-KJEDERQUIST** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows:
Date: **03/07/2024** Time: **8:30 AM** Dept: **T1**
Address of court: **41002 COUNTY CENTER DRIVE #100, TEMECULA, CA 92591**
Branch Name:

If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the **later** of either (1) **four months** from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) **60 days** from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. **Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.**

You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

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