

Resolution to Expand Digital Infrastructure Equity and Post-Secondary Continuity for Incarcerated Youth

WHEREAS access to college education reduces recidivism by up to 43%, according to the [RAND Corporation](#), and incarcerated individuals who engage in education are 13% more likely to secure employment and avoid re-incarceration after release; and

WHEREAS incarcerated individuals often face major disruptions in their education due to a lack of accessible digital infrastructure, especially after release - in a 2023 [survey](#) of 102 people incarcerated at Elmwood Jail in Santa Clara County, 54% reported owning no digital device, and 43% cited affordability as the biggest barrier to technology, leaving many unable to complete online coursework, apply for jobs, or pursue higher education; and

WHEREAS investing in education for incarcerated individuals leads to significant public savings, recent studies show that college programs save more than \$13,000 per participant by reducing future incarceration costs ([Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 2024](#)), and correctional education can save taxpayers about \$5 for every \$1 spent ([RAND, 2013](#));

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Democratic Party supports expanding digital equity infrastructure in juvenile detention and reentry programs, including secure laptops or tablets, Wi-Fi hotspots, and digital literacy training; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Probation Department, and Board of Supervisors urging them to develop a Post-Release College Access Plan that ensures youth leave custody with the digital resources and educational continuity for long-term success.

Submitted by Annika Abraham