



JOHN MOORE Getty Images

SCHOOLCHILDREN arrive for lunch at a kitchen run by a nonprofit group in Nogales, Mexico. Many U.S.-born children of returning Mexicans speak little Spanish and lack the documents to attend school.

‘LOST’ IN SPANISH

In Mexico, returning migrants’ U.S.-born children are set back at school by bureaucratic, cultural barriers

BY NINA LAKHANI

MEXICO CITY — Emmanuel Vargas was 13 and just starting eighth grade in Davenport, Iowa, when his father was detained in a workplace immigration raid and deported back to Mexico.

His parents decided they should stick together, and the whole family, including Emmanuel and his 15-year-old sister, both born in Iowa, moved to Leon, in the central state of Guanajuato.

It was a culture shock for the full-fledged American teenagers, who spoke fluent English and broken

Spanish. Their parents assured them that things would get easier once they enrolled in school and made new friends. But with one bureaucratic delay after another, it took a full year for the Mexican school to process their enrollment.

“It was really hard sitting at home for so long with nothing to do,” said Emmanuel, now 17. “I ... got left behind.”

After deportations increased and the U.S. economic downturn caused more families to return home, the number of U.S. citizens enrolled in

Mexican schools almost doubled over the last three years, with the total now nearing 450,000.

The transition for these American-born students is often no easier than that of Mexican immigrants entering U.S. schools — and often it is worse. Many encounter long delays in enrollment. Once admitted, many struggle to learn Spanish or have trouble adjusting to a new classroom culture and teaching methods.

Only 10% of primary schools and about 40% of secondary schools have

[See Mexico, A5]

Rough play in battle for pro stadium

AEG, falling behind Inglewood and Carson in the NFL chase, pushes hard for its downtown L.A. plan.

BY TIM LOGAN AND NATHAN FENNO

Last month, Carson Mayor Jim Dear took a call from a top executive at sports and entertainment giant AEG.

Ted Fikre, the company’s vice chairman, wanted to talk about the stadium that the San Diego Chargers and Oakland Raiders plan to build in the South Bay city.

Fikre told Dear the project wouldn’t be good for business at the StubHub Center, a sports complex in Carson owned by AEG. The message was clear, say three people familiar with the conversation: AEG didn’t want the \$1.7-billion stadium built.

Not long ago, AEG was the front-runner in the race to return a National Football League team to the region with the Farmers Field project in downtown Los Angeles. Now it lags behind rival proposals in Inglewood and Carson, both of which, unlike Farmers Field, have the backing of an NFL owner.

AEG is pushing back. It has paid for two reports that questioned the safety of the Inglewood stadium that would be constructed at the old Hollywood Park racetrack, which is under the main approach route to Los Angeles International Airport.

In one, Mark Rosenker, former head of the National Transportation Safety Board, cautioned about flaps or landing-gear doors detaching from airplanes approaching LAX and falling near the stadium.

AEG hired former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge to conduct a separate review of potential security threats. Ridge issued a report warning that terrorists could shoot down an airplane over the stadium, a scenario he described as a “terrorist event ‘twofer.’”

Aviation experts disagreed. “The Hollywood Park site is no more vulnerable than any other stadium location,” said Bill Withycombe, who retired in 2013 as the Federal Aviation Administration’s top official for a region that includes Arizona, California and Hawaii.

AEG also provided The Times hundreds of pages of documents that detail complaints and litigation in 2001 involving a proposed stadium in Tempe, Ariz., near Sky Harbor International

Airport. The stadium was eventually built about 20 miles away in Glendale, Ariz.

Withycombe oversaw that case and doesn’t find it comparable to the Inglewood situation.

“It sounds like the AEG folks are just throwing stuff against the wall and hoping something sticks,” said Eric Sussman, a developer who teaches real estate at UCLA.

An AEG spokesman declined Friday to discuss the company’s strategy.

AEG, if it chooses, could be far more aggressive, said Marc Ganis, a Chicago-based stadium consultant [See Stadiums, A9]

CHINA IS CAST AS TRADE VILLAIN

The Asian giant is a major talking point as Obama seeks to win passage of a Pacific Rim partnership.

BY DON LEE

WASHINGTON — As the White House looks to wrap up years of negotiations on a highly contested Pacific Rim trade pact, administration officials are increasingly casting the agreement as vital to helping the U.S. face its most daunting economic rival: China.

The proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, would be the largest trade deal in American history, involving the U.S., Japan and 10 other countries that combined make up 40% of the world economy. China isn’t among them.

In recent weeks, one Obama official after another has hammered away at the same line of argument: It’s crucial that Congress supports the TPP — including passing a related trade-promotion bill that would strengthen the president’s negotiating hand — because the alternative is that China, not the U.S., will write the rules of global trade.

They note that China is trying to cobble together a competing 16-nation trade pact without the United [See Trade pact, A9]

Israeli voters tend to opt for security

Many say they are more passionate about socioeconomic issues, but in the end, might matters the most.

BY LAURA KING AND BATSHEVA SOBELMAN

TEL AVIV — In the final full week of a tightly contested election campaign, a peculiarly Israeli paradox is on clear display.

Polls show that a majority of voters are most passionate about socioeconomic conditions that color their daily lives — issues such as being middle-class yet living with overdrawn bank accounts, or being 40 years old and unable to afford an

apartment without a parent’s help.

But historical balloting patterns suggest that when Israelis are alone in the voting booth, security concerns come to the fore.

Benjamin Netanyahu, facing a tough challenge as he seeks to become the country’s longest-serving prime minister since founding father David Ben-Gurion, played masterfully last week to those security worries in a State of the Union-style address in the U.S. Capitol, engineered by congressional Republicans. In it, he likened the Iranian nuclear threat to the dark days leading up to the Holocaust and referred repeatedly to an array of threats to Israel’s existence.

It has been a message [See Israel, A4]



CHERYL A. GUERRERO Los Angeles Times

GREG BAYER believes he had a better upbringing in America than he would have had in Ireland.

COLUMN ONE

Reunions for the ‘banished’

For Irish children adopted by American families years ago, reconnecting with birth mothers can be a long and risky journey.

BY JAMES QUEALLY

Annie Biggs had crossed an ocean to find her mother, and her journey had come to this: a locked door on a small street in Dublin.

She had spent two decades scouring online genealogy records, searching for the woman who gave birth to her in one of Ireland’s notorious mother-and-baby homes.

Had she thought about Annie in the half-century since she was whisked away to be adopted by an American couple? Did she have any idea her daughter had been sent to Fresno? Would she welcome her? Would she even answer the door?

Biggs knocked and knocked, but no one responded. For four days, she went back again and again, until neighbors asked her to leave.

Devastated, Biggs returned to her hotel room, wondering if she should give up her search. Two days later, the phone rang.

“This is your mum,” said the voice at the other end.

Biggs is one of at least 1,900 Irish children adopted by American families from the 1940s to the 1970s after they were born to unwed mothers in homes run by the Catholic Church.

Grim conditions inside the homes, where thousands of ostracized young women [See Adoptees, A10]

Gender equality far from reality

Nearly 20 years after pledges by global leaders, most nations still deny women their rights, studies show. **WORLD, A2**

Hollywood keeps close eye on trial

A death on rail tracks in Georgia has raised concerns about film set safety. **NATION, A12**

Cal State schools to raise criteria

The campuses, including CSUN, want to limit enrollment as demand soars. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather

Partly sunny. L.A. Basin: 82/54. **B8**

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BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

SELMA 50 YEARS LATER

Terion Oliver, 8, chats with police outside Brown Chapel Church. Thousands came to the Alabama city to commemorate the march. **NATION, A6**