

Welcome to What Happens Next

My name is Larry Bernstein.

What Happens Next offers listeners an in-depth analysis of the most pressing issues of the day. Our experts are given just SIX minutes to present. This is followed by a Q&A period for deeper engagement.

I think you will find this discussion to be both informative and provocative.

This program is moderated to be politically neutral. Our speakers will give their opinions and then we encourage you to make up your own mind.

This week's topics include COVID, vaccines, housing, charter schools, and fiscal policy.

Our first speaker is Dan Gelber who is the mayor of Miami Beach. COVID impacts every community but each community differently. Miami Beach is unusual because of the number of tourists and snowbirds. It also has fabulous weather. How do you manage a dynamic and engaging community who want to be outside and having too much fun during COVID?

Our second speaker is Derek Lowe who by day is a researcher for the pharmaceutical company Novartis and by night is one of the leading bloggers on pharma issues and vaccines in particular. We all have questions about which vaccine to take, when to get the shot, and how to find access to it.

Our third speaker is Steve Alloy who is President and CEO of Stanley Martin Homes. You may recall that Steve spoke to us in the Spring when he told us that homebuilders were selling their inventory like hotcakes. Shockingly, he could not build homes fast enough despite the most severe economic downturn in our lifetimes. Steve will tell us about recent trends in the housing market, why it is hotter than ever, why mortgage rates are a culprit, and the greater role of private equity in building communities of rental homes.

Our fourth speaker is Robert Pondiscio who is a Senior Fellow and VP at the Thomas Fordham Institute. Robert embedded himself at the charter school the Success Academy and then wrote about his experience. His book is entitled How the Other Half Learns: Equality, Excellence, and the Battle over School Choice. I hope to learn why the Success Academy has been so successful educating low income minority children, and if their teaching methods for K12 education are scalable.

Our final speaker is Alan Auerbach, who was my professor in advanced macroeconomics at Penn. Alan is now a Professor of Economics and Law at UC Berkeley. Alan will be discussing his recent paper on fiscal policy for federal and state governments. We are currently running unprecedented budget deficits. Is this sustainable and if so for how long? What does this surge in deficit spending mean for the future of government finance? And can we no longer afford our long-term social programs like Medicare and Social Security?

That is our show for today, and let me turn it over now to Dan Gelber as our opening speaker.