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April 24, 2020 Edition

Across the country, elementary, secondary and postsecondary schools have closed as part of the effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. Each week, IDRA issues an update on the impact of COVID-19-related policies on schools, students and families.

More resources and trainings for teachers, school administrators, families and communities are on our [Learning Goes On website](#). See the [Spanish version](#) of this edition.



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### Policy Update

## Public School Advocates Join Forces to Push for Emergency Funding Equity

IDRA and other advocacy organizations urged state and federal leaders to adopt policies to ensure COVID-19 emergency education funds are spent equitably, targeted at English learners, students of color, students from families with limited incomes, students with disabilities and others most impacted by educational inequities.

Please review the letters below, sent and signed by IDRA and our coalition partners, and use and adapt any recommendations that you find useful for your community. Contact Morgan Craven, IDRA's national director of policy, advocacy and community engagement at [morgan.craven@idra.org](mailto:morgan.craven@idra.org) for more information about these recommendations.

**IDRA joined civil rights and advocacy organizations across the country** to send a letter to U.S. congressional leaders, urging them to allocate supplemental funding for Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to ensure programs for English learners receive more funds. **English learners face educational inequities** that have been made worse by COVID-19 and inadequate at-home learning resources. **See letter.**

The **Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC)** sent a letter this week to Texas Governor Greg Abbott, Commissioner of Education Mike Morath, and Commissioner of Higher Education Harrison Keller, urging the leaders to distribute and monitor federal COVID-19 emergency education relief funds equitably. TLEEC recommends that state leaders do the following:

- Target emergency relief funds equitably, including to support compensatory education and summer learning programs;
- Support the social, medical, mental health and nutritional needs of students;
- Ensure accountability and transparency in the use and distribution of funds;
- Maintain important connections with families and students and dedicate funding to identify families with which schools have had no or little contact during the crisis;
- Create equity-focused task forces and workgroups to advise state leaders on the needs of historically-marginalized communities;
- Ensure community college students receive supports; and
- Ensure protections for English learners.

TLEEC warned that COVID-19 has highlighted and worsened existing educational inequities for English learners, students of color, students from families with limited incomes, students experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities, and others. **See letter.**

**IDRA sent a letter to U.S. Congressional leaders** with recommendations about the equitable use and distribution of future COVID-19 emergency education relief funds for schools and students. **See letter.**

**The Texas Postsecondary Advocates Coalition published an open letter to Texas higher education leaders** with recommendations on supporting college students impacted by COVID-19. **See letter.**

**IDRA joined the Southern Education Foundation and other organizations to send a letter to the Georgia Governor and Superintendent of Education**, urging them to distribute COVID-19 emergency education funds equitably. **See letter.**

**IDRA developed recommendations for leaders in Southern states** for how to use COVID-19 emergency education funds to address the unique needs of English learners,

students of color, students from families with limited incomes and others in the South. [See letter.](#)

## U.S. Department of Education Announces Rules for Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Funding

This week, the Department of Education released guidance and the application form for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSERF). This \$13.2 billion fund is one of three major components of the Education Stabilization Fund in the federal CARES Act. The Department has committed to releasing funds to state education agencies within three days of receiving the short application form. Families and other advocates should urge their states and school districts to follow the recommendations from the letters above to ensure funds are distributed and used equitably.

Funds will be allocated based on Title I formulas in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that primarily calculate funding based on the number and concentration of children living in poverty in the state. States must use the majority of funds to make subgrants to local education agencies, including public school districts and charter schools that serve as local education agencies, to help:

- Comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- Ensure a coordinated effort to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19;
- Support school leaders to address the needs of their schools;
- Support the unique needs, including summer learning needs, of children in families with low incomes, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students of color, students experiencing homelessness and students in the foster care system;
- Purchase technology to support "regular and substantive" online learning, including hardware, software and connectivity equipment;
- Provide mental health services and supports; and
- Plan and coordinate supports for students during school closures, including how to provide meals, provide technology for online learning, and ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws.

Read more about permissible uses for the CARES Act education funds on IDRA's [Learning Goes On](#) web hub.

**For more information and policy news, see  
IDRA's Learning Goes On web hub.**

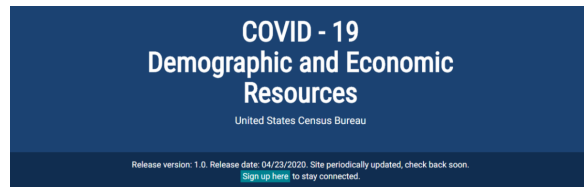
VISIT LEARNING GOES ON WEB HUB

Census Bureau News

# Census Bureau Launches COVID-19 Data Hub

The U.S. Census Bureau released yesterday a new resource page on [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) to help federal agencies, businesses and communities make decisions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar to the Census Bureau's resources pages created during natural disasters, this resource page includes information on population demographics, economic indicators and businesses.

It features a **new interactive data hub** that centralizes already-released data from the American Community Survey and the County Business Patterns program to facilitate users' access to data useful in pandemic-related decision making.



## US Demographic and Economic Data At A Glance

Population Aged 65 Years and Older	Total Uninsured Population	Total Employer Establishments
49,238,581	29,752,767	7,912,745
<small>American Community Survey (ACS) 2014-2018</small>	<small>American Community Survey (ACS) 2014-2018</small>	<small>County Business Patterns (CBP) 2017</small>



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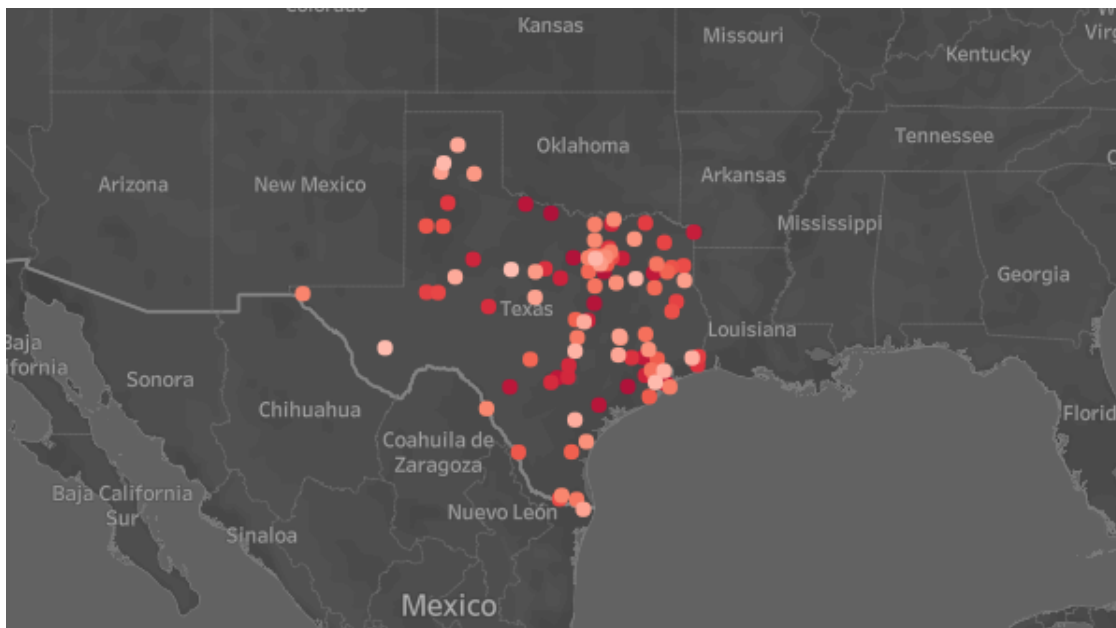
We welcome donations to support education during this COVID-19 crisis.



## Interactive Data Map

### COVID-19 Data Map - Texas College Responses

IDRA developed this data map showing information related to COVID-19 on colleges across Texas. The information includes date of school closure, transition to online instruction and additional notes. The map draws on data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Since the data changes rapidly, students and faculty should contact their college directly for the most up-to-date information related to COVID-19.



City	Date Face-to-Face Classes Suspended	Shift to Online? (Y/N)	
Abilene	NA	Unknown	■
San Antonio	March 16-20	No	■
Universal City	March 16-20	No	■

SEE DATA MAP

## Free Webinar Series

# Equitable Practices for Online Learning Webinars

**Watch on demand webinars now!**

**Equitable Practices for Teaching Online**

**Digital Divide: Connectivity, Infrastructure and Devices**

**Tools & Tips to Alleviate the Homework Gap**

**Facilitating Online Math Sessions**



**PBL at Home & Across the Curriculum - available soon!**

**Journal Writing About the Present for the Future - ELAR Webinar Part 1 - available soon!**

WATCH NOW

## Register for Our Next Three Webinars on English Language Arts and Reading

*Featuring*

Dr. Nilka Avilés, IDRA, with Abydos trainers:

Gerald Sharp, M.A., Edgewood ISD retired teacher and IDRA consultant

Jeanne Cantu, M.A., Texas A&M University-San Antonio adjunct faculty and IDRA consultant

### From Journaling to Personal Narratives - ELAR Webinar Part 2

Wednesday, April 29, 2020, at 2:00 PM (cdt)

In the second of this three-part webinar series, Abydos trainers will demonstrate a process where students select one of their journal entries to expand it into a fully developed personal narrative, reflecting the significance of the COVID-19 event.

REGISTER NOW

### From Journaling and Personal Narratives to Letter Writing - ELAR Webinar Part 3

Thursday, April 30, 2020, at 2:00 PM (cdt)

In the final installment of this three-part webinar series, Abydos trainers will present steps for students to select from their journal entries one issue important to them. Students will expand their writing into a letter to someone in authority suggesting how the issue and its outcome could have been improved upon.

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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent private non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring educational opportunity for every child. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

IDRA works hand-in-hand with hundreds of thousands of educators and families each year in communities and classrooms around the country. All our work rests on an unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.