

It's About Us: 2010 Census in Schools



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For the past 60 years, the Census Bureau has enlisted the support of educators to bring to the community the message of the importance of a complete and accurate count of the population.

The U.S. Census Bureau will deliver 2010 census questionnaires to every household in the United States in March 2010. Persons that live in group quarters, such as in dormitories or in shelters, will also be enumerated using special data collection procedures. Census takers will conduct in-person interviews with households that do not return their questionnaires by mail. The census questionnaire is composed of only 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete.

To assist in the preparation for this year's census, the Census Bureau has created a Census in Schools program called "2010 Census: It's About Us." The program provides educators with resources to teach the nation's students about the importance of civic responsibility through the use of national standards-based lessons involving math, geography, reading, and social studies. The program engages America's youth to help ensure that every child and every household member is counted in 2010.

Resources for Teachers

"2010 Census: It's About Us" provides:

- Age-specific educational materials for students K-12. Adults enrolled in English as a Second Language classes can also receive materials.
- Online resources for teachers, including professional, standards-based lesson plans, family take-home kits, and event ideas. We show how you can use census data to teach students and their families about U.S. history, current events, and more. The interactive, user-friendly Census in Schools website also features memory games, word finds, state facts, coloring pages, and research project ideas. All materials are downloadable at www.census.gov/schools.
- Lessons that include cross-curricular references and skill-building activities, reproducible student worksheets, and printable assessment activities. Materials feature activities in map literacy, graphing, reading, and civic responsibility. Instructional tools include a page of census facts and teaching tips.
- Kits for principals containing maps, a Census in Schools program brochure, information about online lessons, quick-start teaching guides, and family take-home kits.
- Opportunities to discuss and practice civic responsibility and community involvement through five 15-minute lessons, available online.
- A monthly electronic newsletter for educators. Sign up for a free subscription at www.census.gov/schools. The publication features timely, creative ideas for lessons and activities.



Outreach to America

Every public, private, and tribal school in the United States, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands has received printed or Internet materials, or both. We wrote materials for areas outside the U.S. with consideration for local geography and culture, and lessons for Puerto Rico are written in Spanish. We also attended conferences (like the NCSS Annual Conference), reached out to administrators and supervisors, and submitted papers to professional journals—to name just a few outreach efforts.

Why It's Important

Census information affects the number of seats your state occupies in the U.S. House of Representatives. Federal, state, local, and tribal governments do planning and allocate funds based on an accurate demographic count. Communities depend on census data to make decisions about new school construction, libraries, and other public buildings. Community organizations use census data to develop childcare centers, community action

projects, and other social service programs. Census numbers help businesses identify where to locate.

Educators who teach students about the census help students learn the importance of participating in our nation's civic life, while also reinforcing curriculum goals. The Census in Schools program engages students to think about their community and how the 2010 Census affects them.

American Community Survey

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a continuous nationwide survey that collects data each month from a small percentage of the population and produces updated population and housing information each year, once 12 months of data are collected. The ACS is designed to provide communities a fresh look at how they are changing. About 3 million addresses (accounting for approximately 2.5 percent of the population) receive the longer, detailed ACS questionnaire—even during this 2010 Census year.

The ACS, was fully implemented in 2005 for “housing units” and expanded to include the population living in “group

quarters,” such as college dorms, in 2006. The ACS meets a critical need to have more timely, current, and detailed data for decision making at all levels of government, and for community organizations and businesses.¹ For example, the ACS questionnaire, which is several pages long, includes questions on topics such as employment, educational attainment, and commuting. The ACS is conducted by the U.S. Census and is part of the overall decennial census program.

Educators as Partners

Educators are people who make a difference. Thank you for all you do daily for the next generation and our country. Your efforts will help to ensure that the 2010 Census’ “Portrait of America” includes everyone, especially our children! 🌐

Notes

1. www.census.gov/acs/www/SBasics/Final_2010_Census_and_American_Community_Survey_Subjects_Notebook.html.

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