



February 11, 2020

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, and School Principals:

Census 2020: Make Sure California's School-Aged Children Are Counted

As the 2020 Census approaches, we all must do our part to ensure a complete and accurate count in our state. By providing accurate information to the federal government, all California students and families will benefit.

Federal funding supports programs like special education, before- and after-school programs, and school nutrition programs. California receives more than \$7 billion in federal aid to support our schools, and this is especially important for closing opportunity gaps at schools with a high percentage of low-income children and schools with special education programs.

The challenge of an accurate count is amplified in California. As the most populous and diverse state in the nation, California is in major jeopardy of an undercount. Historically, children are "hard-to-count" populations, as are racial and ethnic minorities; people living close to or below the poverty line; and immigrant, foster, and homeless youth.

California's schools play an important part in ensuring that every Californian is counted. This year, we ask that parents, educators, and administrators participate in census outreach. Schools are also encouraged to coordinate with community-based outreach efforts by inviting speakers from local Complete Count Committees, hosting joint informational forums, and staying connected with state-funded Census Complete Count Regional Program Managers. Find regional outreach efforts at the California Census 2020 website at <https://census.ca.gov/regions/>.

A key message that should be conveyed to parents is that the census is safe, secure, and confidential. The 2020 Census will also be the first to rely heavily on online responses.

The California Census Communication Toolkit for Schools (K–12), available on the California Census 2020 Education (K–16) web page at <https://census.ca.gov/resource/school/>, includes a sample parent letter, social media posts, and talking points to engage your school community in Census 2020 participation. The 2020 Census also represents an opportunity for our students to learn

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more about how their government works and to develop positive habits of civic engagement. An accurate count may even qualify California for an additional seat in Congress.

We encourage all educators, county offices of education, districts, administrators, teachers, and parents to share this toolkit and spread the word about the stakes of the upcoming census.

Census Day is April 1, 2020. Individuals will have until July 30 to complete the census questionnaire form. We are counting on you to help us ensure that every one of California's students is counted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Thurmond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tony" being more prominent than the last name "Thurmond".

Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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