



For Immediate Release

ELIZABETH SCHOOLS, CITY LAUNCH INNOVATIVE PROGRAM TO BOOST U.S. CENSUS PARTICIPATION

ELIZABETH, NJ— April 8, 2020 - Elizabeth Public Schools has collaborated with the City of Elizabeth to launch an innovative program to enable students to help families complete the U.S. Census online and earn extra credit.

"Completing the Census is a practical, real-life civics lesson that benefits our city and students enormously," said Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer. "The Census is mandated by the Constitution and determines Congressional representation, important lessons for our students."

Mayor J. Christian Bollwage said the city was seeking new ways to increase participation after seeing disparities in initial Census participation rates throughout the city.

Since students are signing on to their computers at home every day during the Covid-19 outbreak, city officials saw an opportunity. The census was imported to the district's E-remote learning platform as a social studies assignment that contains a weblink directing families to the census. Teachers are downloading the assignment to all their virtual social studies classes from Grades 3-12. Students and their families will click on the link to access the census and will follow the provided directions to complete the process. Families will be given the option to complete the census in their home language.

"The City of Elizabeth stands to benefit tremendously from the 2020 population count and we highly depend on how many of our residents participate," said Mayor J. Christian Bollwage. "Elizabeth students, along with their families, can help shape their own futures by filling out the Census, because this will determine the amount of federal funding we receive for schools, roads, health services and public safety for the next decade. No one has a greater stake in the Census than Elizabeth's young people."

If students inform their families about the census and assist them with filling it out or confirm their parents have completed it, they'll receive extra credit, Hugelmeyer said.

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