

THE MOUNTING COST OF INACTION: *ACCESS TO EDUCATION*

COVID-19 On July 10, 2020

U.S. Infections – 3,047,671
U.S. Unemployment – 11.1 percent

U.S. Deaths – 132,056
Since House Passed Heroes Act – 56 Days

What Is Remote Learning?

In an effort to contain the spread of COVID-19, schools across the country have moved partially or entirely to remote learning. This frequently requires students to interact with their educators through online platforms in place of in person classes and complete course work online.

Remote Learning Fact

Not all access to the internet is made equal. More than 16 million children do not have access to the internet in their homes and 12 million children do not even have access to a computer in their homes.

What Is The Problem?

The pandemic has exacerbated the “homework gap,” further disadvantaging students, often from poorer, rural, or minority communities, who lack reliable access to the internet from their more well off peers. [Even before COVID-19](#), students who lacked a computer and access to the internet at home struggled to complete routine homework assignments like research papers or access course materials online. When many schools moved to remote learning in the spring, these students were unable to reliably participate in online classrooms, access reading materials, or even turn in their coursework. With COVID-19 surging in the United States, it is increasingly likely that some form of remote learning will be necessary as children “return” to school in the fall. If we do not address the homework gap, children without access to the internet will be left further behind their more affluent peers. Denying these children the same access to education has potentially devastating consequences in the future as these children fall further behind in reading, math, and science. This makes it more difficult for these children to break the cycle of poverty, and pulls the lifeline of education further out of their reach.

What Can We Do?

Senate Republicans need to abandon their “wait-and-see” approach and Congress must provide the resources to ensure these children have the same access to remote learning that their more affluent peers have. Last month, [Senate Republicans even rejected a proposal from Senator Murray](#) that would have provided \$4 billion to address the homework gap. In total, the Murray bill would provide \$345 billion for schools in order to make sure that school districts, colleges, and universities have the resources they need as they determine how to reopen safely in the midst of the pandemic.

Where Can I Read More?

[Locked Out Of The Virtual Classroom](#)

[U.S. Senators Urge Funding For Internet Access During Pandemic](#)

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