

MEMBER EXCLUSIVE BRIEF



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE HOMEWORK GAP

ISSUE RECAP

The U.S. Department of Education recently released a report, which identifies significant gaps in home broadband access among K-12 students. The growing ubiquity of Internet access and pervasive use of online information has changed the learning landscape forever. Digital Equity is the civil rights issue of today: the right to connect to needed learning resources—anywhere, anytime.

Read the full report here: [Student Access to Digital Learning Resources Outside the Classroom](#)

KEY FINDINGS

- There is a significant difference between the percentages of all US households with Internet access (77 percent) vs. the percentage of households with students age 3-18 with Internet access (61 percent).
- 80 percent of 8th graders reported using a computer at home for schoolwork on a weekday, putting students without home internet access at a significant disadvantage.
- Geographic locale plays an important role in home-based internet access; students in remote rural and distant rural areas generally have more limited Internet access than students in suburbs, cities or towns.
- Within geographic locale types, there were additional gaps among students of different poverty levels and racial/ethnic groups.
- Students living below the poverty threshold have the lowest rates of home internet access.
- American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic students have lower rates of home internet access than their peers who are White, Asian, or Two or more races.
- The two main reasons children ages 3 to 18 lacked access to the Internet at home were expense and lack of interest.
- Students without home internet access had lower assessment scores in reading, mathematics, and science.



LEADING EDUCATION INNOVATION

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COSN'S PERSPECTIVE

CoSN recognizes that there is no “one size fits all” solution and that every community will require different approaches to meet the needs of students who lack Internet access. Our policy agenda advocates:

- [Continued support for Lifeline modernization](#) - which includes broadband as a support service for low-income families; American efforts to improve learning opportunities for all students would suffer significantly without this support.
- A [strong E-Rate program](#) is critical to ensure equality of Internet access in American schools

COSN'S RESOURCES

CoSN has created sources designed to help you address the challenges faced by students without home Internet access, including:

- [Digital Equity Action Toolkit](#)
- [Digital Equity Infographic](#)
- [School-to-Home report](#)
- [Sample Out-of-School Connectivity Survey](#)

ADDITIONAL READING

[Digital Equity: The Civil Rights Issue of Our Time](#)

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