Why does the census matter?

The national 2020 Census starts in March—and there’s a lot at stake for you, your families and your students.

Using data derived from the Census, the federal government distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in education and school food programs—funds that will go elsewhere if we’re not careful.

What’s more, if New York does not do better at getting its residents counted, we could lose as many as two seats in Congress, giving other states a stronger say in national policy and a stronger voice in the dispersal of federal funds.

New York’s Census return rate in 2010 was about 60 percent—well below the national average at 74%. We can’t let that happen again. Join us in working with your chapter, your school, your parents and your neighborhood. Everyone in New York counts—let’s make sure we all get counted.

FEDERAL FUNDING AT RISK

- Census data is used to distribute more than $675 Billion across the 50 states. This is funding for our schools, hospitals, libraries, highways and roads, public transportation, and public housing to name a few.
- Right now, New York City gets $679M in Title I funding to support schools with high poverty; $131M for the Head Start program $14M for Career and Technical Education.
- New York City also gets $338M in federal funds for National School Lunch and $143M for School Breakfast Program.
- If New York City is undercounted in the 2020 Census — hundreds of millions of these dollars will be lost.

POLITICAL CLOUT AT RISK

- Census data is used to apportion and redistrict the U.S House of Representatives, State Assembly, State Senate, and New York City Council seats.
- The New York City’s participation rate averaged was 61.6% in the 2010 Census, well below the national average 74%.
- Low participation in the 2010 Census cost New York two seats in Congress, down from 29 to 27 members of Congress.
- Low participation in the upcoming 2020 Census could cost New York City two more Congressional seats, down to 25 Congress Members.

TAKE ACTION!

- UFT members can contact their Borough Political Action Coordinators to become a part of their borough Political Action Committee. For more information, please call the Legislative and Political Action Department at 212-598-7747.
- Join or create a Complete Count Committee in your neighborhood by visiting https://www.census.gov/partners/complete-count.html
- Become a “Census Ambassador” through an NYC Neighborhood Organizing Census Committee by visiting https://www.nycservice.org/opportunities/14072
- Educators can embed the Census into their lesson plans using resources available at www.census.gov/schools and the New York City Civics for All curriculum.
- Pledge to be counted in the Census and encourage others to participate by signing the Working America-New York pledge at http://bit.ly/workingamericapledge