



The impact of the Coronavirus on higher education

Summer 2021

Roadmap



Overview



Challenges



COVID-19 relief: American Rescue Plan



Reopening schools



Many students decided against taking post-secondary classes this fall

63%

Of students unable to pay for classes/educational expenses due to **pandemic-related changes to income** cancelled all classes

46%

Of students who **had coronavirus or had concerns about contracting coronavirus** cancelled all classes

59%

Of students **caring for others** whose care arrangements are disrupted cancelled all classes

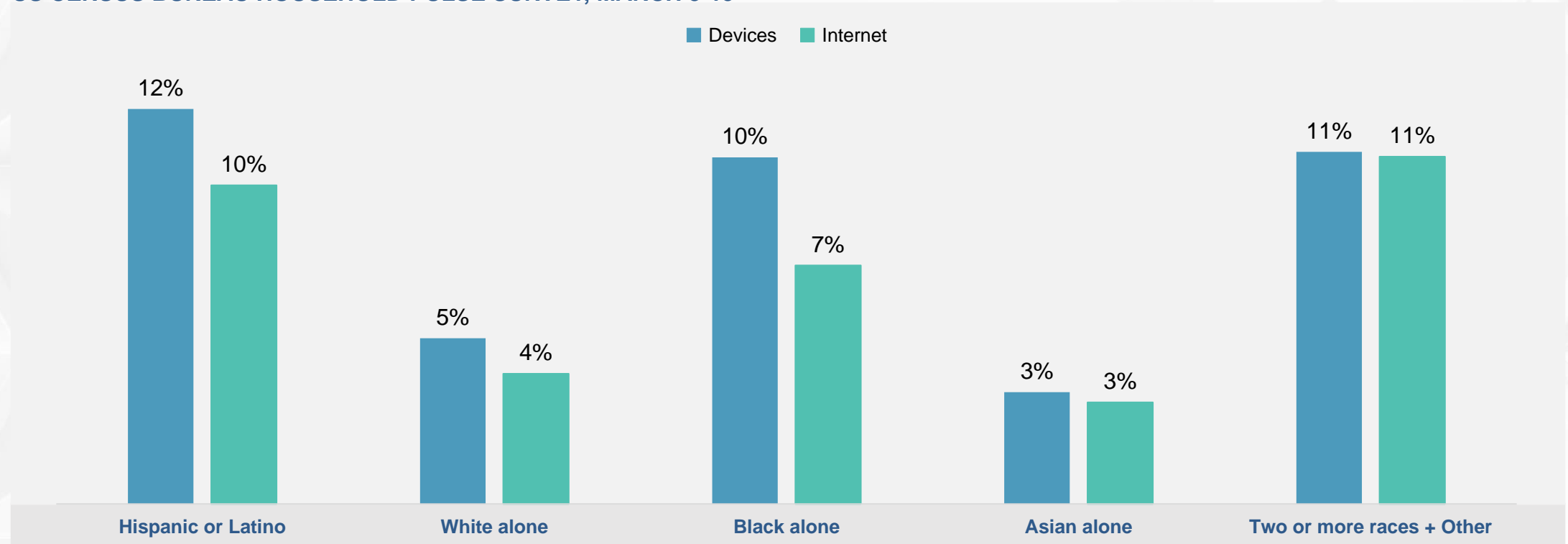
** Total Population 18 Years and Older in Households Where at Least One Adult Was Planning On Taking Classes This Fall From a Post High School Institution, March 3-15*

SOURCE US Census Bureau

Black and Hispanic households have less consistent access to the tech needed for online learning

Share of total population 18 years and older in households with children in public or private schools who report having technology available for education “sometimes,” “rarely,” or “never,” in contrast to households who report having technology available “usually” or “always”

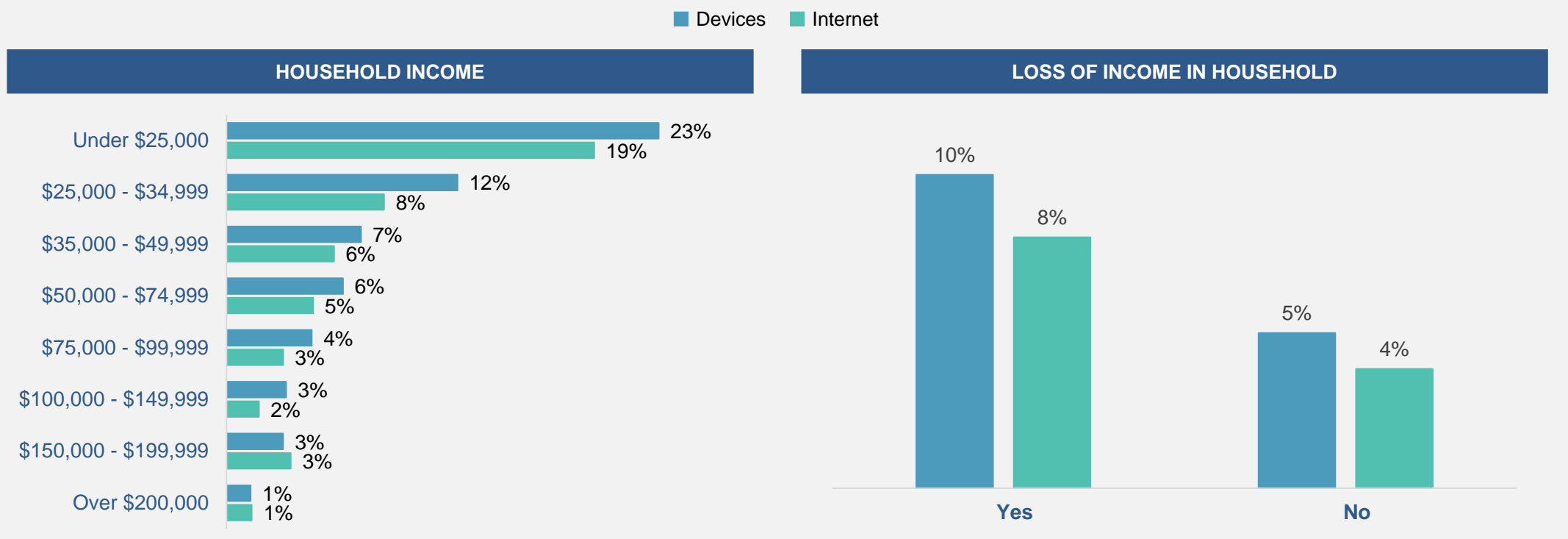
US CENSUS BUREAU HOUSEHOLD PULSE SURVEY, MARCH 3-15



Financially insecure households are more likely to report inconsistent technology availability

Share of total population 18 years and older in households with children in public or private schools who report having technology available for education “sometimes,” “rarely,” or “never,” in contrast to households who report having technology available “usually” or “always”

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU HOUSEHOLD PULSE SURVEY, MARCH 3-15



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The pandemic could drive many changes in the higher education space

Budget challenges:

As states face an economic downturn, many advocates are worried that education will see funding decreases. In New York City, Mayor Bill de Blasio (D) proposed a cut of over \$827 million to the education budget.

Career and Technical Education:

CTE was a major education priority for many leaders before the pandemic, but programs' reliance on hands-on training have made the transition to remote learning particularly challenging.

Assessment and evaluation:

Most states cancelled their federally-required standardized assessments, which could have an impact on how schools are held accountable for student achievement. College admissions will change as some universities waive the already controversial SAT/ACT

requirements

FCC has taken steps to improve students' access to internet services during the COVID-19 pandemic

Highlight of FCC action to support education

1

FCC promoted the use of the **\$16 billion CARES Act Education Stabilization Fund** for remote learning and is now creating a **\$7.1 billion Emergency Connectivity Fund** as part of the American Rescue Plan

2

FCC **waived gift rules in the E-Rate program** until June 30, 2021, allowing schools and libraries to accept improved capacity, Wi-Fi hotspots, or other equipment services from providers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

3

Over 800 companies and associations signed FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge, which called on companies not to terminate service due to an inability to pay, waive late fees, and open Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needed them during the pandemic.

E-Rate overview



- E-Rate is the largest government program addressing in-school broadband access
- Advocates have repeatedly called on the FCC to loosen regulations so funding can be more easily spent on at-home devices to improve access for students
- Former Chairman Ajit Pai declined to expand the E-Rate program, but Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel has called for its expansion

Over 1,100 colleges and universities in all 50 states cancelled in-person classes

Academic impact



- Studies have found that student performance can suffer in online classes
- Hundreds of colleges and universities have changed grading policies in response to the pandemic
- A growing number of colleges are dropping testing requirements for admission, waiving fees, or extending deadlines

Economic impact



- The sudden shift to online classes and potential revenue losses jeopardize academic institutions' economic security
- Worsening stock market conditions also weakens endowments
- The threat of a recession may leave fewer students able to afford higher education or choosing more affordable options
- Adjunct and part-time faculty are more likely to lack benefits such as sick leave or health insurance

Other considerations



- International students: On July 14, the Trump administration announced the reversal of their plan which would have required international students to leave the country if taking an entirely online course-load
- Sports: NCAA will cut distributions to Division I schools by up to \$375 million and grant eligibility extensions for seniors who had their seasons cut short or cancelled



Student loans

- **Federal student loan payments** were originally suspended in March 2020 as part of the CARES Act
- Suspension of payments also included **stopped collections on defaulted loans and a 0% interest rate**
- President Biden signed an **executive order** in January 2021 extending federal student loan payment suspension until at least September 31, 2021
- The **American Rescue Plan** includes a provision to make **student loan forgiveness tax-free**, which will make it easier to pass legislation that cancels federal student loan debt

On July 14, 2020 ICE rescinded their updated visa guidelines for international university students



- On July 6th, the Trump administration released new federal guidance that would impact international students enrolled in solely online courses
- Following the announcement of the guidance, a coalition of 17 states and multiple universities, including MIT and Harvard, were among groups to bring legal challenges to the new policy
- On July 14th, a Boston US District Court Judge expected to preside over the Harvard-MIT case announced that the parties had come to resolution and the policy would be rescinded

Key components from the July 6 temporary exemptions for the fall 2020 semester

Those taking only online classes



Not allowed in the United States

- All non-immigrant F-1 and M-1 students whose classes are entirely online need to **either leave the country or transfer** to a school offering in-person courses
- The Department of State **will not issue visas** to these students, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection will not let these students into the country

Those taking only in-person classes



Allowed in the United States

- Non-immigrant students attending only in-person courses are subject to existing federal regulations and **are still allowed to maintain visa status**
- Certain eligible F-1 students are allowed to take up to one course online (up to three credit hours)

Those with a hybrid semester



Allowed in the United States

- If a student's program offers a mix of in-person and online classes, **that student may take more than one online class** and stay in the country
- The school **must certify that their program is not entirely online** and that the student is taking the minimum number of online courses needed for normal degree progress

Spring 2021 undergraduate enrollment is down 5.9% compared to Spring 2020

% change in enrollment from Spring 2020 to Spring 2021:

Postsecondary enrollment: **- 4.2%**

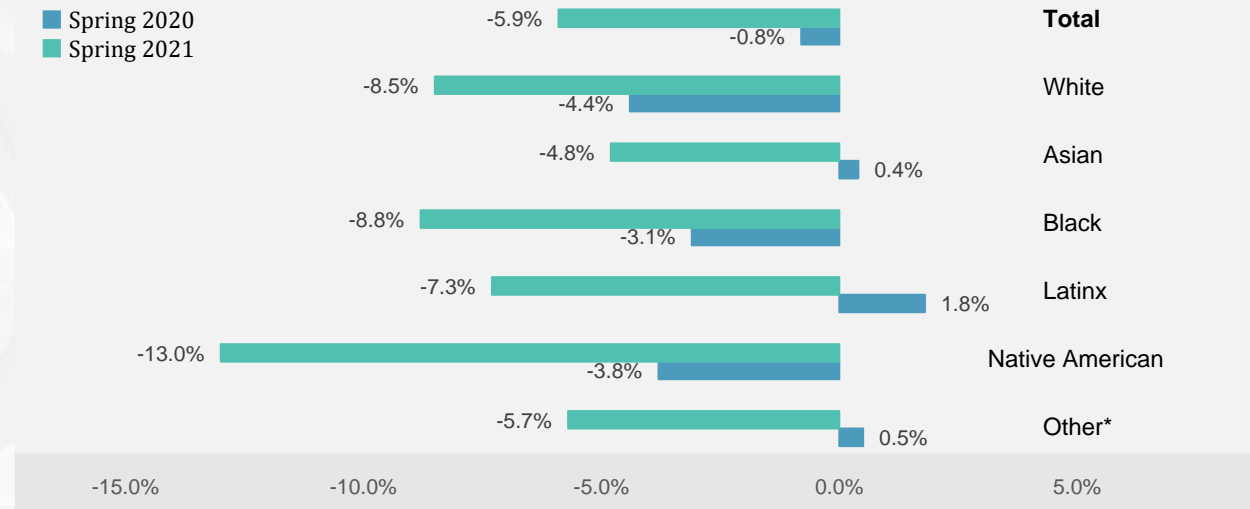
Graduate enrollment: **+ 4.4%**

Community college enrollment: **- 11.3%**

International student enrollment: **- 17.4%**

Enrollment among students ages 18-20: **- 7.2%**

Undergraduate enrollment by race and ethnicity



*Includes Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and two or more races

SOURCE National Student Clearinghouse, NPR, NY Times, Inside Higher Ed

Analysis

- Financial insecurity, the challenges of remote learning, and family responsibilities are causing students to delay or cancel plans for post-secondary education
- Declining community college enrollment raises equity concerns as **40%** of community college students are Black or Latino and nearly **50%** are low-income
- International student enrollment saw significant declines due to the lengthy and complex visa process, high tuition costs, unwelcoming political climate, and global competition
 - Declining international student enrollment significantly impacts university finance and campus diversity
- In addition to the impacts of COVID-19, colleges are facing an **enrollment cliff** due to shifting demographics

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Education provisions in the American Rescue Plan

TOTAL ALLOCATED: \$165 BILLION



\$39.5 billion allocated for higher education emergency relief

- Public and private nonprofit institutions will receive 91% of these funds
- HBCUs, HSIs, and other minority-serving institutions will receive **5% of the remaining funds**
- The rest of the money will be split between aid for **students attending for-profit institutions** and for those institutions with the **greatest unmet need** related to COVID-19



Commitment to a “maintenance of effort” and “maintenance of equity”

- Includes provisions intended to **protect the country’s most underfunded students** from disproportionately harmful cuts



Other related provisions

- Eliminates **taxes on federal student loan discharges** through Jan. 1, 2026
- **\$3 billion** for programs funded through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Uses of education emergency relief funds

Allowable uses of higher education emergency relief funds (HEERF)

- Institutions are required to spend **at least the same amount on emergency grants** to students as they did with funds allocated by the two prior COVID-19 relief packages
- A portion of the received allocations must be used to **implement evidence-based practices** to monitor and suppress COVID-19 and conduct direct outreach to applicants about their ability to receive a COVID-19 related financial aid adjustment
- All funds must be used by Sept. 30, 2023
- Find more about HEERF requirements at NACUBO's [HEERF Resource Center](#)

Maintenance of effort and maintenance of equity



Maintenance of effort

- As a condition for receiving funds, states must ensure that spending for both K-12 and higher education represents at least the same share of total state spending in FY22 and FY23 as it did, on average, in FY17, FY18, and FY19

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CDC guidelines for reopening schools

Planning and preparing



Reopening strategies should be adaptable to changing levels of viral transmission in the school and throughout the community

- Review, update, and implement Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs)
- Promote **prevention strategies** including universal mask use, physical distancing, and hand hygiene through signs and messages
- Maintain **healthy environments and operations** by cleaning, upgrading ventilation systems, alternating or staggering schedules, and offering flexible leave and absence policies
- The Dept. of Health and Human Services issued a directive making vaccines available to workers in the education sector

Updated safety guidelines



The CDC released updated recommendations for safely reopening schools, including:

- **3-6 feet of distance** between students in classrooms
- Ventilation and HVAC regulations
- Avoiding clusters in schools
- **Monitoring new cases** in local communities in the reopening decision-making process