

Dear Student Information System CEOs,

America's K-12 school system has undergone an unexpected transformation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with [55 million students](#) sent home at the peak of the crisis. Teachers, administrators, parents, and students have made incredible sacrifices and adapted quickly to the new reality of remote learning. Unfortunately, [millions of K-12 students](#) across the country without home Internet access or a dedicated learning device were at risk of falling significantly behind during school closures.

Normally, summer is a time for members of the education system to take a much-needed break to recharge and reinvigorate. This summer, of course, was different. We have been making urgent preparations for an uncertain back to school period that is well underway for some districts and around the corner for others. While there are still many questions about what school will look like, one thing that has become clear is that many districts will rely on a remote or hybrid learning structure. And we cannot accept the fact that learning gaps could widen among students without home access to online learning and their better-connected peers.

As we've laid out in CCSSO's [Home Digital Access Data Collection blueprint](#), understanding which students are impacted by this access gap is critical to our ability to close it. The best way for our state and local education agencies to collect, manage, and analyze this data is by utilizing the student information systems that we depend on to support core operations. SIS providers would be demonstrating great leadership by updating the available data fields to reflect the requisite home digital access information during this critical moment in time.

We are urging that this problem be addressed systematically, so we have agreed upon common data fields in the blueprint, as we know this needs to be done in the most efficient manner possible. We ask that SIS providers think of this as new demographic data extensions of the student record in the core product, rather than a one-off report for particular schools or states.

The SIS community has been an important partner to the K-12 education system as we have worked to make learning more equitable. Now we ask you as partners to act with the same urgency to help our schools prepare for an unprecedented school year and support the work of closing the digital divide.

We are grateful for your attention to this critical issue and look forward to collaborating with you to meet this challenge.

Respectfully,

Brent Engelman
Program Director
Education Data and Information Systems (EDIS)
Council of Chief State School Officers

**Student Information System Letter of Intent
State Signature Page**

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