

Census in Schools Week: Ideas for your school

Building awareness about the **2010 Census** should go beyond individual classrooms.

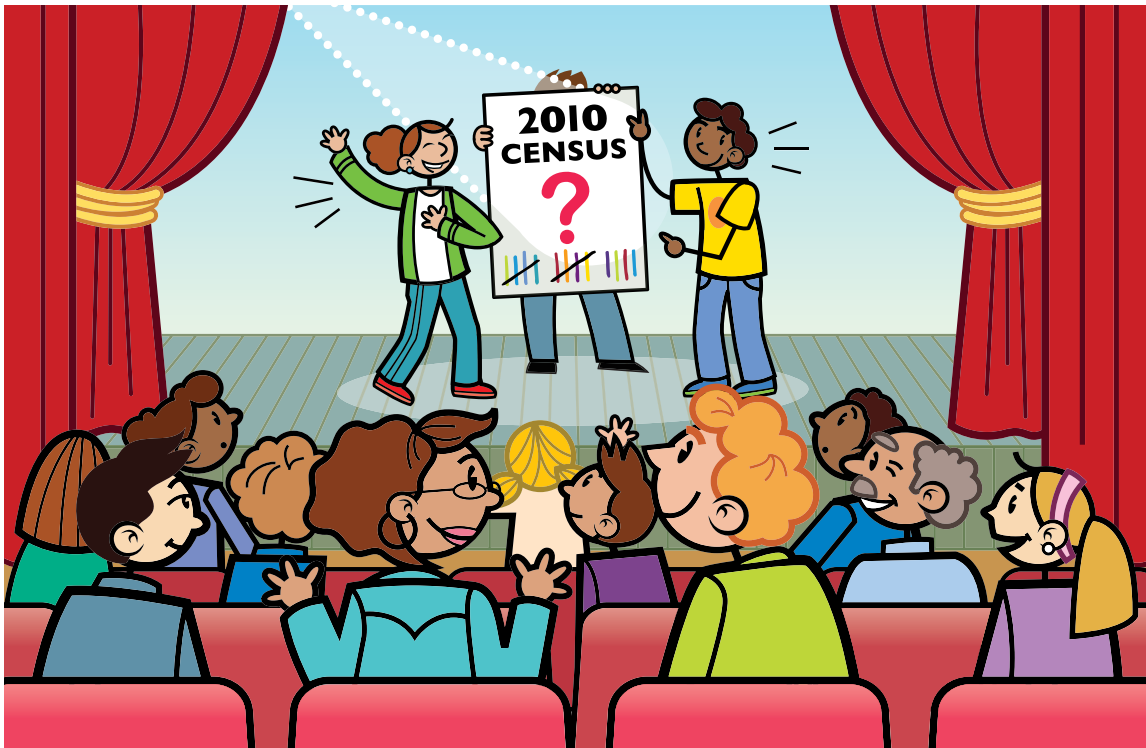
Consider the following activities for schoolwide events that can help you celebrate **Census in Schools Week**:

1. Hold a School Assembly

Generate enthusiasm for the **2010 Census** by holding a school assembly for all students and teachers. Invite different classrooms, grade levels, or student groups to give presentations on the following census topics: history of the census, procedures of the Census Bureau, and the significance of the census to the community. All of the resources for these presentations are available at www.census.gov/schools. Presentations may include performing skits demonstrating how (or how not) to fill out a census questionnaire. Students could also have a contest for the best census “cheer.” Close the assembly by discussing the importance of counting everyone in the community during the **2010 Census**.

2. Hold a Parent/Teacher Night

Your students' families are key to the successful completion of the **2010 Census**. Build awareness of the **2010 Census** with a parent census night. Discuss the importance of full participation in the census to the community. Point out that the distribution of federal funds can be affected by the census count. Without an accurate count of every member of the community it is possible that a town would not receive its fair share of federal funding. Bring sample census questionnaires to the meeting and walk parents through completion of the form. Assure parents that census data are confidential and carefully protected by the Census Bureau. Remind families about the census all year long by linking to www.census.gov/schools from your school Web site.



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3. Invite a Census Speaker

Learn about the census directly from the source! Invite a census representative to visit your school and talk to your students and/or their parents. The representative will be prepared to discuss how the census affects your specific community and how important it is for families to complete the form. The representative can also discuss details about the questionnaire, privacy, statistical methods, and the many types of data the Census Bureau collects. Feel free to ask the representative about his or her background, interests, stories of census work, and why he or she cares about the census. If anyone is interested, they can ask about careers at the Census Bureau or in the government. Have students prepare questions in advance. To arrange a speaker visit, please call the Census Bureau at 1-800-923-8282.



4. Take a Schoolwide Census

Give students a chance to get firsthand experience with a census. Create a one-page census questionnaire of some simple and fun questions about everyday topics. Select a particular grade, class, or group of students to serve as the “Census Bureau” and write the questionnaire, distribute it, and collect the forms afterward. Keep in mind that the census questions can be both multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions. Possible questions include: favorite kind of ice cream, favorite musical group, color of shoes, height, etc. After collecting the questionnaires and tabulating the responses, gather all students together for the announcement of the results. If possible, have the “Census Bureau” input the data into a spreadsheet so the results can be graphed and sorted more easily.

5. Invite Local Media

To draw attention to the census and your school's efforts, invite local media to cover the various events at your school. Whether the event is a school assembly, a parent/teacher night, or a visit from a census representative, your local media will be interested in your school's efforts and civic responsibility. Fill out the press release template included in this packet and send it out to your local community television, radio, and newspaper outlets. Be sure to include the details like date, time, location, and the event that will be covered. When the media representatives arrive at your school, make sure a few teachers or students are available for interviews.