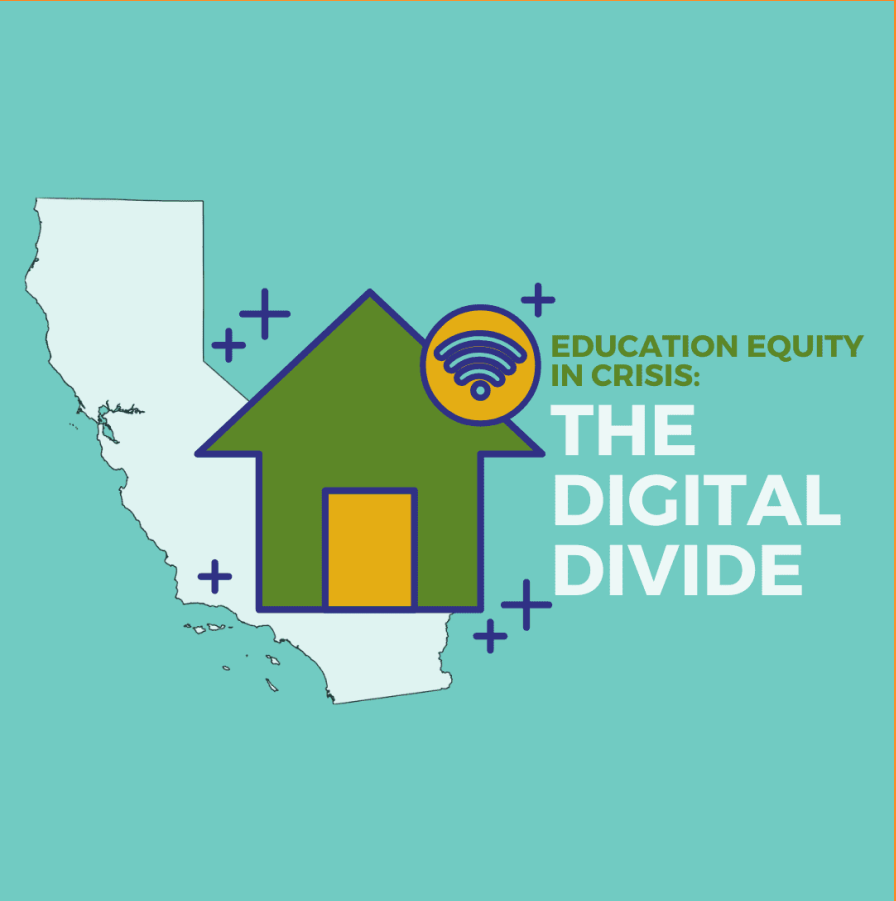


From Crisis to Opportunity: The Higher Education Digital Divide





The COVID-19 pandemic continues to take a heavy toll academically, emotionally, and financially on college students across the state.

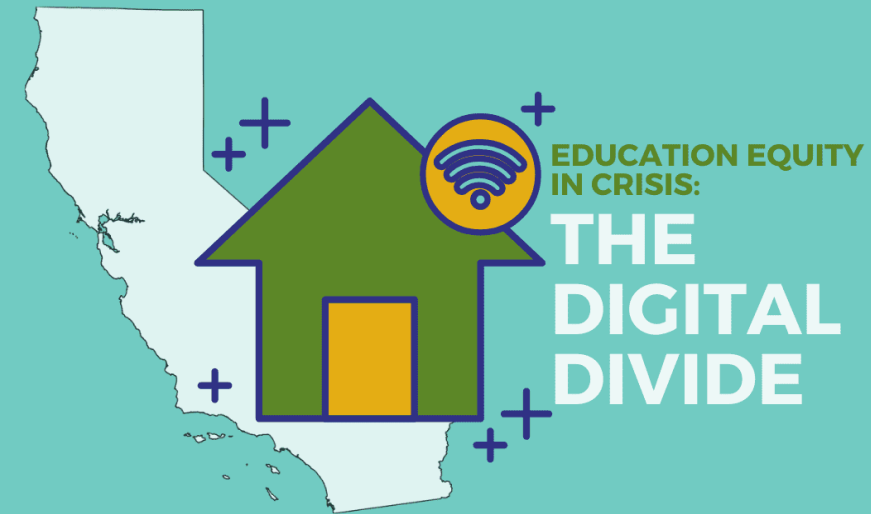
Our [spring 2020 poll](#) of higher education students revealed that the initial transition to remote learning was extremely disruptive.

Especially for students from lower-income households and students of color.



The shift to online learning has prompted many students to put their education on pause.

82 percent of California college students that are not returning this semester cited uncertainty about online learning or new class formats as the reason they are taking time off.





Access to adequate connectivity and technology play a critical role in that decision.

We know from the statewide poll that we conducted this past spring that:

- 13 percent of students of color** and **14 percent of low-income college students** in California lack internet access
- 12 percent of students of color** and **15 percent of low-income students** lack a device to access distance learning



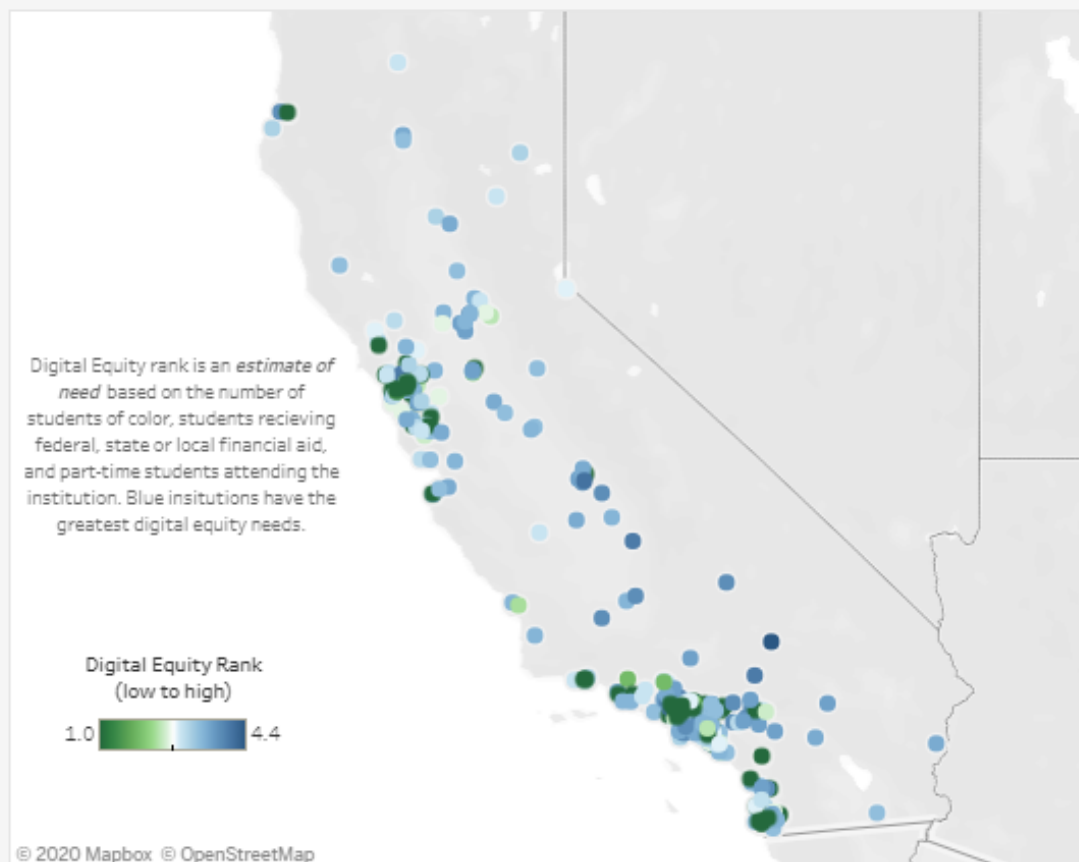
The Digital Divide Map



- The map paints a picture of digital access for college students across the state.
- These numbers are estimates based on available data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Mapping the Higher Education Digital Divide in California

Access to internet and technology and the impact of COVID-19 on California's higher education systems.



Use the filters below to compare digital equity considerations across geographies, sectors, and individual institutions throughout the state.

Sector

(All) ▾

County

(All) ▾

Institution Name

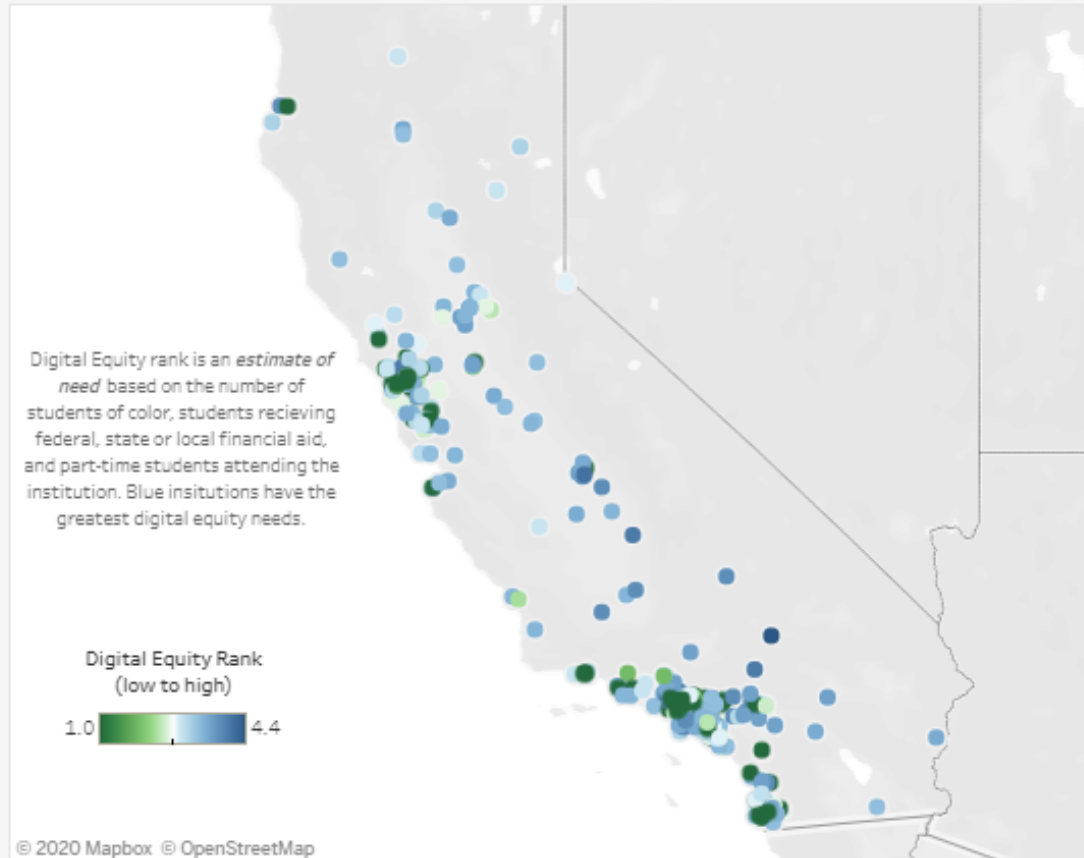
(All) ▾

Source(s): Postsecondary Education Data System, 2020 (Accessed September 2020); The Education Trust - West, Higher Education Survey, 2020

We projected the *percentage of students from lower-income households and students of color* without internet and device access at the institutional level based on results from our statewide higher education poll.

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Sector
(All)

County
(All)

Institution Name
(All)

Source(s): Postsecondary Education Data System, 2020 (Accessed September 2020); The Education Trust - West, Higher Education Survey, 2020

Colors on the map illustrate an institutions projected “digital equity rank” based on following factors:

- % of students that received federal (Pell Grant), state, or local financial aid
- % of students of color enrolled
- % of part-time students enrolled
- Estimated % of low-income students and students of color without internet access
- Estimated % of low-income students of color without device access



Each institution received a need score from 1-5 (low to high) on their percentile rank statewide on each of these factors.

Those scores were averaged to generate an overall digital equity rank.

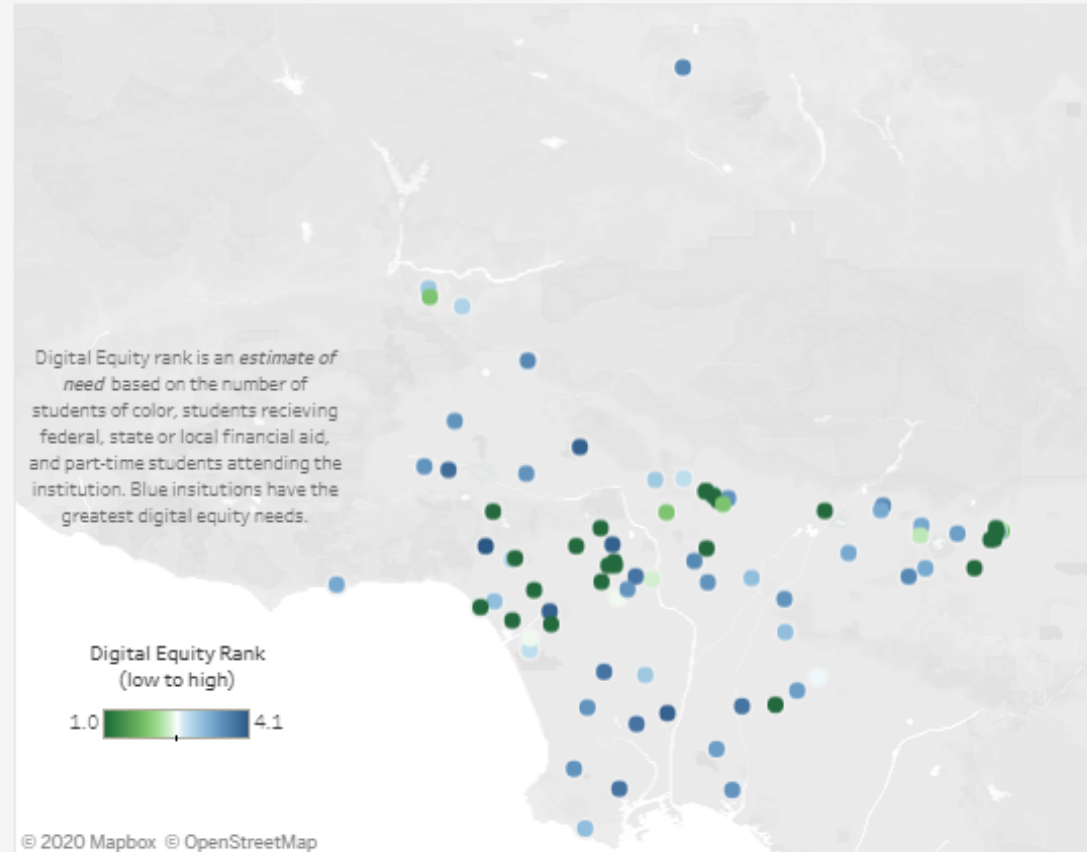
Institutions shaded blue are estimated to have the largest digital gaps and greatest need for resources.

Mapping the Higher Education Digital Divide in California

Access to internet and technology and the impact of COVID-19 on California's higher education systems.



The Education Trust-West



Use the filters below to compare digital equity considerations across geographies, sectors, and individual institutions throughout the state.

Sector

(All)

County

Los Angeles

Institution Name

(All)

Source(s): Postsecondary Education Data System, 2020 (Accessed September 2020); The Education Trust - West, Higher Education Survey, 2020

Our Digital Divide Guiding Principles

- 1 Every student has access to the adequate technology and connectivity to engage with learning from a distance
- 2 No student faces barriers to accessing distance learning based on their economic, racial, cultural background, language ability, or unique learning needs
- 3 Whenever possible, ensure that students have access to synchronous learning opportunities that prioritize social emotional learning.



We hope state and institutional leaders use this map to advocate for resources to ensure that every student has access to the technology and connectivity needed to effectively engage with distance learning, so that no student faces barriers based on their racial or economic background.



Recommendations



We recommend that the Governor and State leaders:

- Establish a public-private partnership with internet service providers to guarantee free/reduced price broadband connectivity.
- Invest in long-term broadband connectivity solutions that build out future proof networks.
- Survey/Data Collection – post-release we will administer a survey for campus/segment administrators and staff on the digital divide issues; we need the Administration's buy-in.



Questions?

STAY IN TOUCH!

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	Low-income students		Students of Color	
	Number no internet	Number no device	Number no internet	Number no device
California Community College System	52946	56737	103485	95524
California State University	30472	32648	26572	24532
University of California	11649	12482	8108	7485
Private, non-profit	7109	7615	6991	6450
Total	102176	109482	145156	133991

