

CIVICS IN THE NEWS

On August 5th, Governor Kim Reynolds of Iowa ended the state's lifetime disenfranchisement for most people with felony convictions. The state's permanent ban on voting for previously incarcerated people was the only one in the U.S., and its removal is being applauded by voting rights activists nationwide. The order will allow around 60,000 Iowans to register to vote before the fall election, including nearly 10% of the state's Black population. With ongoing conversations about racism in the criminal-legal system, this decision further erodes felony disenfranchisement laws that became common following the Civil War and the legal expansion of the franchise to Black men.

U.S. District Court Judge William Osteen ordered that North Carolina elections officials must allow residents to fix any problems with mail-in ballots before they're thrown out. Lawyers have claimed that the ruling will potentially save up to 100,000 voters from having their ballots invalidated this fall. Black voters were disproportionately likely to have their ballots rejected, according to the lawsuit. Texas voters still have no option to fix mail-in ballots, and may not find out their ballot has been rejected until after the election.

In Hong Kong, following a new national security law imposed by Beijing in June, schools are now being forced to remove books that may promote "secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign powers." Academics and pro-democracy activists worry how this might affect the freedom of expression for students and teachers in Hong Kong.



TX CIVIC EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

AUG. 2020

Welcome to the August edition of the Children's Defense Fund's civic education newsletter! As young people across Texas (and beyond) prepare to restart school in a world still reeling from COVID-19, catch up with this month's news.

1. **Campus Compact**, a national coalition of colleges dedicated to building community through civic education, are hiring **student recruiters!** Recruiters will help find other students and people to serve as poll workers during this upcoming November election cycle. Recruiters must work **33 hours** and will receive a **\$500** stipend. **Apply here!**
2. **TX Votes**, in partnership with other organizations like **Campus Compact** and **Campus Vote Project**, is hosting the **2020 Texas Voting Summit** virtually! The event will take place Friday, August the 14th, Saturday, August the 15th and Saturday, August the 22nd, and will focus on how to best approach civic participation in the time of COVID-19. **Register here!**
3. Remember to respond to the **2020 Census** on paper, online, or over the phone. Filling out the census means more **federal funding for your community.** Read more about the census and fill yours out **here, on the official website.**

Click [here](#) to add someone to or unsubscribe from our mailing list. Want to see your announcement in next month's newsletter? Contact **Maggie Stern** at mstern@childrensdefense.org.



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LEADING THROUGH A CRISIS

We continue to share stories of young leaders around the world staying civically engaged during the COVID-19 pandemic. This month, we highlight those who are going above and beyond to ensure that their communities, families, and environments are protected in these trying times.

Rio Grande Valley, TX

The Rio Grande Valley Mutual Aid Fund was formed by young organizers as a way to directly help residents of the RGV. The region is currently facing one of the worst spikes of COVID-19 cases in America, and extensive environmental destruction from Hurricane Hanna, which passed through two weeks ago. You can support their work and learn more **here**.

Chicago, IL

Chicago high schoolers are hosting **open mic nights** for young Chicago artists to share their skills. The **Community Youth Development Institute**, which runs a community garden and farmers market, is working with students from multiple high schools to put on the weekly event.

Around the World

As youth continue using social media to share information and organize, **the slacktivist** has been creating campaigns for teenagers to educate themselves and take action. The group is dedicated to providing easily accessible information over a variety of social issues around the world. Check out their campaigns on **saving the USPS** or on **the history of protests for racial justice**.

Thanks for reading! Please stay safe and healthy!

