



# American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-Digital Inclusion/Literacy

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ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

APRIL 26, 2022

BRIEFING BY BRIAN DILLARD, CHIEF INNOVATION  
OFFICER

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Impact of COVID-19 on digital divide

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Overview of City's Digital Inclusion Efforts

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Potential Funding Alignment for State & Federal funding

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Council Input

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Next Steps

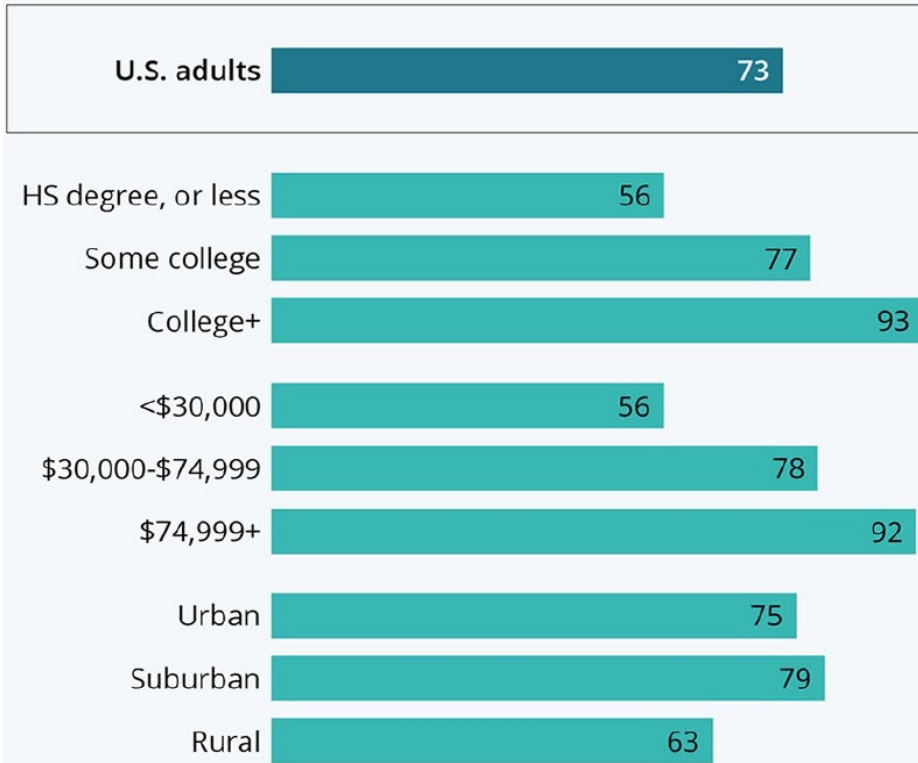
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## **Presentation Overview**



## Quarter of Americans Have No Internet

Percentage of U.S. adults who have a home broadband connection



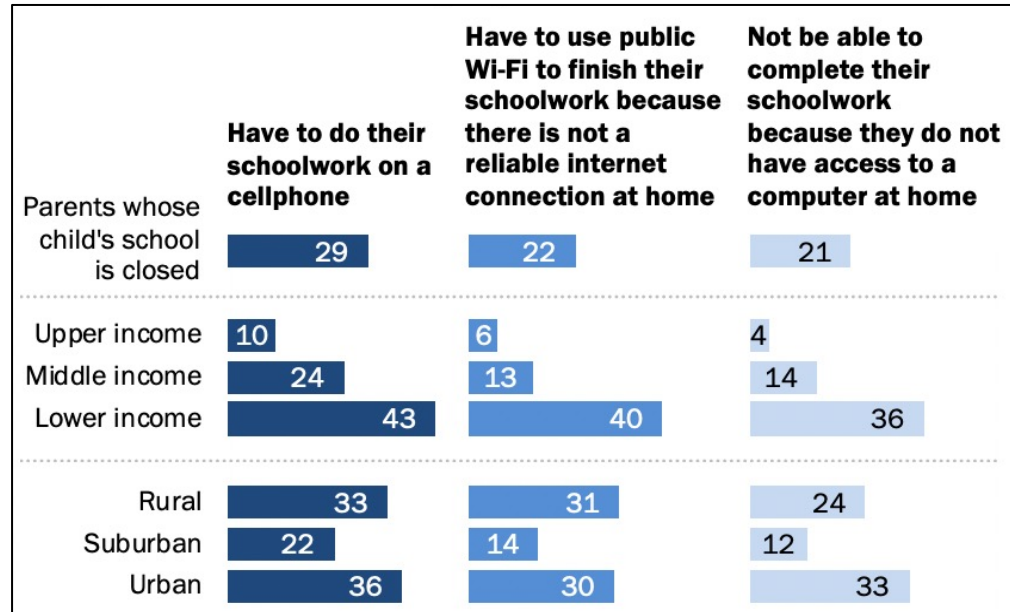
Survey conducted Jan-Feb 2019

Sources: Wall Street Journal, Pew Research Center

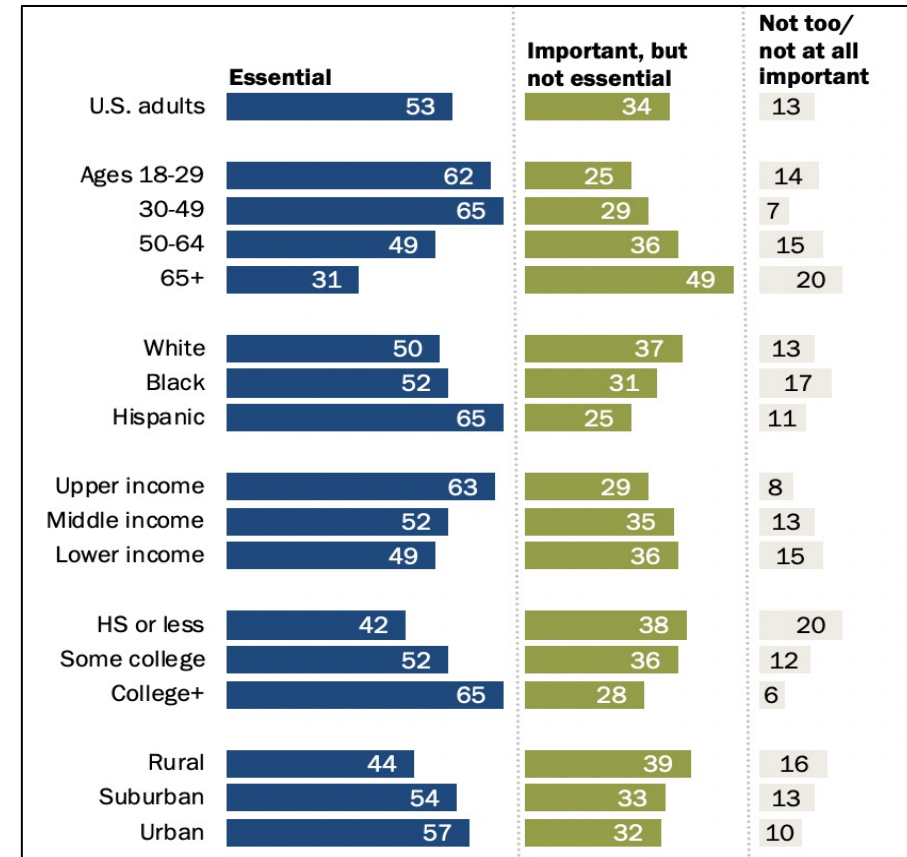
## COVID-19 Impact

- Black and Hispanic/Latinx adults were twice as likely to cut their internet service due to financial strain during the pandemic
- 15% of all households with school-age children in the United States lack an internet connection
- Researchers at the University of Chicago found that lack of Internet access was consistently one of the factors connected with higher risk of death due to COVID-19 in the United States

## Digital Barriers for K-12



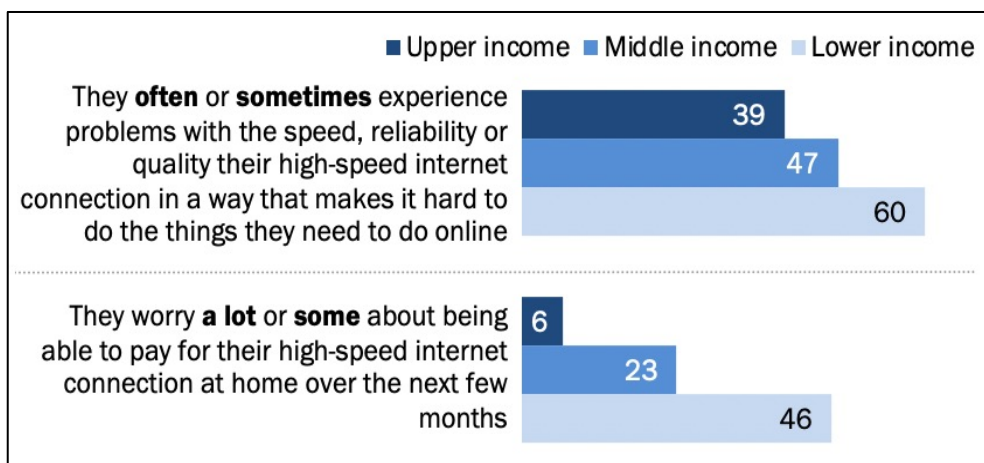
## Digital Needs by Demographic



Pew Research Center

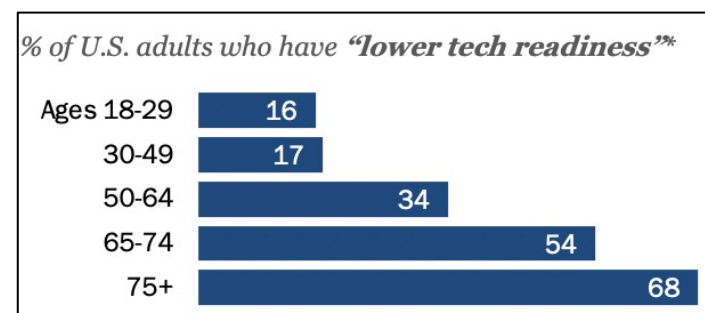
## Quality & Affordability

- 60% of Lower Income broadband users often or sometimes have connection problems
- 46% Lower Income users worry about paying for broadband internet



## Digital Literacy

- 26% of adults need assistance with set up and use of new devices
- 10% are not at all or only a little confident using digital devices to perform online activities



# Over 20% of San Antonio/Greater Bexar County households have barriers

## Size of the divide

130K+

20%+ of all households  
without broadband

65K+

10%+ of all households  
without devices

## Barriers to adoption (for disconnected households)



Availability

**50K**

lack access to reliable coverage



Affordability

**90K**

have no access because of affordability



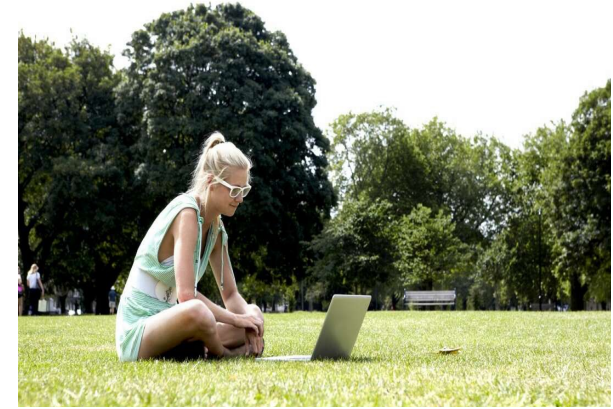
Adoption

**Up to 130K**

face adoption barriers

Source: US ACS Census (2020); SASpeakUp (2019); BroadbandNow





**SA DIGITAL  
CONNECTS**

A San Antonio and Bexar County,  
Public-Private-Community Collaboration

# Current and Past Digital Inclusion Efforts

# San Antonio and Greater Bexar County Digital Equity Plan and Roadmap

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Private and Public Sector initiated/funded



Community informed



**140+** community organizations, businesses, school districts and institutions of higher education **were engaged** through interviews, an inventory survey, and focus groups

**Community Advisory Group** of local digital leaders gave valuable input during weekly sessions



# State and Federal Funding Alignment

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## House Bill 5:

- establishes the Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO) and tasks them w/ the following:
  - Developing a state broadband plan;
  - Engaging in community outreach;
  - Creating and publishing a broadband map
- establishing a broadband development program to award funds to eligible applicants
  - Senate Bill 8 allocated \$500 million in ARPA funding to BDO



# Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

## ~\$65B IN BROADBAND FUNDING

**NTIA will administer ~\$48B of this new funding**

**FCC to administer ~\$14B**

**BEAD**

**DIGITAL EQUITY**

**\$14.2B**

Affordable Connectivity  
Program

**\$42.45B**

**\$2.75B**

*Title I - Broadband Equity, Access &  
Deployment Program*

*Title III – Digital Equity Act*

**MIDDLE MILE**

**TRIBAL**

**\$1.00B**

**\$2.00B**

*Title IV - Enabling Middle Mile  
Broadband Infrastructure*

*Title II - Tribal Connectivity Technical  
Amendments*

# BEAD Program

## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

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- 1 Unserved locations  
*No access to 25/3 Mbps*
- 2 Underserved locations  
*No access to 100/20 Mbps*
- 3 Community anchor institutions  
*Without gigabit connections*



## OTHER KEY FEATURES

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### Quality requirements

Specific network requirements are included  
e.g., speeds of at least 100/20 Mbps

### Matching requirement

Eligible entities must ensure that they or a subgrantee provide at least 25% match (*unless waiver granted*)

### Low-cost plan requirement

Required to offer a low-cost plan to eligible subscribers  
(*to be determined by NTIA*)

# Digital Equity Act - \$2.75B

## Program's Objective

Support the closure of the digital divide  
& promote equity and digital inclusion



## Programs Created

### State program

State Planning  
Grant Program  
(\$60M)

State Capacity  
Grant Program  
(\$1.44B)

### Comp. program

Competitive  
Grant Program  
(\$1.25B)

Created once state  
implementation grants  
begin being awarded

Initiatives	Details
Expand infrastructure access	Encourage residential fiber at reliable 100/100 mbps
Enable access in affordable housing	Retrofit or install adequate connectivity
Support school-sponsored access programs	Expand school-centric connectivity/device programs
Expand low-income internet offerings	Connect residents to available low-income solutions
Distribute devices	Create systems to supply low-cost devices
Stand-up adoption support programs	Multi-channel campaigns to enroll residents in digital programs
Collect data & track KPIs	Ongoing assessments and tracking plan in dashboard
Implement an effective operating model	Determine the model and procurement plan for implementation

## ARPA Allocation for Digital Inclusion/Literacy-\$6.9 Million

Slide is designed to facilitate discussion with Economic and Workforce Development Committee.  
 Specifics on the slide reflect strategies identified in the Digital Inclusion & Equity Roadmap. These are not staff recommendations.





# Next Steps

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- **Collect EWDC feedback on ARPA for digital inclusion/literacy priorities (start today)**
- **Develop Plan that:**
  - Identifies COVID-19 Impact
  - Responds to impact, benefits those impacted, and promotes equitable outcomes
  - Define key outcome goals & performance indicators
  - Includes a four-year implementation plan
    - (funds committed by December 2024 & spend by December 2026)
- **Secure plan approvals from:**
  - Economic and Workforce Development Committee
  - City Council

# Plan Components

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COVID-19 Impact	Program/Strategies	Equitable Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Amount



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