

## Educate Texas - Census 2020 Phone Canvassing Review

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### Introduction

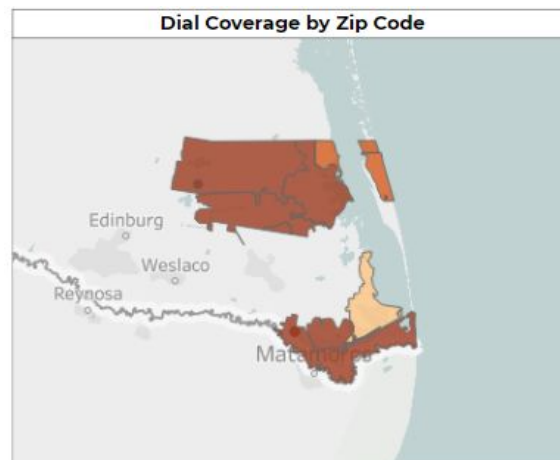
Over the course of September, Educate Texas & the Shiftsmart Flex Contact Center co-designed & executed a rapid Census 2020 canvassing effort across Texas, including a targeted effort with the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville. This effort served as an alternative to traditional in-person canvassing methods due to COVID-19. The Shiftsmart team leveraged an experienced team of ~350 distributed calling agents, predominantly using Texas-based workers. Over the course of September, the size and scope of the overall program expanded by ~8x as a result of additional support from donors from across the state. This resulted in rapid scaling from ~10k calls per day up to a max of ~80k calls per day in the final week of the effort.

Overall, the objectives of the canvassing efforts were to:

1. Call households across Texas, including a focus on South Texas and the Brownsville area
2. Make contact with as many households as possible
3. Educate & inform households of the importance of completing the census
4. Understand relative engagement with the Census across Texas regions
5. Drive intent to complete the census and direct federal funding to state of Texas

### Key Results - Brownsville

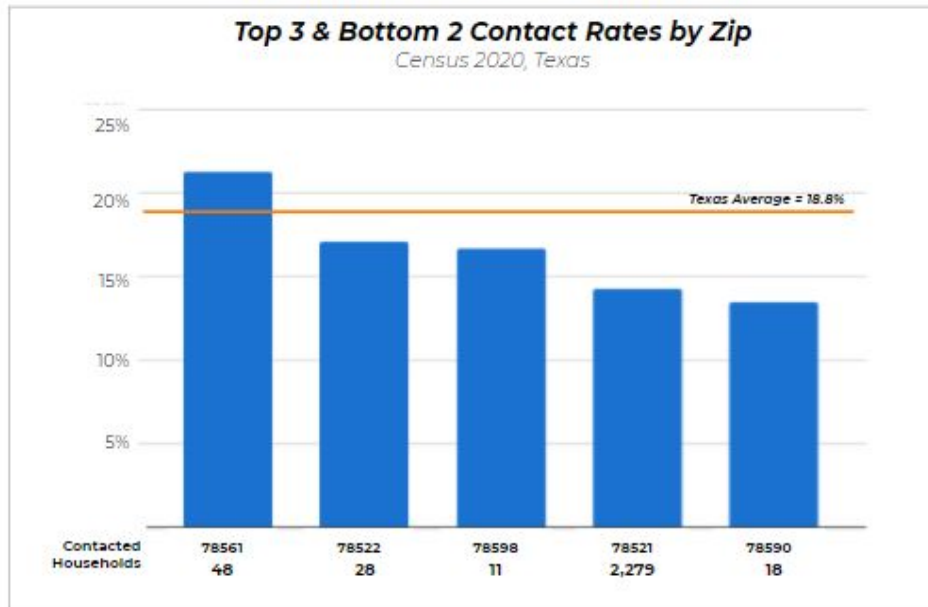
1) Scale of Campaign: across the full campaign, 41k outbound calls to 20k unique leads in 12 zip codes were made in the Brownsville area.



2) Contact Rate: the overall contact rate was 15%, which translated into making contact with 6.1k households. To reach this population of households required ~540 total hours of dialing.

This translates into 11 contacts made per hour of dialing. When compared to traditional door-to-door canvassing, which accomplishes ~4 contacts made per hour<sup>1</sup>, the dialing effort was able to reach almost 2.8x more contacts.

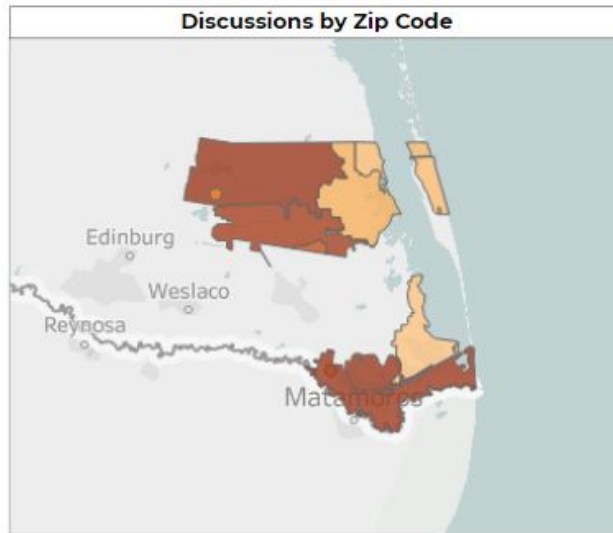
The contact rate for Brownsville calls lagged the overall Texas contact rate of 19% but exceeded the averages seen for Southeast, West, Northwest, and Central Texas. Of the zip codes with more than 10 leads dialed, 78561 (21.3%), 78522 (17.1%), and 78598 (16.7%) had the highest contact rates while 78521 (14.3%) and 78590 (13.5%) had the lowest.



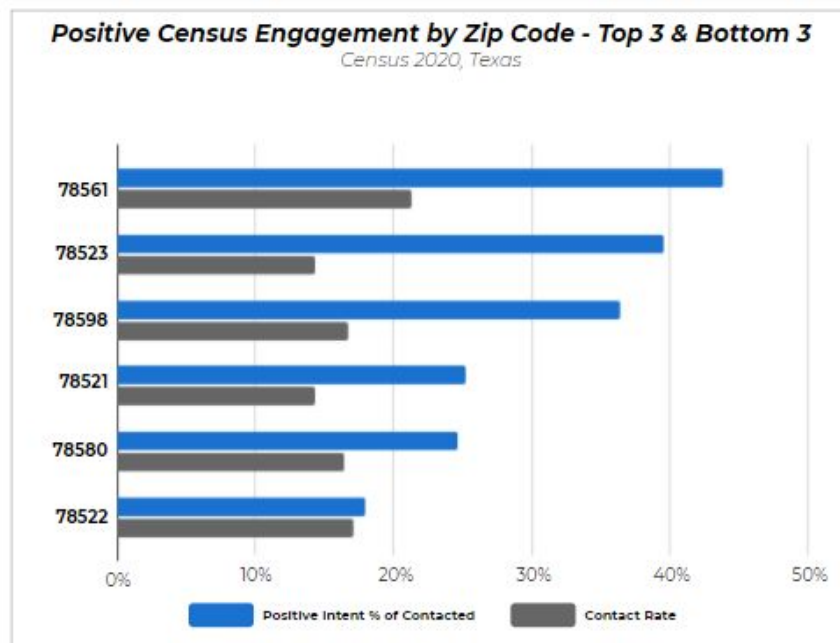
*Note: Contact is defined as any call that resulted in an answer or leaving a personal & informative voicemail.*

3) Informative and Positive Discussions: The dialing effort was able to communicate information on the benefits of completing the Census and capture information on willingness to participate. Of the 6.1k total contacted households, 3.1k of them (51%) were informative or positive discussions regarding the Census. Informative discussions were those that provided basic FAQ information on why completing the census is important (1.5k total or 48% of all discussions). Positive discussions were those that indicated a positive commitment around participation of the census (1.6k total or 52% of all discussions).

<sup>1</sup> [Re:power / Wellstone Volunteer Voter Contact Formula](#)



4) Census Engagement Across Regions: Despite having a lower than average contact rate, the Brownsville calls showed a high engagement on the Census with 27% of contacted calls resulting in a positive indication of census completion, in line with the highest-engagement regions of Central and Northwest Texas.



5) Commitments to Complete Census: Of the 3.1k positive discussions, 1.6k (52%) provided positive intentions towards Census completion. When broken down further, 1.5k of these discussions yielded an indication that they had already completed the Census. There were an additional 168 discussions leading to a commitment of completing the Census before the deadline. Based on a conservative estimate of census-driven federal funding in Texas of \$11.6k

per capita<sup>2</sup> over 10 years, the phone canvassing has the potential to yield ~\$2m of incremental federal funding to support Texas if these 168 discussions result in a newly completed Census.

### Conclusion & Recommendations

Despite the challenging circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, phone canvassing proved to be a safe and effective method to reach all areas of the state of Texas, including Brownsville zip codes. Thanks to funding support from Educate Texas donors, the canvassing effort was able to make 929k calls across 394k leads, resulting in an opportunity to yield \$40m of additional funding to benefit households across the state of Texas. The CDCB's effort alone resulted in \$2m of estimated incremental funding.

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<sup>2</sup> [Counting for Dollars 2020: The Role of the Decennial Census in the Geographic Distribution of Federal Funds](#)

*Appendix A: Breakdown of Calling Campaign in Brownsville*

