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Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meals

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Abstract

In 2020 many students had to continue their education through social distance learning from home, which resulted in many students having food insecurities. The focus of this Capstone Project is on students who do not have access to Covid-19 school lunch distributions. This is important because many students may be eating unhealthy or not eating at all, which can result in physical and mental health issues. An evidence-based argument proves that there has been a decrease of the number of students receiving a school lunch meal due to Covid-19. Consideration of the issue should include the perspectives of a lunch lady who is a mom, a lunch district supervisor, and a principal, because they are aware of the issue and create an impact in finding alternative solutions for students. The three alternative ways to improve access to meals during Covid-19 that emerged from an analysis of the data include: contacting local school districts; looking up bus routes for school lunch distributions; and providing bikes or scooters to students. Contacting the local school district to explain their students' lunch meal needs and informing parents about school bus route meal deliveries are argued to be the most effective way to achieve the goal of increasing student access to Covid-19 lunch distributions.

Keywords: Covid-19, meals, access

Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meals

The issue of students not having access to Covid-19 lunch meals is very important to me because I have personally seen the damage that can result from eating unhealthy or what not eating at all can do to a body's physical and mental health. A relatable situation occurred to a cousin of mine named Manuel¹. Manuel was in 9th grade, which meant he was a freshman in high school. Manuel's issue was that he did not have a steady eating plan. He would eat one meal a day or only eat breakfast or dinner. Manuel's situation is very relatable to the issue of students not having access to school lunch distributions, because the same consequences that occurred to Manuel can occur to students today. His body was not receiving the daily nutrition. In other words, he was not eating the necessary breakfast, lunch, and dinner that a human body should take in. Although Manuel's situation did not occur during Covid-19 pandemic his story is relatable toward students not having access to a school lunch meal.

When Manuel entered high school, his parents assume he was responsible enough to feed himself the necessary nutrients. His parents worked an eight to six pm job, which meant Manuel did not see his parents until six pm. His daily routine was going to school at eight am and getting out of school at three pm. Throughout the day, he would not eat the breakfast or lunch that was offered at the school. The reason for this was because he did not enjoy the lunch that was offered at school, which meant that he would continue his day on an empty stomach. Since his parents were mainly at work throughout the day his mother was not aware that he was not eating at home. When his mother got out of work of course she would prepare dinner, but it was mainly ready until seven pm, which meant that Manuel was eating until seven pm.

¹ All proper names are pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of the people and places involved in this project.

After continuing the following eating habits throughout the whole school year Manuel's body was not functioning properly. Manuel was feeling nauseous, dizzy, low energy, and was looking pale. He was always tired and mainly slept throughout the day. He was cold on a regular basis and was also losing his hair. He was also developing skin problems. After going to the doctor Manuel ended up with low blood sugar. The doctor also mentioned to Manuel's parents that he was not eating the proper nutrients. Manuel's parents were shocked. The doctor even warned Manuel that if he continued to eat this way, he would be more at risk to get sick on a regular basis than a human who is eating properly. The following news was a shock to the family. After Manuel heard the news he became depressed and felt like he was losing his motivation. It was very difficult for the family as well as for Manuel. Manuel's grades then dropped after hearing his medical results. He was not motivated to do any schoolwork, since he felt like his life was drifting away. The family had to lift him up and encourage him to eat with a steady meal plan.

The recovery process was not as easy as it seems. People who did not know would advise Manuel to just eat, but it was not that simple. Manuel had to slowly start eating the proper nutrients. His mother had to take some time off work to help his son start eating healthy. He needed a lot of attention and help. Manuel even had to go to a psychiatrist to talk about his depression and mental health of feeling unmotivated. Finally, Manuel had to go to the doctor once a month to get checked for his blood pressure, and for any other health condition that may have risen from not eating healthy or not eating at all.

After seeing how Manuel's life was affected from not eating the required meals and nutrients each day, I have come to rationalize that students who do not have access to school lunch meals during Covid-19 need to have alternative solutions. What occurred to Manuel must

not occurred again to our students in Salinas. Yes, it is just eating food, but it is basically the fuel to our body that helps our body run properly. Without eating properly our body's do not function as they should, which can then result of health and mental issues among our students who are not getting the proper nutrients each day. Manuel's story is a great example of why eating and having the proper meals is very important and necessary for our students.

Literature Synthesis and Integration: Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meals

An issue that has risen in schools in 2020 is students not being able to access school lunch meals during Covid-19. Since the U.S. is under a pandemic, many schools all over the nation had to close to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. As a result, many students were forced to continue the school year through social distance learning from home. In addition, regular lunch time has been replaced with lunch distributions. In other words, schools set up a booth where students can pick up their lunch at a certain time frame at their school. This is unfortunately difficult for students who do not have that privilege of an accessible parent at home. As a result, many students are not picking up their school lunch meal, so therefore they do not eat or decide to eat unhealthy foods. The issue that will be addressed throughout the following research paper is what do stakeholders from schools in Salinas have to say about students who do not have access to a school lunch meal during Covid-19, and also how to improve access?

What is the issue?

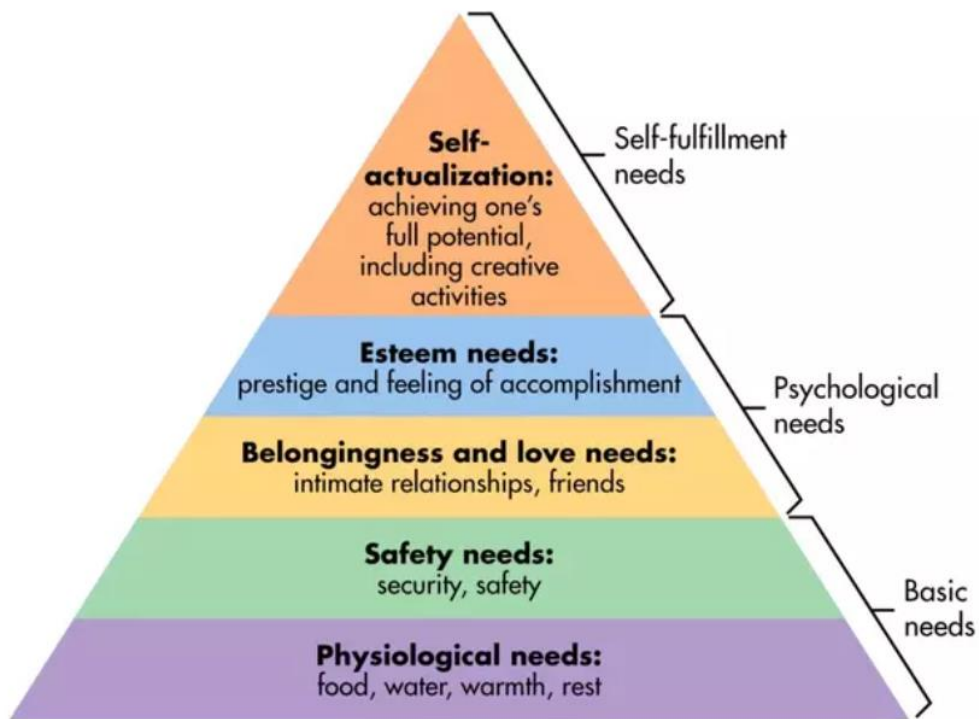
A current issue that has been occurring in 2020 is students not having access to Covid-19 school lunch distributions. In a variety of school districts, most students who qualify for a free or reduced lunch meal are not picking up their school lunch due to not having transportation to

access the school (Turner, 2020). Part of the issue deals with parents returning to work while students are at home completing their social distance learning. Before the pandemic hit the nation, a variety of school districts were serving 50,000-60,000 meals per day (Turner, 2020). After the Covid-19 pandemic, school districts now only serve 70,000 meals per week (Turner, 2020). This is a huge drop in the number of meals served to school children . Approximately 80 percent of school districts only make 50 percent of the number of meals that were usually made in a regular school year (Turner, 2020). The main issue that will be researched and analyzed throughout this capstone project is what do stakeholders from schools in Salinas have to say about students who do not have access to school lunch distributions during Covid-19 while also improving access?

Why is it an issue?

Students not having access to school lunch distributions during Covid-19 is an issue that needs to be addressed because it is creating food insecurity and has contributed to physical and mental health concerns (Dunn et al., 2020). In other words, students are not eating at all or eating very unhealthy as a replacement for the school lunch meal. Children from low-income families rely heavily on the school lunch meals as being their only meal of the day (Turner, 2020). Since some students are substituting school lunch meals with junk food or not eating at all it is increasing the student's chances of suffering from short and long-term health issues. According to Dunn et al. (2020), the short-term effects that can result from not having a healthy meal everyday include fatigue, reduced immune response, and increase the chances of communicative diseases. The long-term effects that can result from not having a healthy meal everyday include psychological, physical, and emotional harm to the student (Dunn et al., 2020). Meals and snacks that are provided from the school lunch are much healthier than the food that is available at home

(Dunn et al., 2020). Not having access to Covid-19 school lunch is not only affecting their health it is also affecting their academic performance. Without having access to school lunch meals students do not have the energy to be productive in various Zoom meetings throughout the day. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which is a motivational theory that represents how basic needs need to be taken care of before a human can take off their self-fulfillment needs such as self-actualization needs. (McLeod, 2020). As shown in Figure 1, where food, water, warmth, and rest are part of the basic needs that must be met, it proves that if students do not fulfill the basic needs, such as food, they will not be able to meet the upper needs such as psychological or self-fulfillment. In other words, it is very important for students to have access to school lunch meals during Covid-19. Students should not be going hungry or eating unhealthy, because it can have a greater effect on psychological needs and self-fulfillment needs as shown in Figure 1 with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (McLeod, 2020).

Figure 1*Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*

Note. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs by McLeod S. (2020).

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html> The following figure is a pyramid of the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that shows how a human must take care of their basic needs first before being able to attend to the self-fulfillment needs that are presented on top of the pyramid.

What should be done?

There are many options that could be done to help students gain access to a school lunch meal during Covid-19. For example, taking the meals to the students (Turner, 2020). It makes sense that if students cannot get to the meals then the meals should come to the students. According to Turner (2020), school districts are distributing meals in sixty-seven buses, but instead of giving students a meal per day they are instead giving a week's worth of food that can be easily made at home. The only issue with that option is that many schools cannot afford to do it for an entire school year since they are serving in a low-income area (Turner, 2020). SNAP is another option that can help students gain access to a healthy meal. According to Feeding America (2020), SNAP stands for "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and it is a federal program that helps millions of low-income Americans put food on their table." When times are tough or in this case a pandemic hits the nation, SNAP provides additional support to parents, elderly, and people with disabilities. For instance, during the pandemic many families cannot afford to buy groceries or provide food to their children. In addition, since they are not able to access school lunch meals, SNAP provides additional resources such as an EBT card or access to local food banks. An EBT card is like a credit card that can only be used to buy groceries. It is funded by SNAP in other words the federal state. In addition, in the local food banks, they are also funded by SNAP, and distribute food every day throughout the week at local schools. With the benefits that SNAP provides it gives an additional access that can help support students from low-income families who are facing food insecurities. According to Dunn (2020), there needs to be more support from the policies that are presented from the nation in order to help the low-income families through the pandemic. In other words, policies need to be established and pushed through the communities, schools, and organizations in order to help

students gain access to a healthy meal. For example, the Family First Coronavirus Act was passed in March 2020, and includes one billion dollars in nutrition assistance and four hundred million in funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program. They also help local farmers, support SNAP, and local food banks (Feeding America, 2020). Another great example of a law that was also passed was the CARES Act, which stands for Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (Dunn, 2020). The CARES Act includes 15.8 billion for SNAP and 8.8 for child nutrition programs (Dunn, 2020). The following not only provides support to schools, but also provides additional resources for low-income families. Although there are many options and resources available for students who do not have access to school lunches during Covid-19, these options require parents to use the alternatives that are available for these specific circumstances. Having children go hungry or eat unhealthy food is not an option. Parents need to use the additional resources that are available during the Pandemic to find alternative solutions for students who cannot access school lunch meals.

Conclusion

An issue that has come up in the year 2020 is students not having access to school lunches. This issue is very important, because not only has it created food insecurities but has also created physical and mental health concerns. There are many alternative solutions that can address the issue, but it is mainly up to parents to take immediate action and use the resources and options that have been provided by the state and the school districts. Although the following issue is new, many people do not know how long the pandemic will last, so it is better to take affirmative action sooner than later for the well being of the children.

Method

The issue framing this project is students not being able to access school meals during Covid-19. This issue has resulted from students not having access to transportation during the school lunch meal distributions that have been occurring Monday-Friday. As a result, many students are not eating or eating unhealthy foods, which can lead to major health concerns. This is an issue that needs to be brought to attention especially in 2020. No one knows when exactly when the Corona Virus will end. It can take years, which means that there needs to be opportunity for alternative solutions that can help students who do not have access to school lunch distribution at the school have an opportunity to receive a meal. The goal is providing a free or reduced lunch meal to every student who wants one during social distance learning.

Context

The following research was conducted in two sample schools, which will be referred to as Ace Elementary School and Joe High School. Ace elementary school was established in 1998. It is a very clean, updated school with a cafeteria that can hold half of the school. The school is predominantly Hispanic, with more than half being bilingual English language learners. The school is located in a middle-class, quiet neighborhood surrounded by mountains and agriculture. Ace elementary school is very interactive with the Hispanic community and the local community as well. For example, they are very involved with their local community by organizing fundraisers and extra support groups that help parents, students, and staff succeed. Some interesting programs that are offered in Ace elementary school include decoding programs, STEM, art, band, tee golf, local field trips, and a variety of interactive sports. Ace elementary school also offers free lunch to all students who are interested.

Joe high school was established in 1959. The school is slightly outdated with a couple of new buildings that were built in 2014. The school has been having a lot of maintenance when it comes to its buildings. Some upgrades to the school include a sand volleyball court, a new football field, new cafeteria, and a new dining space for the students. The school is also predominantly dominated by Hispanics, whites, and Filipinos. More than half of the students are English language learners. Joe high school is also located in a low-income neighborhood that is populated by Hispanics. The school is close to a main busy road and a Christian church. Most of the students who attend Joe high school walk to school or ride a bike. Interesting programs that are offered at Joe high school include a health academy, floristry, Future Farmers of America, MECHA, and many other clubs. The school also has many sports such as football, baseball, tennis, and swimming. Finally, Joe high school offers snack machines, food carts, as well as free and reduced lunch meals to all students.

Participant and Participant Selection

In the following research project, two schools participated. From Ace elementary school, the school district supervisors and the principal were interviewed. The third participant invited to participate was a school lunch lady that works in Joe High School.

Researcher

Students not having access to a school lunch meal is an issue that is very close to my home. In other words, I have two younger brothers who have a hard time picking up a school lunch meal. When I am not around and have to work, they do not have transportation to access a school lunch meal. Not only does it affect their school, but it also affects how they feel physically. By the time everyone is home they have headaches and do not feel good, because

they are not capable of making a nutritious meal. My family must not be the only one dealing with this issue. Therefore, the following issue was very meaningful to me. I knew I could carry out this project due to my general knowledge of the school lunch distributions, and from close relatives who work in the lunch distributions. I knew I had all the resources I needed to carry out the following issue by finding alternative solutions that can be available to students who are dealing with the same issue.

Food School District Supervisor

The food school district supervisor oversees the Ace elementary school's lunch distribution. She has been working for the district for about 20 years. She oversees that the lunches are distributed on Mon-Fri. She is also in charge of the current employees who are working in the school lunch distributions. In addition, she is well informed of the issue, and provides alternative solutions for those families who need it the most during this pandemic. She was a great contributor for the following research project, because she is also trying to help solve this issue for students who do not have access to a school lunch meal.

Principal

The principal of Ace elementary school is Mexican American with a master's degree in educational leadership and administration. He has been a principal for about a year but has worked for the school district for many years. The principal oversees the school and is aware of the school lunch distribution and organizations that are available locally near the school. He was a great candidate for the following project, because he knows about the issue, and provides extra resources for students who do not have access to a school lunch meal.

Lunch Lady

The lunch lady works at Joe high school. She has been a lunch lady for five years. Her job description includes serving school lunch meals during Covid-19, which means she knows the process. In other words, she is aware of how many school lunches are made as well as how many are left over. She personally sees the decrease in the number of lunches distributed during social distance learning. Finally, she is aware of alternative solutions that are available for the students.

Semi-Structured Interview and Survey Questions

1. What are you concerned about when it comes to Covid-19 lunch distributions?
2. What is currently being done to improve the issue of specific students who want lunch, but do not have access to transportation?
3. In regards to the previous question what is being done to address this issue, by whom and do you think this is good, bad, or indifferent? Why?
4. What are your suggestions in regards to improving school lunch distributions during covid-19. For example, what are your ideas are in regards to the issue.
5. Are parents allowed to take a school lunch if a student is not present?
6. Can a student from any school come and pick up a lunch if they are not a student at that particular school?
7. About how many lunches are made each day?
8. How much is usually left over?

9. What happens to leftover lunch meals?
10. Is there anything else that you would like to say about students who cannot get a school lunch due to transportation issues.
11. Do you know of any organizations or community supports that you know that can help students find a meal during covid-19?

Procedure

The following interviews were conducted through Zoom and Face to face. Each participant was asked the same set of questions. The following questions proceeded into deeper conversation that brought up many topics and additional insightful information that created a great contribution to the research project. Each participant was recorded whether it was in a Google doc or a voice recording. The interviews were about 30 minutes each.

Data Analysis

Transcribed interviews will be coded and analyzed for emergent themes.

Results

For this Capstone Project, a food district supervisor, principal, and lunch lady were interviewed to see what they think could be done to improve the access of school lunch meals during Covid-19. This is important because many students are not eating at all or eating unhealthy which can result in mental and physical health concerns. Based on an analysis of the data and the relevant research literature, three themes emerged (see Table 1). Evidence-based decision making required evaluating each potential Action Option by the following criteria: *effectiveness*; *reach*; and *cost*. *Effectiveness* is an important evaluation to measure, because it

reflects how effective the alternative solution will give greater access to school lunch meals. *Reach* is important, because it will provide a consideration of how many students could gain access to school lunch meals. Finally, *cost* is also important because it will evaluate the affordability of alternative solutions. Based on the evaluation of each Action Option an action will be recommended and justified.

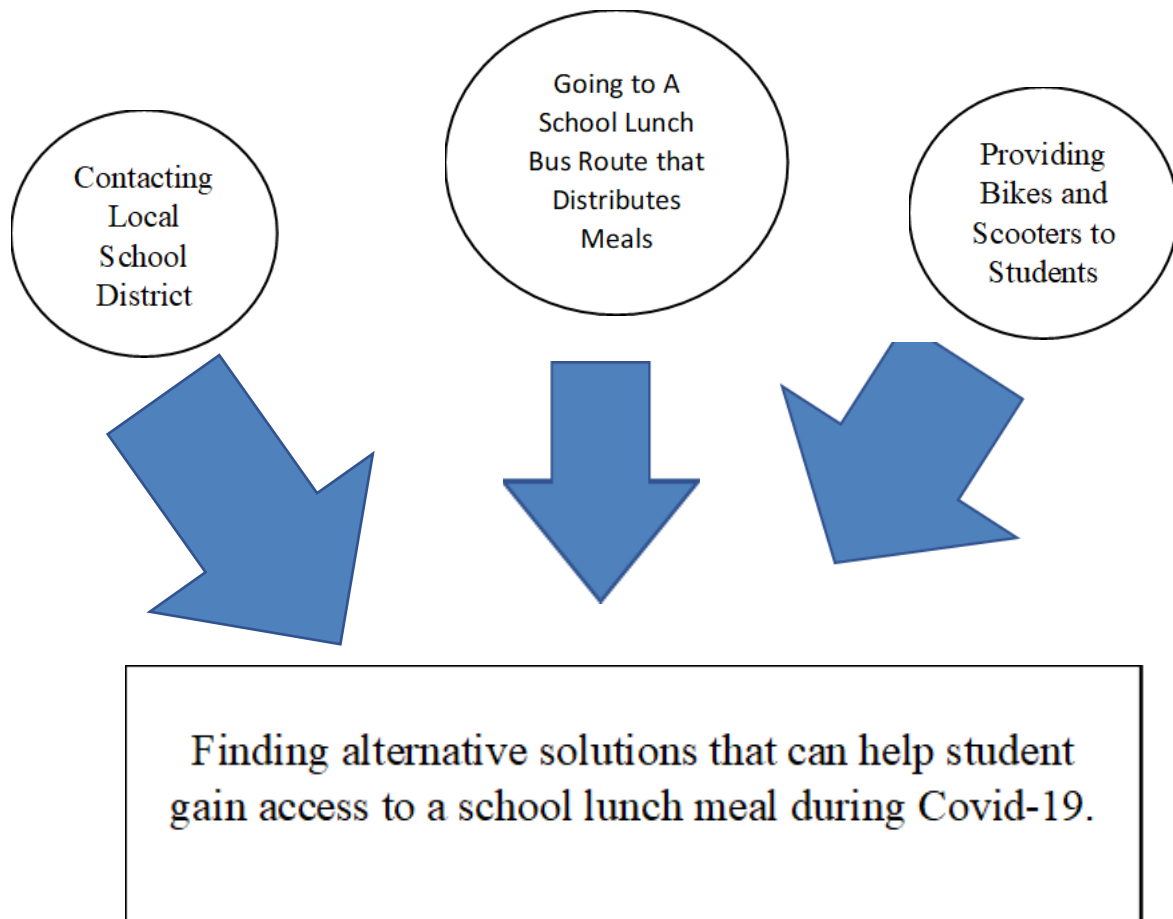


Image 1. Themes which emerged from the data and literature.

Table 1

Evaluation of Action Options

	<i>Effectiveness</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Contacting local school district for extra support for students who need the extra help in order to gain access to a school lunch meal.	High	High	Low
Going to a school lunch bus distribution route.	High	Medium	Low
Providing bikes and scooters to students.	Medium	Medium	High

Contacting Local School District

The first option that presented itself from the data and literature is contacting a local school district. What this means is parents will contact their student’s local school district and explain to the school district supervisor that their student needs extra support from the district in order to obtain a school lunch meal (Food District Supervisor, personal communication,

November 9, 2020). This will give students an option of weekly meals, local food banks, or a van that can deliver a meal directly to the home. Depending on the situation, there are additional services that are available if needed which include child nutrition programs, state waivers that can ensure a meal, and a pandemic ebt card (Food Research and Action Center, 2020, p.1). The following options are very *effective*, because they will provide many alternative options for students who cannot access a school lunch meal from their school. In terms of *reach*, students will not have to worry about not getting a meal, because they will be guaranteed that the school will provide a meal to their homes every day. The *cost* will be free, because it will all be reimbursed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture depending on whether the student qualifies for a free or reduced meal.

School Lunch Bus Route

The second option that presented itself from the data and literature is instead of going to the school to pick up a school lunch meal, students can pick up a lunch at their nearby bus route. In Ace elementary School District children can go to their usual bus route stop and wait for a bus to arrive at a certain time each day (Food District Supervisor, personal communication, November 9, 2020). There are a total of five bus routes that distribute school lunch meals. The bus provides essential meals, and students will not have to travel a far distance, which will be easier to gain access to a school lunch meal. According to Turner and Kamenetz (2020), buses are packed with school lunch meals and provide free lunches to students who rely on a school lunch meal and who do not have access to a parent that can drive them to the school. There are schedules for the buses, and they will be distributing free lunches for an hour to students. The following option is *effective* in that there will be a guaranteed meal that will be available to students to pick up at their local bus stop. In terms of *reach*, it will be to a certain extent. For

example, for this to extend the reach, students must decide to walk to their nearby bus stop to pick up a school lunch meal. Finally, the *cost will* be completely free, all lunches will be free to students. They will only need to provide their school id number.

Bikes or Scooters

The third option that presented itself from the data and literature is providing bikes and scooters to students. In other words, parents or the school will provide scooters or bikes to students as a way of offering transportation. This will give students another way to access a school lunch meal if there are no parents around to take the student to school. Students will have to be responsible enough to ride to the school during the school lunch distributions times that are available. According to Joe High School lunch lady, parents should let students ride to school in a scooter or bike in groups of children while taking the necessary precautions for Covid-19 (Lunch Lady, personal communication, November 11, 2020). The following option will be *effective* to a certain extent. In other words, students will have to make the effort of riding to their local school and picking up a meal. Students will need to gain permission from parents. The *reach* may be sufficient, if the students can ride in groups to the school to pick up a school lunch meal. Finally, the *cost*, will range depending on what type of bike or scooter the parents buy for the student to ride. The *cost* can also vary depending on if schools provide a bike or scooter to a student, which can cost the school extra funding.

Conclusion

Out of the three options that presented itself from the data and literature as the best alternative solution that will help students get access to a Covid-19 school lunch meal is contacting the local school district with a combination of getting informed of school lunch bus

routes. This option will provide all the additional resources that the student needs in order to find a way to gain access to a school meal if parents are not available to take them. By contacting the school district food service, parents will gain access to additional resources plus alternative options that can become available to their student depending on the situation.

Concessions

After evaluating each of the three options an option that was not chosen was getting students scooters or bikes. The following option is a better option for a wealthy school district, which is not the case in this research project. Many of the students who do not have access to a school lunch meal come from low-income households, which means they are living paycheck to paycheck. It cannot be that the general family can afford to buy a student a bike or scooter especially when there is a pandemic affecting the unemployment rates in the U.S. Also, since schools get their general income from student attendance, there has been a low attendance rate through social distance learning due to Wi-Fi issues.

Limitations

After researching the following issue there are limitations to following the solution that is being recommended. Since the data is very new, it is uncertain if students or parents know about the alternative options that are available to students. Since parents are not aware of the extra support that is available to students many are letting the issue continue, which is not helping students. There is a limitation to informing parents of the options that students have in regards of picking up a school lunch meal at a nearby bus stop or using alternative resources that are available at the school district that corresponds to the student.

Potential Negative Outcomes

Although the following option has been recommended and evaluated there is still a possibility for potential negative outcomes. The following recommendation was to contact the local school district and be informed of bus routes that distribute lunch meals. Some negative outcomes that can arise include parents not contacting the school or feel afraid to contact the school due to language barriers, nationality, or beliefs. Many parents can also not have the time to contact the school, which will not help the student gain access to a school lunch meal. In regard to the bus routes, parents may also not allow students to go pick up a lunch meal while no one is home. There are potential negative outcomes that can occur from the alternative solutions that have been recommended in the following Capstone Project.

Conclusion

Despite the concession, limitations, and negative outcomes that were presented in the following Capstone Project, the most *effective, reachable, and affordable* recommendation that can help students who do not have access to a school lunch during Covid-19, is contacting the school district while also being informed of the bus routes that distribute food. The following options will make a difference in the accessibility of the school lunch meals. Not only will they make a difference, but they will also keep parents informed, which can potentially bring out new information that can benefit families during the current pandemic that has occurred in 2020.

Action Documentation and Critical Reflection

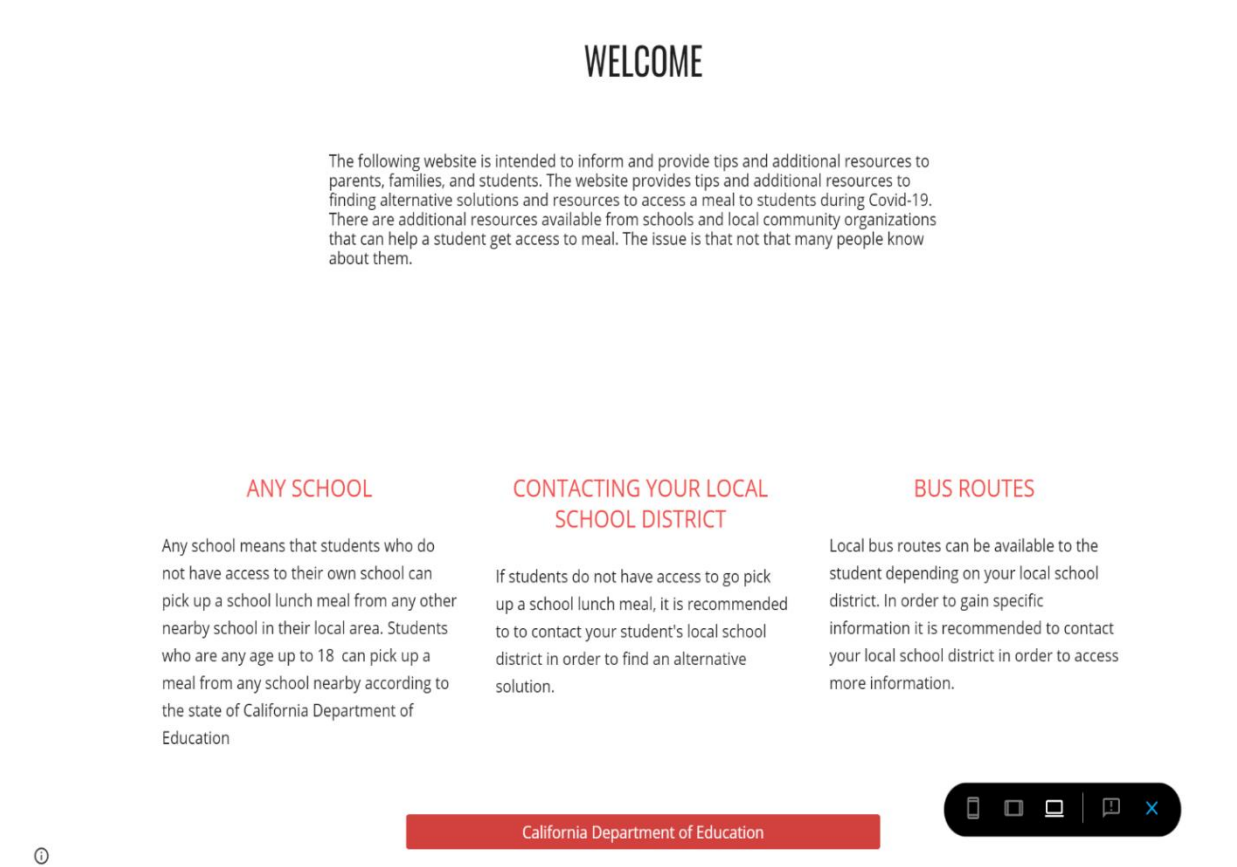
The following issue that is being addressed in the following Capstone Project is students not having access to a school lunch meal during Covid-19. The issue results from students not

having transportation to go pick up a school lunch meal, in addition parents and students are not knowledgeable about the extra resources that are available to students. For the following Capstone Project, the stakeholders that were interviewed included a food district supervisor, school principal, and a current lunch lady working during Covid-19. After interviewing the following stakeholders, the common action options that emerged from the interviews included recommending that parents contact local school districts to find an alternative solution, getting parents informed of school bus routes for lunch distributions, and buying students bikes and scooters so they can pick-up meals. The action that was implemented suggested that parents both contacting the local school district and getting informed of school lunch bus routes. The following action option was chosen, because it provided efficient and current alternative solutions to help students and families gain access to a school lunch meal, and additional local community resources that can be available to families.

Action Research Project Documentation Reflection

Figure 2

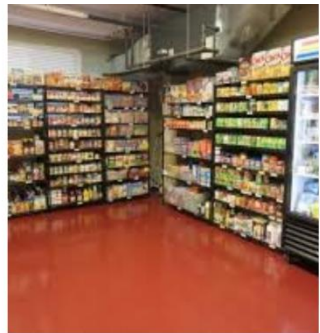


Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meal In CA+ Additional Resources



Note. Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meal In CA+ Additional Resources by Viviana Figueroa. (2020). <https://sites.google.com/view/pickmeupcovid19schoolmeal/home> The following figure is an image of a website that contains alternative solutions and additional resources that can help students find alternative access to a school lunch meal during Covid-19.

Figure 3

Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meal In CA+ Additional Resources

		
<p>FOOD PANTRIES</p>	<p>FOOD BANK</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)</p>
<p>Food pantries will help you find your nearby local food pantries, soup kitchens, and food shelves in your nearby area. The information that you will need to provide in order to find these local food pantries include state, city, and address.</p>	<p>Food banks occur nationwide in your nearby area. In order to gain more information to your specific food bank click on the following button.</p>	<p>The purpose of SNAP is to provide nutritional benefits to supplement the food budget for families who are in need for additional help. Click on the following button in order to gain more information.</p>
<p>Food Pantries</p>	<p>Food Bank</p>	<p>SNAP</p>

Note. Pick Me Up: Covid-19 School Lunch Meal In CA+ Additional Resources by Viviana Figueroa. (2020). <https://sites.google.com/view/pickmeupcovid19schoolmeal/home> The following figure is an image of a website that contains alternative solutions and additional resources that can help student find alternative access to a school lunch meal during Covid-19.

The following action project that was conducted for the Capstone Project included a website that informs parents about additional resources and tips about alternative solutions that a school can provide to a student to access a school meal. In addition, the website also provides information about local community resources that can also help families out during Covid-19. My goal in creating a website is to educate low-income families about the additional resources

that are available to students in order to help gain access to a lunch meal during Covid-19. What was unexpected from the action project was realizing that many schools have different resources available depending on the area. It is surprising, because what can be beneficial to all students may not be available to a certain number of students. That is why it is recommended to contact your student's local school district to get informed of what is available to help gain access to a meal. The changes and modifications that needed to be made for the action project was informing parents of the additional resources that are available outside of the school system. After sharing the website to parents the most common response is that they did not know about the additional alternative resources, because it was not advertised by the school or the community. What I know now that I wish I knew from the start was that it is very difficult for the school to fully support families, because it is all very new to the system. I wish I knew that the school system is a very slow process to get things done or to move ahead and provide solutions to low-income families. However, the next important step is bringing awareness to families and providing alternative meals to students. After working on the following project, I learned that it is very important to stay informed about the school resources, and to also stay informed about the additional resources that are available in a local community.

Synthesis and Integration

Going to CSU Monterey Bay as a transfer student was an unexplainable journey that has impacted my life in a positive manner. CSU Monterey Bay has changed my way of thinking and has pushed me to work hard. However, the Liberal Studies MLOs, the required coursework, and this action project have also impacted my way of seeing education and the process of building a career. For example, MLO 1, which is to think, write, and speak critically about general knowledge, skills, disposition in a California public education system or community, has

changed the way I approach or learn new ideas. Before I was not fully open to any new perspective, but with MLO 1 I analyze and reflect on my way of thinking. In addition, MLO 5, which is Subject Matter Generalist, or showing competency in various subject content areas and completing a coherent depth of study for a successful practice in California public education. The courses and projects that I have completed at CSU Monterey Bay have fulfill MLO 5 by the Capstone Project and the courses that have influenced my research in the education system. As I continue my education in the Credential Program, I see that the necessary next steps that I need to take to become the professional educator that I envision is volunteering at my local community school and applying all the strategies and concepts that I have gained from CSU Monterey Bay.

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