

Hotspot Distribution

Weld Re-8 School District

Fort Lupton, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education



The Covid-19 pandemic changed the landscape of the 20-21 school year, particularly when it came to how teachers delivered instruction. Remote instruction meant that students needed to have access to the internet to be able to log into their classes. Unfortunately, many internet service providers around Fort Lupton do not offer service, which meant many of the district's students, with multiple students in one household, had to share one phone hotspot. So many people on one connection made it difficult to have fast enough data to log in or do their homework. Weld Re-8 families found themselves scrambling to find adequate internet access.

In order to support families' needs, Weld Re-8 school district decided to purchase around 200 hotspots from Verizon to distribute to families who were in need. The district made calls, sent emails, and shared on social media to contact the schools if they needed hotspots. Each school provided pickup dates for families to receive their hotspots. For families that were unable to make the pickup date, the District Family & Community specialist personally delivered the devices.

The District Technology Coach and District Family & Community Specialist made home visits to families that needed support in connecting the hotspot and pairing it to the student's Chromebook. They walked families and students through how to turn on the hotspot and how to connect to it on the Chromebook. If families expressed that they did not know how to access the students google classroom, they also taught them how to log into their classes, turn in homework, and how to turn on/off their camera and microphone. From these conversations, the district also decided to offer families virtual training on Google Classroom and technology support explaining these steps.

Providing hotspots to students in need changed students' outcomes. Some students were not logging in to their classes before being offered a hotspot and began to log in after. Providing internet access resulted in a sense of belonging for students as they were able to login and see their teacher and classmates. Advice for colleagues wanting to replicate this would be to take time for outreach and personalized communication. For Lupton's Family & Community Specialist shares: "When families notice you care about them and you are taking time out of your day to show them, they will appreciate your district even more, because you show you care about their students."