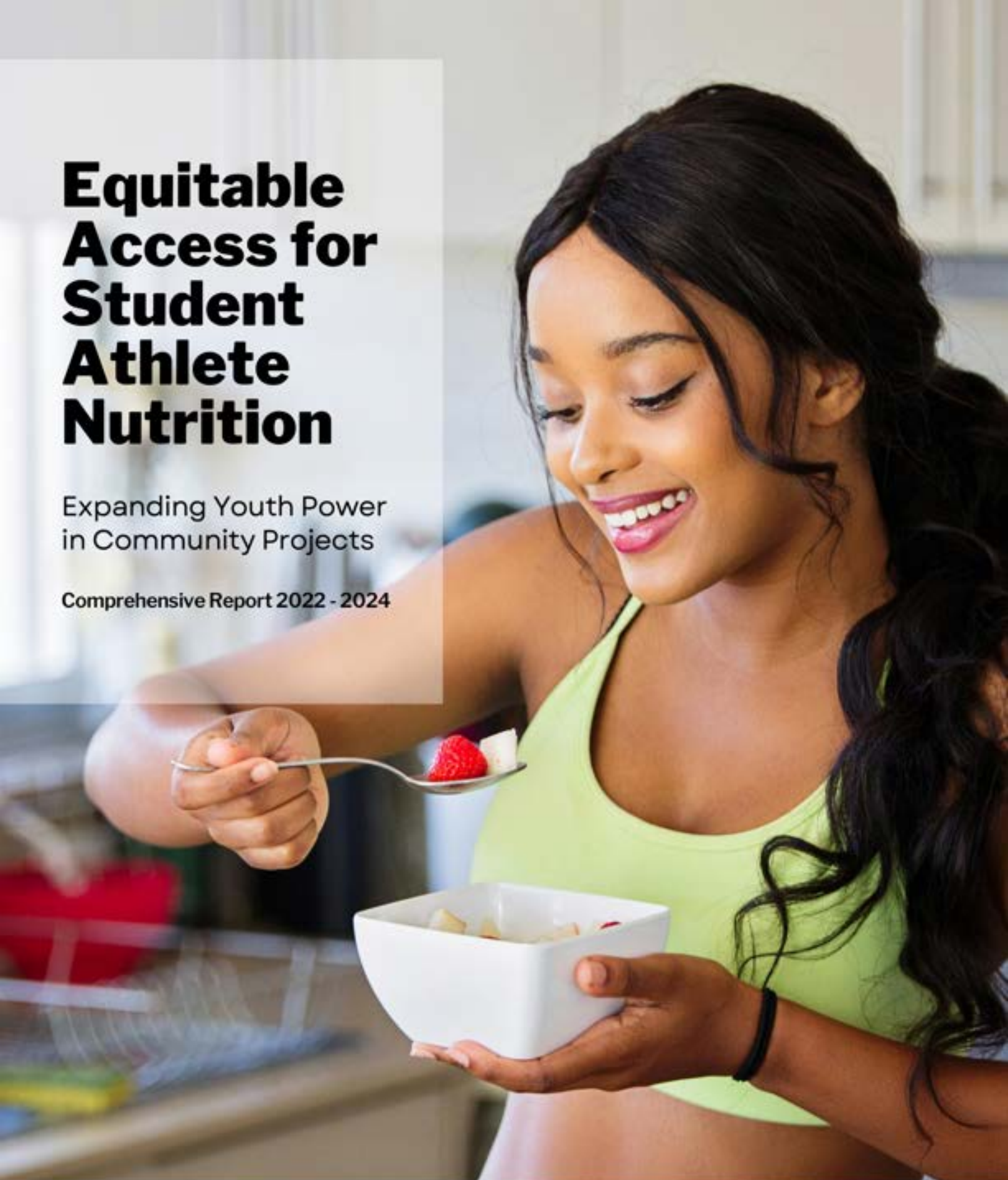


Equitable Access for Student Athlete Nutrition

Expanding Youth Power
in Community Projects

Comprehensive Report 2022 - 2024



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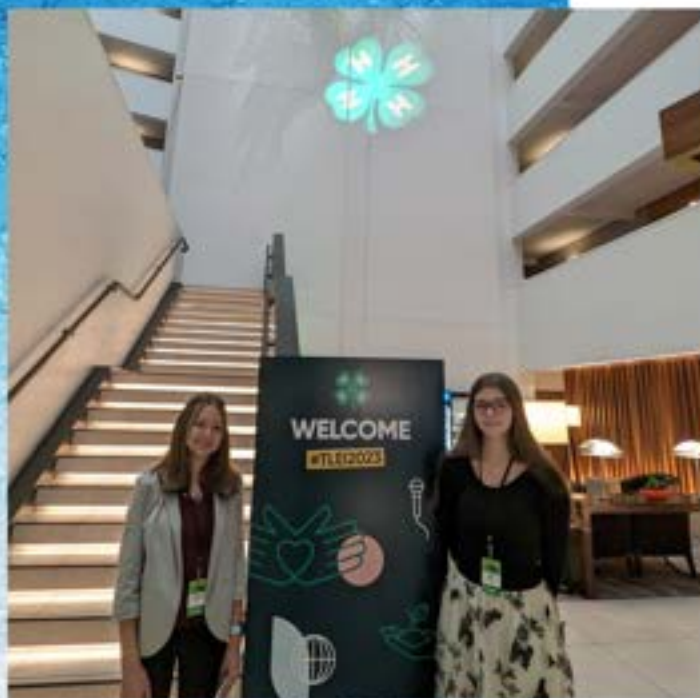
BACKGROUND



The 4-H True Leaders in Equity Institute (TLEI), held annually in Washington, D.C. is a training program for passionate youth ages 14-19 to learn about equity and inclusion and how it affects their communities. The institute will prepare participants to be change agents within the Cooperative Extension System, creating more welcoming and inclusive environments. Youth-adult-led teams develop plans to spark innovative solutions and return to their local communities inspired to make a change.

(National 4-H Council, events.4-h.org)





As part of the Well Connected Communities national health initiative, University of Idaho Extension professionals had the opportunity to accompany a team of youth to the True Leaders in Equity Institute (2023 & 2024) and mentor them in the implementation of a community health equity project of their choice.

MEET IDAHO'S TEAM

TRUE LEADERS IN EQUITY



KEIRA FERRO

University of Idaho
4-H Health Advocate
Caldwell High School Junior



MAYLEE MCCONNELL-SOONG

University of Idaho
4-H Health Advocate
Caldwell High School Junior



JOEY PEUTZ

University of Idaho
Extension Educator



MAUREEN TOOMEY

University of Idaho
4-H Youth Development
Area Extension Educator
Associate Professor of
Health & Wellness



LINDSEY MCCONNELL-SOONG

University of Idaho
Health Equity Director





*Paul Webster
Community Schools and Family Engagement Coordinator
Caldwell School District
April 29, 2024*

“Access to healthy food is essential for health, but is a challenge for quite a few families in Caldwell. Our community schools needs assessments have indicated that many of the families we serve struggle to afford basic necessities like housing (“Rent eats first”), food, childcare, and transportation. Because many families are pinching pennies to get rent paid and to pay for basic food and transportation to/from work, the extras can be a challenge. While kids in Caldwell can eat breakfast and lunch for free, weekends and vacations can be a challenge. Recently, on the first day of spring break (Monday, March 25), we had 125 households/families come get food boxes at our Traveling Table distribution at Serenity Park. We provide many families with backpacks with extra food for the weekends. We find this is quite helpful. We also refer many families to local food banks.

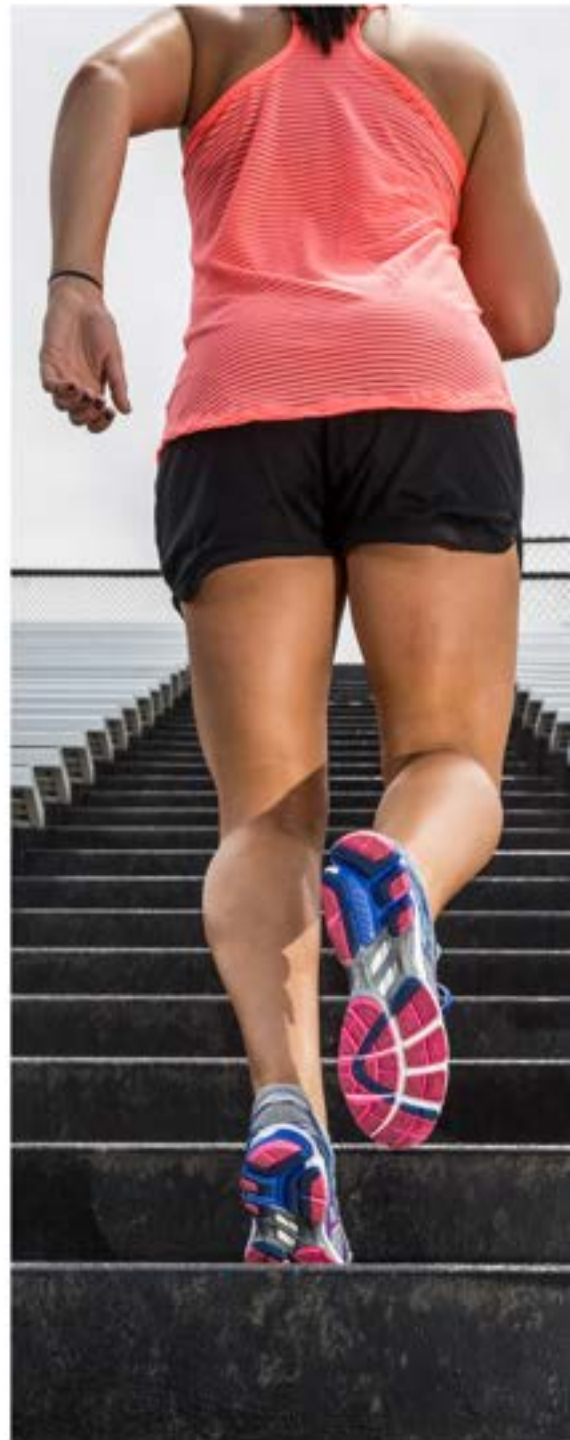
After school sports and activities can be one of those extra expenses. Families are stretched just to get their kids involved in extracurricular activities, and food is another challenge on top of that. As a dad of 3 former Caldwell athletes, I know athletes can eat a ton. Also, going through a long night of practice or competition without food is a real struggle. I’ll bet quite a few athletes and families appreciate the little extra boost.”

PROBLEM STATEMENT

WHY FOCUS ON FOOD INSECURITY IN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES?

When we were brainstorming for our project focus, the topic of school lunch came up and how it may not be enough nutrition for some students at our school, specifically for athletes. A large majority of our peers are from limited-resource families and our community is also considered a food desert, making it even more difficult for those families to have access to sufficient nutrition. We became very passionate about focusing our health equity project on food insecurity and hoped that support and education coming from peers might have a positive impact in our school.

07



08

CALDWELL

FOOD DESERT

In Caldwell, at least 33% of the population live more than 1 mile from the nearest grocery store (USDA).



LOCAL HEALTH DATA

- Rates of uncontrolled diabetes in Caldwell are significantly higher than other communities in Southwest Idaho.

CALDWELL HIGH SCHOOL

- 66% Hispanic / Latino
- 33% White
- 76% of students from limited-resource families

IDAHO FOODBANK

According to the Idaho Foodbank, in 2022:

- 1 in 7 Idaho children experience food insecurity
 - 16.2% Southwest Idaho children experience food insecurity
-



PROJECT SUMMARY

—
09

YEAR 1



ORIGINAL IDEAS = TOO BIG

- Educational Campaign: Impact of food insecurity on academic, athletic, and mental health functioning.
- Needs assessment in a core class, a sports team, and a mental-health school club.

CHALLENGES & LEARNING

- Narrowing focus
- Timing
- Approval from University of Idaho Institutional Review board for surveying youth
- Effective and timely communication with school administrators



FINAL OUTCOMES

- University of Idaho Impact Statement [**read it here*](#)
- Surveys, snacks, reflections
- Adapted goals: Pre and post survey for track athletes on nutrition/hydration practices and impact of project.
- 57 water bottles, 255 healthy snack bags with nutrition facts, and 200 food access location post cards distributed to track athletes on days of competition.



EXPERIENCE

YEAR 1

The institute itself was amazing. Everyone was so supportive and it was inspiring to see how many people our age were passionate about their communities. Prior to the institute, we'd had very little exposure to people our age from different states. Listening and gathering information from other people's equity experiences helped us to develop our project much more.

Implementing our project after the institute was the challenging part. It took a while for us to find exactly what we had the capacity to do and what connections we needed to make in order for it to be successful. We had a lot of uncertainty about what it would look like in the end. The greatest lesson we learned during the first year was to be patient and consistent.



Scan QR Code to see highlight video



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YEAR 2



ORIGINAL IDEAS

- Expanding to new schools through peer mentorship
- Repeat surveys to strengthen data significance

CHALLENGES & LEARNING

- Considering capacity...again!
- Adult mentor support needed at other schools



FINAL OUTCOMES

- University of Idaho Impact Statement
- Surveys
- Involved more peers from CHS + 2 other nearby schools
- 62 water bottles, 319 healthy snack bags with nutrition facts and food access location post cards distributed to track athletes.

EXPERIENCE

YEAR 2

"Our second year at the Institute, we experienced greater confidence and a feeling of belonging. We felt more comfortable asking questions and speaking up."

"The best part of our second year of implementation was seeing our peers recognize the project and get excited for it. Also, it was so meaningful to present our work and provide inspiration to other youth for making a change. Accomplishments are better celebrated with a team than on your own." - Maylee

"The greatest lesson of our second year was about achievable ambition. Mentoring another school turning out to be a task larger than we anticipated. Thinking about a third year, I have tried to keep my ideas achievable but still ambitious." - Keira



Scan QR Code to see highlight video





SURVEY RESULTS

With the support of our University of Idaho Extension mentors, we developed two surveys to gather and measure the impact of our project. We completed the approval process required by the University of Idaho Institutional Review Board and obtained parent consent for student athletes to complete the surveys. For both years of the project, the first surveys were conducted at the beginning of the track season. The second surveys were conducted at the end of the season in order to gauge the impact of providing reusable water bottles, healthy snacks, nutrition education, and food access resources.

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DATA 2023

- 100% of respondents agreed that the snacks and water bottles had a positive impact on their sports season
- 84% learned something they didn't know from the nutrition fact cards that accompanied the healthy snacks
- Top three responses to "what might motivate you to make positive change for your eating or hydration practices"
 - Healthy foods offered during athletic practices and competition events
 - Better understanding of how nutrition and hydration impacts me
 - Healthier foods offered at school lunch

For copy of survey questions, please see appendix.

For survey results, contact Lindsey McConnell-Soong: lmconnellsoong@uidaho.edu



DATA 2024



- 100% of respondents agreed that the snacks and water bottles had a positive impact on their sports season
- Top three responses to "what might motivate you to make positive change for your eating or hydration practices"
 - Encouragement from coaches
 - Better understanding of how nutrition and hydration impacts me
 - Healthier foods offered at school lunch
- 59% eat school lunch most days or every day
- 66% would not have had access to healthy snacks on competition days
- 100% agree the snacks and water bottles helped both athletic performance and hydration

For copy of survey questions, please see appendix.

For survey results, contact Lindsey McConnell-Soong: lmcconnellsoong@uidaho.edu



***From Laura Carrier
2023 Head Track Coach***

"I cannot express how thankful I am for this program! I have coached track for over 20 years and athletes of all ages always forget to bring water with them to practice and meets. The water bottle program has helped tremendously with hydration. We have not had the muscle cramping from lack of hydration. The bottles are so stylish that the athletes carry them with them to classes and hydrate all day.

The snack program has been a Godsend. Many athletes don't know what type of snacks they should bring to meets, even though they are given a list of good ideas to bring. I think the athletes are realizing what kind of things they like to eat, that they can use as healthy choices for a meet. A lot of our athletes also don't have the money to buy themselves healthy snacks to take to meets so this has helped to furnish nutrition to those that would go without. Thank you so much for everything that this program has brought to our athletes."

CHS Athletics Head Coach

The impact has been great as students who need access to food, especially to support their athletic performance was no longer a worry for them.

CHS Athletic Trainer

I loved the water bottles that were provided for the athletes last year and the times listed on them so that athletes could properly gauge their hydration levels throughout the day. I was unaware that snack bags were provided for competitions days however I do know that many athletes were always asking staff members for food on a daily basis. This is a critical point for our athletes and food insecurities within our community is huge. My hope is that this project can be maintained because our students would benefit greatly from a program like this.



***Sophomore Track Athlete
(2-yr project participant) April 2024***

"I would definitely love this to be permanent. Especially like me when I forget snacks to bring or I don't know what to bring. I know some teammates that struggle with [not having food at home] so I'm really glad you guys do this. That helps them perform really well in their meet and gives them the nutrients they need if they don't have food at home."

***Senior Track Athlete
(2-yr project participant) April 2024***

"I believe [this project] helped us as a team overall, because I know some people, especially our freshmen, don't come prepared at all because...nobody knows what to bring, especially food-wise. That [nutrition fact card] really teaches us what we should bring."

"When we have that [nutritious food] in our bodies, it's a big difference in our performance. Usually people eat candy and they eat junk food before our meets. But now it's like we have access to something better for us."

***Freshman Track Athlete
(first year project participant) April 2024***

"Some people, they can't afford [snacks] or they forget that we have a track meet and it's useful to have. Especially the water bottles. We all got a water bottle and I use mine every day.... They're really nice, they're really durable and I think that everybody uses them quite a lot."

"[This project] is beneficial for me because I know that at the track meets, they usually sell not very healthy snack choices, and they're quite expensive. So these snack bags are really helpful and they make me feel more energized as well, so they also impact my running skills."



***Freshman Track Athlete
(first year project participant) April 2024***

"[The nutrition notes] on the bags say 'eat now' or 'eat after' and then they give descriptions. I think those are very helpful. I usually read them and the descriptions help a lot. Honestly, later on when I'm at home, I basically try to stay eating healthy food. So I feel like what's on those bags is very helpful for what I'm going to eat in real life, after track."

"[Seeing our peers do this project] is really helpful because there's someone out there who wants to help you. I feel like track isn't a very spoken-of sport. So to know that there's someone there who wants to really help and improve that sport just makes it feel a whole lot better."

***Kodey, CHS 11th grade project volunteer
(helped with building and delivering snack bags,
and facilitating surveys during the 2nd year)***

The amount of work that everyone does to make this program run smoothly could not be measured. There was never a point in time where I wondered what was going to happen and what we were going to do. I must thank all the members for making this a really enjoyable experience for me and allowing me to help out my community. I also really appreciated getting to hear the coaches' opinions on the program because they were very positive and thankful for us providing snack bags.

***Tabitha, Junior, Ridgevue High School,
Mayor's Youth Advisory Council member***

It was impactful being involved with this project. I felt successful when I helped with the snack bags. The project was important for the Caldwell community and I hope it expands.

Caldwell Mayor Jarom Wagoner

Maylee and Keira have truly gone above and beyond to make a positive impact on the community they live in. Their extensive research and implementation of their True Leaders in Equity Project has truly made a difference in the Caldwell community. They have brought awareness of food insecurities in our area, and what's even more important is they have found ways to solving these issues for their peers. Their positive impact truly cannot be overstated.

FUTURE PLANS

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- Attending the 2024 True Leaders in Equity Institute in Washington, D.C.
- Focusing efforts on engaging with adult leaders to create a permanent athlete food pantry at CHS and presenting to potential donors to secure funding support.

Our third year of the project will focus on sustainability. Sustainability is important because it gives others the opportunity to help out with this project and it allows the results we've seen to continue for many years to come.

We want adults in our community to know that youth are passionate about making a difference and are willing to put in the work. Given the right resources, there are a lot of ambitious kids who would love to lead or be a part of a project like this.

We want our peers to know that while it takes work, you can make a difference. There are adults willing to help you achieve your goals. Don't be afraid to ask questions or speak up. The only way to learn is to be curious.

REFLECTIONS

Overall, this has taught me a lot about being part of a project and even more, being part of a team. Prior to this project my experience working in teams was limited to school, which is good, but not nearly the same as working on something of this size with people in a professional field.

This experience has given me insight on what I can do after high school. It has opened my eyes to what I can help accomplish and career paths I can pursue in the future. I can see myself using this experience in public speaking. This project required me to present to many people. I've learned techniques that will give me an edge in the competitive atmosphere that is college and career.

I've also experienced better connection with my community through meeting people, especially my peers. I have met people at my school that I may not have otherwise known. For others who want to create change in their community, start talking about it and look for someone who can help make it happen. For example, if you see an issue in health equity, look for people who work in the health field and don't stop asking until you find someone that can help.

Change does not come without persistence and perseverance, so keep trying and you'll make something happen.



~ Keira

REFLECTIONS

I never imagined myself being a leader. I was always the shy and quiet kid who kept her thoughts and concerns to herself. This project has made me realize that there is value in my thoughts and opinions. I know that this leadership aspect I have gained will lead me through the rest of high school and into my future. Ever since I was little, I have always wanted a career that focused on helping others and the environment and the knowledge I have gained from this experience will help me figure out ways to make an impact wherever I end up after college.

This project has also given me a new perspective on my community. Before, I was ashamed to live in Caldwell. All I saw were the bad parts, and those discouraged me. Now, I see all of the great things and whenever I see something that could be better I come up with ideas to improve it. I have never felt more connected to my community and I will be forever grateful for that.

For those who want to make a change in their community, my advice would be to first find someone who supports you and believes in you. You also need to understand that things don't happen overnight. Changes take time and work and support, but the feeling you get when you see the impacts you have made is better than anything. Working with my community has given me a new sense of purpose that I had never felt before. Sure, it feels nice to lay in bed all day but the feeling you get when you see all of the hard work you put into something paid off can't be beat. So, don't get discouraged when things don't work out right away because all of those failures and mistakes are just a part of the pathway to success.

~ **Maylee**



PROJECT TIMELINE

2022

- June-July 2022: Brainstorm project ideas and create a poster for the True Leaders in Equity Institute
- July 2022: Attend the 4-H True Leaders in Equity Institute in Washington, D.C.
- August 2022: Submit grant application for \$1500 from National 4-H Council; present to Caldwell School Board about Institute and project plans.
- September 2022: Awarded \$1500 grant
- October - December 2022: project planning and adaptations



PROJECT TIMELINE

2023

- January 2023: propose project idea to Caldwell High School administration and athletic department, obtain approval letter
- January 2023: Develop pre and post surveys, submit to Institutional Review Board
- February 2023: Coordinate with CHS track coaches to develop schedule for surveys, water bottle distribution, and snack bag distributions; develop parent consent and youth assent forms.
- February 2023: Research healthy foods for athletes and select items for purchase; create "Nutrition Fact Cards" and obtain "Food Access Resource" cards from Idaho Food Bank staff; distribute and collect consent forms for survey participation
- March-May 2023: Distribute reusable water bottles to track athletes at first practice; build snack bags; distribute snack bags at 4 track meets; conduct pre and post surveys
- May 2023: Compile survey data; deliver final project report to National 4-H Council; present findings to Idaho Food Bank and Caldwell School Board.





PROJECT TIMELINE

2023

- **June 2023:** Brainstorm project ideas for 2nd True Leaders in Equity Institute, create poster.
- **July 2023:** Attend 4-H True Leaders in Equity Institute in Washington, D.C.
- **August 2023:** Submit grant application for \$1500 grant from National 4-H Council.
- **September 2023:** Awarded \$1500 grant.
- **October - December 2023:** Project development and planning; presentation to Mayor's Youth Advisory Council to recruit additional youth from various schools.

PROJECT TIMELINE

2024

- **January 2024:** Coordinate with CHS administration and athletic staff to prepare for 2nd year implementation.
- **February 2024:** Purchase water bottles, healthy snacks and inspirational stickers; print “Nutrition Fact Cards”; build snack bags.
- **March – May 2024:** Conduct surveys; distribute water bottles and snack bags; compile data; present to Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council.
- **June 2024:** Present to Caldwell School Board; prepare for 3rd True Leaders in Equity Institute and continuation of project.
- **July 2024:** Attend True Leaders in Equity Institute in Washington, D.C.; develop 3rd year project.





APPENDICES

Impact Collaborative
Innovation Canvas

A

CHS Permission Letter

B

TLEI 2022 Grant
Proposal

C

TLEI 2023 Grant
Proposal

D

Survey Questions

E

<p>Challenge, Issue, or Opportunity</p> <p><i>Need Assessment: What is the fundamental need and urgency?</i></p> <p>1) Economically disadvantaged students rely heavily on school food. 2) Distribution of food is not equitable based on needs 3) Education and support connecting nutrition/hydration to academic, athletic and mental health performance is minimal.</p>	<p>Key Metrics</p> <p><i>Project: Are students participating? Example: participation, engaged users, website visits, grant submissions, requests for info</i></p> <p>1) Increased education and awareness around project topics 2) Perceived level of support 3) Impact on academic, athletic, mental health performance</p>	<p>Why Statement</p> <p><i>Why: What is your "big, ambitious goal?"</i></p> <p>We believe that ALL students deserve access to the resources necessary to perform at their highest level.</p>	<p>Unfair Advantage</p> <p><i>Advantage: Check the website to see what? Example: Christened Education to ensure it's what you need?</i></p> <p>1) Established connections with supportive adults 2) Connections to key people in the district and community 3) High potential for crucial partnerships</p>	<p>Audience Segments</p> <p>1) CHS Students 2) CHS/District faculty and staff 3) CHS Parents 4) Community members</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p> <p><i>Collaborator: Who are you doing this with? Who is a resource for this?</i></p> <p>1. Caldwell School District (nutrition, media) 2. Idaho Food Bank 3. Southwest District Health 4. BSU, Dr. Smith 5. Teacher, Coach, Group Facilitator 6. Peer team members</p>	<p>The "Wow!"</p> <p><i>Insight: Did you learn something? The one thing you never realized that everyone will now do. An unexpected burst of insight, knowledge, or level of understanding.</i></p> <p>Provides teens with the education and support to experience "instant gratification" on healthy nutrition/hydration practices. Lays a foundation for systems and policy change for access to nutrition</p>	<p>Unique Value Proposition</p> <p><i>UVP: "A unique project/idea/service for you get community members/participants that they wouldn't normally benefit from/enable existing community benefits/enable existing alternatives."</i></p> <p>A food security and impact project for Caldwell High School that assesses student and staff perceptions of nutrition/hydration support available and educates them on the direct daily impact of properly fueling their bodies, enabling discussion and awareness of disparities and ineffective policies, thus laying a foundation for supportive changes towards food equity; unlike continuing with outdated approaches that fail to consider youth voice nor the vastly varied nutritional needs of students.</p>	<p>Channels</p> <p><i>How will you reach your audience? Features: Website, face-to-face programs, Adv. events, newsletters, social media, etc.</i></p> <p>- Social media - Print - Student discussion groups - - Student leaders/council - - School announcements - - Short video clips - Info - Booths at lunch - Sticker - chart surveys</p>	<p>Unknowns/Assumptions</p> <p><i>Unknown: What are 2-3 things you wish you knew? What are 2-3 assumptions that you are making?</i></p> <p>Unknown:</p> <p>1) Are people willing and interested in participating? 2) Will they follow through? 3) Data on CHS mental health Assumptions: 1) We'll get adult partners 2) We'll receive grant money 3) We'll get permission from administration 4) We can make time for this project 5) Most students agree with our assessment of the food situation.</p>
<p>Budget Considerations</p> <p><i>\$: Nutritious snacks at youth gatherings; water bottles; Registration fees; printing costs. Time: regular project planning meetings; research and creation of educational materials; discussion groups/staff interviews Talent: research, graphic design, peer outreach, public speaking and presentations Ties: networks through Lindsey/UF and Dr. Ferro</i></p>	<p>Community Impact</p> <p><i>Impact: What difference do you want to make? What are your short, medium, long term intended impacts? Share examples of the measurable benefits you envision.</i></p> <p>- Creating a better foundation of understanding in students about nutrition/hydration impacts on daily functioning - Resource for parents - Beginning conversations and building awareness in school system about the types and levels of support for students' nutrition - Lay a foundation for future policy and systems change within the school</p>	<p>Community Impact</p> <p>- Creating a better foundation of understanding in students about nutrition/hydration impacts on daily functioning - Resource for parents - Beginning conversations and building awareness in school system about the types and levels of support for students' nutrition - Lay a foundation for future policy and systems change within the school</p>	<p>Community Impact</p> <p>- Creating a better foundation of understanding in students about nutrition/hydration impacts on daily functioning - Resource for parents - Beginning conversations and building awareness in school system about the types and levels of support for students' nutrition - Lay a foundation for future policy and systems change within the school</p>	

APPENDIX A



University of Idaho
Extension

January 26, 2023

Re: Idaho Youth in Equity

Project Title: Nutrition Equity at Caldwell High School: Assessing needs and creating a foundation for change.

To Whom It May Concern:

Maylee McConnell-Soong and Keira Ferro have the permission of the Caldwell High School Administration to conduct their project for the 4-H True Leaders in Equity Institute. The administration has been provided with the details of this project through both email and in-person communication with the students and their adult mentors at University of Idaho Extension. The content of the student athlete surveys has been reviewed and approved by the administration and the students will coordinate with the Athletic Director and coaches to administer them. Parental consent for student participation will be obtained through forms provided by University of Idaho Extension staff.

It is understood that these students are being directly supervised and mentored by University of Idaho Extension faculty/staff. CHS staff, faculty and administrators agree to provide reasonable and appropriate support for the completion of this project throughout the 2022/2023 school year.

Anita Wilson
Principal
Caldwell High School

2/3/23
Date

APPENDIX B



Nutrition Equity at Caldwell High School: Assessing needs and creating a foundation for change

Team: Idaho Youth for Health Equity

Youth: Maylee McConnell-Soong, Keira Ferro

Adult: Lindsey McConnell-Soong; lmcconnellsong@uidaho.edu; 208-795-5364

Land Grant and Fiscal Entity: University of Idaho

Leading Community Change

As students in the Caldwell School District, we recognize that there is room for significant improvement regarding student nutrition and health equity. This exists on several levels. First, we are painfully aware of the consistent low quality and lack of appeal in our standard school lunches. We also know that due to 76% of our student population being economically disadvantaged, many students rely heavily on the food provided at school for their primary source of nutrition. Second, we know that education on proper nutrition and hydration in standard health curriculums are minimal and brief. And finally, we see a major gap in youth awareness of the direct impact that healthy nutrition and hydration practices have on things like **academic achievement, athletic performance, and strong mental health functioning**. We believe that this combination of factors ultimately places our friends and peers at even greater disadvantages for living their best lives. Nutrition and hydration are among the most basic of needs, and vulnerable students are impacted disproportionately by the lack of support in the school system. Considering that our school district reports that only 11.3% of Juniors meet both math and English benchmark scores, and that Idaho has one of the highest youth suicide rates in the nation, we believe that addressing a topic such as food security and nutrition education can have a significant impact on a variety of important areas. Overall, we'd like our community to be more aware of our student population and its growing needs.

Strategy

Our team plans to address this issue in two ways: 1) a student-led educational campaign and 2) facilitating a needs assessment through the engagement of youth and caring adult partners. As the school year begins, we will begin engaging our peers directly and through social media to recruit additional project team members. With youth and adults aware of our mission and committed to the project, we'll be ready to begin on the following steps:

1. We will be asking for adult partners and **"Pilot Groups" in three areas:** a core curriculum class, a sports team, and a mental-health focused school club. We will provide a general protocol for the caring adults in each group to begin checking in regularly with students about the types of nutrition and hydration support they need or are receiving. We would like to create a space for these conversations to take place more regularly and naturally, with acknowledgement of the importance to student performance and personal experiences.
2. Pilot groups will participate throughout the school year in a variety of student-led discussions and simple surveys regarding food and hydration access at school, education of food security and direct impact to mental and physical health, and the level of support perceived at school and in athletics.
3. Our team will engage in regular follow-up discussions with our adult partners and track input and observations along with the feedback received from our peers.
4. The Educational Campaign will occur simultaneously. We will utilize visual tools such as posters, flyers, and social media posts. We also hope to integrate educational tidbits into our daily school announcements. Another important aspect will be doing parent outreach through school newsletters, providing local resources for access to nutrition-rich foods. Messaging to youth will focus on the instant gratification of supporting our minds and bodies with proper hydration and nutrition.

APPENDIX C

5. Needs assessment information will be compiled and reported back to administration, district nutrition specialists, and athletic directors to continue the conversations.
6. Increased education and an understanding of needs are not enough. We will encourage and pursue further action that **improves access** to nutrition-rich options and hydration practices.
7. We will present our findings and suggestions for future action at a state or regional youth conference.

Get Practical

Our proposed timeline is as follows:

- By August 31st, at least 3 other Caldwell students will join the project team, with assigned roles in graphic design, research, and leaders for each athletic, academic, and mental health pilot groups.
- By August 31st, our team will identify adult partners for at least one class, one athletic team, and one mental health-focused group/club.
- By September 15th, our team will deliver presentations to adult partners and the support team on the impacts of hydration/nutrition on academic/athletic/mental health performance.
- By October 1st, our team will establish our education campaign timeline, specific goals, and methods.
- By October 15th, our team will lead student discussions and facilitate simple “sticker board” surveys in each of our pilot groups to assess for baseline perspectives and awareness of project topics.
- By November 15th, pilot group leaders will engage in follow-up discussions with adult partners and compile observations and feedback.
- By December 15th, project team will facilitate follow-up student discussions and basic surveys to assess for changes in perspectives and awareness of project topics.
- By January 30th, project team will evaluate progress and prepare data for presentation.
- By March 1st, project team will present to school board and appropriate stakeholders the project findings, implications and suggestions for next steps.
- By April 15th, team will have final presentations for True Leaders in Equity prepared.

Success will be measured initially by the level of engagement from youth and adult partners. Further along, we will assess for increased student awareness of project topics, changes in behaviors and perceived impacts. We hope to see an increase in students' sense of support from teachers, coaches, and administrators. Ultimately, this project is considered a first step in laying a foundation for future systems and policy change that will positively impact nutrition security and student empowerment.

We are aware that potential roadblocks may include capacity of adult partners to be involved, considering a significant staff shortage in our school system. We are also preparing for the challenge of our own youth capacity, and ability to arrange time during school hours to facilitate the project tasks. We look forward to community support through our local health coalition and other Well Connected Communities networks throughout Caldwell. We will need time and space for discussions and support from the school district social media administrators. We will also utilize the Youth Advocates for Community Health resources to hold us accountable and tackle obstacles.

Funding

Our primary expense will likely be materials and supplies for our education campaign, project team meetings, and needs assessment methods. We estimate **\$540 for materials/supplies**, which will include nutritious snacks at all youth gatherings throughout the project. We would like to provide our pilot groups with quality water bottles that meet school policy to encourage improved hydration. We estimate 20 students per group x \$6 bulk cost = **\$360 for water bottles**. We would like to reserve **\$600 for registration fees** to share our project at a regional or state youth conference to support replicability and inspiration for similar projects.

APPENDIX C



Equitable Access for Student Athlete Nutrition: Expanding youth power in community projects

Team: Idaho Youth for Health Equity

Youth: Maylee McConnell-Soong, Keira Ferro

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Land Grant and Fiscal Entity: University of Idaho

Leading Community Change

As students in the Caldwell School District, we continue to recognize that there is room for significant improvement regarding student nutrition and health equity. The implementation of our 2022/2023 True Leaders in Equity project, which supported nutrition and hydration for student athletes, resulted in data and feedback indicating that students and coaches appreciated the extra support. Over 40% of the participating athletes reported that they would not have had access to nutritious snacks without our project. Seventy-six percent of the families in our school district are economically disadvantaged and new data from St. Luke's Health System reveals that the two primary zip codes in Caldwell meet the United States Department of Agriculture's definition of a "food desert." Despite the abundance of food that is produced in our agricultural community, Caldwell residents experience a surprising amount of food insecurity.

Strategy

While we gathered some helpful data during the 2022/2023 project, we understand that it is important to continue projects and gather additional data. We also feel that our experience can be used to guide other youth to take similar action in their schools. We hope that the continuation of our project at Caldwell High School, with the addition of new youth expanding the project in other local schools will strengthen the conversations among adults in our communities about improving all students' access to their most basic needs: food and water. We propose the following steps:

1. Continue our project for a 2nd year at Caldwell High School
 - a. Facilitate pre-season surveys that address nutrition and hydration practices of track & field athletes.
 - b. Provide high quality water bottles to these athletes.
 - c. Provide healthy snack bags with nutrition facts and food access resources for at least four track and field competition events.
 - d. Facilitate post-season surveys that address athletes' experiences and the impact of the project.
 - e. Present findings to our local decision-makers (school and athletics administrators, MYAC, Caldwell School District Board, Caldwell Health Coalition, etc).
2. Develop a user-friendly template or toolkit for replication of our project by youth in another school.
3. Present our project to the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) to recruit one team of youth to replicate the project.
4. Connect with one other out-of-state TLEI team to provide the completed toolkit.

5. Provide coaching and consultation to the new youth teams.

We will measure success on the completion of our second-year project at Caldwell High School, our completion of a project toolkit, and our professional approach to partnership and support of both local and out-of-state youth who are working to implement a similar project.

Get Practical

Our proposed timeline is as follows:

- September – December 2023
 - o Develop toolkit for project replication.
 - o Engagement of one other local student team and Utah’s TLEI team
 - o Preparation for Caldwell High School project – Year 2
- January – April 2024
 - o Implementation of Caldwell High project
 - o Coaching new school project
- May 2024
 - o Final Project Presentation to True Leaders in Equity and community

While we will continue working with our mentors from University of Idaho Extension and the school/sports administrators at Caldwell High School, additional adults will include the mayor’s staff. We also look forward to engaging more youth from MYAC, whether they are on the replication team or not. This group is motivated and enthusiastic about engaging in projects; therefore we expect that many of our peers will be willing to assist with the tasks of building snack bags and distributing them at events. In addition, the MYAC are strong fundraisers. We would like to work together to raise any additional funds that will support the project replication in the new school.

The primary roadblock or challenge that we anticipate is the range of different policies among schools and districts. Our replication team may encounter issues that we did not experience in our first year, and therefore would not be included in our toolkit. We hope to counteract this by including a clear preparation step that involves researching school policies and discussing potential challenges with administration at the beginning of the project. We learned many lessons during our first year about the time it takes to communicate with adults and administrations, and we plan to allow ourselves much more time to accomplish this.

Funding

Snacks	\$625	Variety of individually wrapped, non-perishable, healthy snacks that align with best practices for athlete nutrition
Water bottles	\$300	High quality reusable water bottles for student athletes to encourage and support increased daily hydration, as well as during competitions
Printing and Supplies	\$500	Parent/student consent forms, paper bags, nutrition fact cards, stickers with 4-H/UI/CHS logo for snack bags, encouraging message stickers for 60 athletes x 4 events.
Travel	\$75	Mileage for supply shopping and travel to high school for surveys and snack bag distribution
Total	\$1500	

APPENDIX D

True Leaders in Equity, a 4-H Project by Idaho Youth for Health Equity
In partnership with Caldwell High School Athletics
PRE-SEASON SURVEY

Student Athlete: You are being asked these questions because you are part of the Caldwell High School (CHS) sports team. We want to learn what you know about nutrition and hydration. This survey is voluntary. If you do not want to complete the Qualtrics survey, you do not need to. However, we hope you will take a few minutes to complete it because your answers are important. CHS Administration has approved the Qualtrics survey. This survey is private. No one at CHS will see your answers. A final report of all responses will be shared with CHS administration and coaches.

Please answer all of the questions as honestly as you can. If you are uncomfortable answering a question, you may leave it blank. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers, and your

1. Do you pay attention to how much fruit you eat each day? *(Yes 1, Usually 2, Not Really 3, No 4)*
2. Do you pay attention to how many vegetables you eat each day? *(Yes 1, Usually 2, Not Really 3, No 4)*
3. Do you pay attention to how much water you drink each day? *(Yes 1, Usually 2, Not Really 3, No 4)*
4. Do you pay attention to how many sugary drinks you drink each day? *(Yes 1, Usually 2, Not Really 3, No 4)*
5. Do you pay attention to how active you are each day? *(Yes 1, Usually 2, Not Really 3, No 4)*
6. Do you encourage others to be active with you? *(Yes 1, Usually 2, Not Really 3, No 4)*
7. How often do you eat breakfast? *(Every Day 4, Most Days 3, Some Days 2, Never 1)*
8. How often do you eat fast food? *(Every Day 4, Most Days 3, Some Days 2, Never 1)*
9. How often do you eat school lunch? *(Every Day 4, Most Days 3, Some Days 2, Never 1)*
10. Do you feel encouraged by your fellow athletes to make healthy food choices? *(Yes 4, Usually 3, Not Really 2, No 1)*
11. Do you feel encouraged by your coaches to make healthy food choices? *(Yes 4, Usually 3, Not Really 2, No 1)*
12. How often do you notice your athletic performance is tied to the type and amount of food you eat throughout the day? *(Always 5, Most of the time 4, Sometimes 3, Rarely 2, Never 1)*
13. How often do you feel you have control over the types and amounts of food that you eat? *(Always 5, Most of the time 4, Sometimes 3, Rarely 2, Never 1)*
14. What, if anything, makes it difficult to drink water during the school day? *(Open ended)*
15. What might motivate you to make positive change for your eating or hydration practices? *(Check all that apply)*
 - a. Seeing my peers make healthy choices 1
 - b. Encouragement from coaches 2
 - c. Better understanding of how nutrition and hydration impacts me 3
 - d. Larger servings of food offered during school lunch 4
 - e. Healthier foods offered at school lunch 5
 - f. Healthy foods offered during athletic practices and competition events 6
 - g. Having a personal water bottle to carry during school 7
 - h. More time between classes to visit the water fountain 8
 - i. Different restroom break policies/permission during school hours 9
 - j. Other: *(open answer)*
16. *What grade are you in? (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)*
17. *Counting this season, how many years have you participated in this sport? (First year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, More than 4 years)*

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POST-SEASON SURVEY

Student Athlete: You are being asked these questions because you are part of the Caldwell High School (CHS) sports team. We want to hear your thoughts about nutrition and hydration during this past sports season. This survey is voluntary. If you do not want to complete the Qualtrics survey, you do not need to. However, we hope you will take a few minutes to complete it because your answers are important. CHS Administration has approved the Qualtrics survey. This survey is private. No one at CHS will see your answers. A final report of all responses will be shared with CHS administration and coaches.

Please answer all of the questions as honestly as you can. If you are uncomfortable answering a question, you may leave it blank. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers, and your answers will not affect your participation or place in CHS sports in any way. Thanks for your help.

1. Did you complete the start-of-Season survey? (Yes, Not Sure, No,)
2. Did you receive the athlete snack bags? (Yes, Not Sure, No,)
- (Questions 3-16 scale: Strongly Agree 5, Agree 4, Neither Agree nor Disagree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1)*
3. I liked getting the athlete snack bags.
4. I liked getting a water bottle.
5. The snacks were helpful in supporting my athletic performance.
6. Receiving the athlete snack bags made me feel supported by my peers.
7. Receiving the snack bags had a positive impact on my experience this sports season.
8. I ate the snacks provided prior to competing in my athletic events.
9. I saved the snacks for after competing in my athletic events.
10. Having a new water bottle helped me to drink more water.
11. I learned something I didn't know from the nutrition fact cards in the bags.
12. I would not have had access to nutritious snacks on athletic events days without the snack bags.
13. My coaches encourage me to make healthy food choices.
14. It is important that student athletes are offered healthy food and water at school.
15. I would like to see healthier food options during school lunch.
16. Any other comments on the project? _____
17. What grade are you in? (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)
18. Counting this season, how many years have you participated in this sport?
(First year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, More than 4 years)

Thanks for completing this survey. GO COUGS!