

Is Dismissal The Real Danger?



The Dragons

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The Coronavirus Issue

Schools are essential to a working society and with most of them currently closed it is difficult to get our economy back on track. Unfortunately, opening schools again is easier said than done because having a large amount of people in one space is likely to spread an infection. Because the coronavirus is very contagious, people are hesitant to send their children back to school where they have a greater chance of contracting it.

Our school, West Point High, is one of many educational institutions that is struggling to find solutions to this issue, so that it can open again for the new school year, without causing a spike in Covid-19 cases. We want to help our school become a safe environment for students to learn, where they don't have to fear becoming sick and infecting their loved ones.

Problem Area: Entrances and Exits

One of the many areas of our school that are heavily and often used are the gate entrances and exits. Everyone on campus uses this area: students, teachers, staff, and visitors. The most hectic times are the start and end of the school day when everyone has only 5 minutes to get where they need to be. This means that our student population of 1,800 are all traveling through the same area at the same time, which makes it impossible to stay 6 feet away from each other. The main entrances near the front office are small and easily congested, which makes it the most likely place to become infected.



Front Entrance →

← Back Entrance



Solution: Different Dismissal Times

We came to our solution using our creative/design process that consisted of our hands-on knowledge , reliable research, discussion with other students, and feedback from our mentor. Our solution is to change the school's schedule to have different classes have separate start times and dismissals. This will help eliminate large crowds of students using the front gate at the same time. Another way, to further reduce the contact and chance of infection would be to widen the front gate, so that more students can enter/exit without bumping into others.

These solutions will be implemented by having the administrators change the dismissal and arrival times of the students by grade levels and by paying for the main gate to be enlarged. A construction engineer will be needed to renovate the front gate and a planning engineer will create a schedule that is efficient and practical. These solutions are innovative because they haven't been implemented before in our school and our new schedule will continue to be useful in the future because it will help keep any future epidemics from having a large effect on students.

Research Survey

We've asked the teachers and staff of West Point High school a series of 16 questions on which areas are the most crowded and hardest to implement distancing rules.

With our research, we've concluded that the Front Gate is the 2nd most crowded area, with Hallways being the most crowded area with an average of 7.43.

7. On a scale from 1-10, from 1 being enough space to run and 10 being to always bumping into people, How crowded is the Front Gate? (During Dismissal)

[More Details](#)

14

Responses

6.93

Average Number

[Full Survey Here](#)

Similar School Schedules

According to the New York Times:

“In Sydney, Australia, schools are opening in staggered stages, holding classes one day a week for a quarter of the students from each grade. Hong Kong and Japan are trying similar phased reopenings. In Taiwan, classes have been in session since late February, but assemblies have been canceled and students are ordered to wear masks.”

“In Germany, which last week announced that it would reopen most aspects of its economy and allow all students back in coming weeks, class sizes have been cut in half. Hallways have become one-way systems. Breaks are staggered. Teachers wear masks and students are told to dress warmly because windows and doors are kept open for air circulation.”

Barriers to Our Solution

Our different dismissal schedule will cost the school and/or employer who implements this ideology (minimizing groups/limiting number of students) the time and scheduling of their work/education space, E.G. having to extend a school day for an hour or two more due to the different arrival and dismissal times of students to and from the school. And possibly some extra effort on the staff's part because they would be the ones making a personalized schedule for their school. This solution would take no extra equipment than what the school already has on hand.

However, enlarging the main gate will come with a cost because they would need to remove the original door and put a bigger one in its place. This would require the school to hire construction workers to get the job done safely. In our specific plan the school's space does not change from the original amount of exits they were planning on using. The size of the space available for entrances/exits can differ depending on how they use the 4 exits in their new schedule.

Effects of Our Solution

Implementing our solution would affect the stakeholder's schedule/time, because they would have to rearrange their schedules due to the different dismissal and arrival times.

The negative ethical considerations that we have to consider which are the emotions and mental wellbeing of the students, due to the fact that they might not be put on the same schedule as someone they might be emotionally dependent on which causes their mental and emotional health to deteriorate. Although there is benefits to splitting people up, as it would greatly lower the risk of infection and improve our ability to contain an outbreak should one occur in our school.

The function of the space will change by limiting the amount of people using all of the exits at one time which greatly decreases the risk of spreading the infection. While at the same time more exits in the school will be opening up to allow more groups to exit from different sections of the campus at one time.

Team Work

Our team was very successful when it came to decision making, equally dividing the work and participation on the physical “turn in” work.

The one thing that was hindering our progress was the lack of communication between our team because part of our team were unable to talk to the rest of us, which made it difficult to be on the same page.

We’ve improved a lot on learning what how to take help, especially on presenting, it helped us with finding new ways on how to communicate with each other.

Works Cited

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