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Binghamton City School District's Meal Programs and their Impact on Reducing Local Food Insecurity

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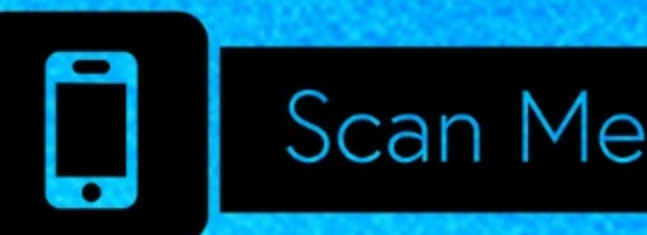
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Is the National School Lunch Program the reason why Broome County's food insecurity has remained steady amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent unemployment?



for photos of distribution sites during school shutdowns

National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

- To mitigate COVID-19 related concerns, the Binghamton City School District implemented the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to provide free meals to all students
- I evaluated the impact of NSLP on decreasing the food insecurity rates in the Binghamton City School District amidst the COVID-19 pandemic

Conclusions

- Figure 1 suggests that the use of the National School Lunch Program is a factor that contributes to the alleviation of food insecurity and meal struggles
- After an increase in public outreach by Binghamton School District, families were more inclined to use the National School Lunch Program
- There are several factors that contribute to the slight decline in food insecurity, but the school district's ability to properly inform the public and execute 13 food distribution sites greatly helped

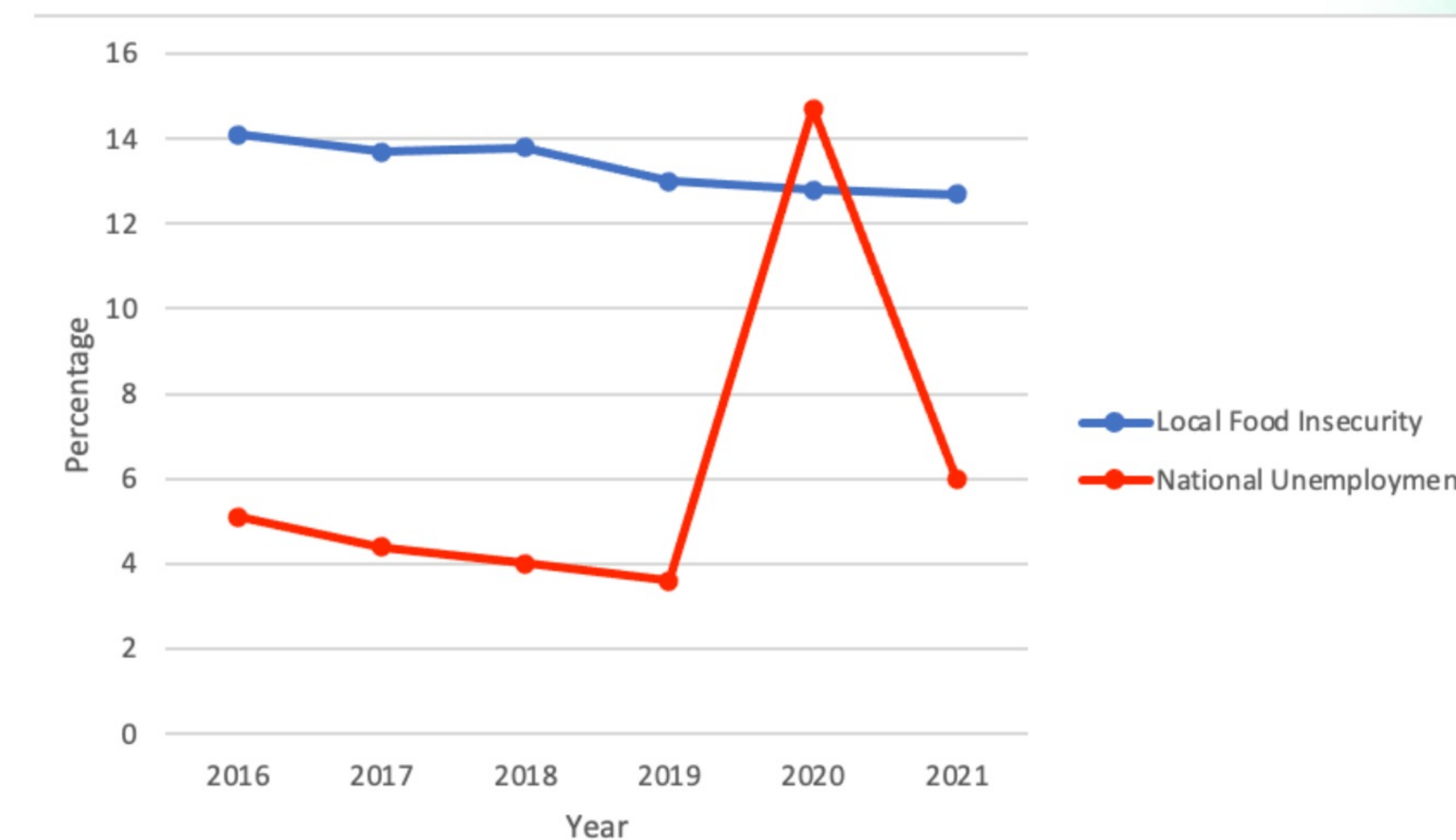


Figure 1: National percentage of unemployment in comparison to Broome County's percentage of food insecurity

Background

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an uptick in the number of food insecure families
- Food insecurity goes hand in hand with unemployment and the decreases in income
- When adults in the household experience partial or total loss of income, their ability to provide food for their families decreases

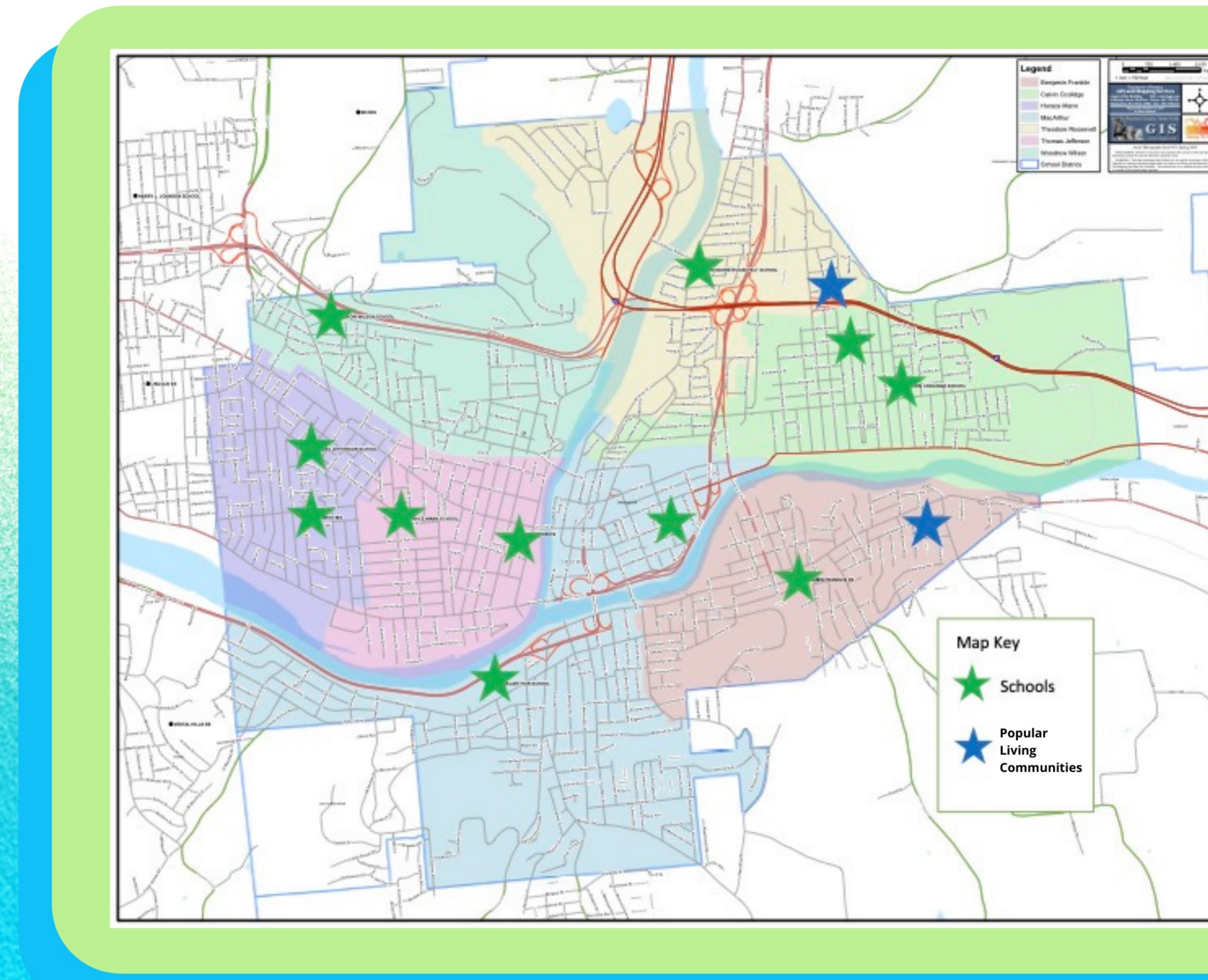


Figure 2: Binghamton City School District's "Grab-n-Go" meal distribution sites present at elementary, middle schools, high schools, an popular residential complexes

As advertised by Rock on Cafe, Broome County's meal service provider, the starred sites are available to all students who attend a public school in Broome County. Students can visit any location in Broome County, even those located outside their school district. This creates security for the families who may rely on babysitters, extended family members, and friends living outside their school district. The majority of sites are open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on weekdays.

Research Methods

- Mapping of distribution sites alongside map of residential areas
- Analysis of Rock on Cafe's social media platforms and public outreach methods
- Visiting neighborhoods surrounding distribution sites to observe residential demographics