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Although many people consider the Corona Virus to be “the great equalizer” which “doesn't care about how rich you are, how famous you are, where you live, what amazing stories you can tell” as Madonna put it ([mentioned in a CBS article](#)), COVID-19 on the other hand, is not equal in the way it affects students in the educational system. “The great equalizer” disproportionally affects students with lower socioeconomic status or in underrepresented communities.

With the risk of exposing students to COVID-19, online homeschooling was proposed to ensure students can still receive an education without the risk of spreading germs through daily contact. Even though the idea of online schooling, seems like a solution to the education system during quarantine it is not an optimal solution for every student. Any student who does not have access to wifi and technological device to use will be negatively impacted by the shift to online schooling. One of these students, a friend of mine who is a junior who goes to Brooklyn Tech who has to take 3 AP tests in the upcoming weeks. As a result of her unstable wifi, while she was taking the AP US History test, she was unable to submit her test. Since this occurred before the [College Board](#) put out a statement saying “Any student testing between May 18 and 22 who can't successfully upload their response through the exam platform or send it to us by email, will need to request a makeup exam”, she will have to retake the test later in June. Although the College Board instantiated a solution to a problem that negatively impacted my friend and many other students who might have had a similar issue, it does not solve the problem for a student who does not have or cannot afford a device to take this test on or wifi to send the email in the first place.

Many students who fit this description come from low-income families which prohibits them from being able to afford a wifi router and a working technological device to complete homework assignments or AP with. For many of the low income or homeless youth in America, that daily contact in school is the only means for them to receive an education in hopes of making a better life for themselves. An article in the New York Times [She's 10, Homeless and Eager to Learn. But She Has No Internet](#), highlights the reality of many homeless and low-income students who will be behind in their classes simply because their families cannot afford the resources needed for them to fulfill online classes. One story that is highlighted in this article is the story of a homeless girl named Allia Phillips, who does not have access to wifi in the family shelter where she lives which to complete her assignments. Even though her mom's phone has a limited cellular hotspot she can use to connect to an iPad her school provided to allow her to complete assignments, the cellular data is still limited and not always reliable. Also, the option to get a device from school and use the cellular data on a parent's is not an option for every student in this situation. Ultimately, any student who does not have both a technological device and access to wifi will be negatively affected by this pandemic from an academic standpoint without factoring in how environmental justice also puts many students who live in

underrepresented communities or have a lower socioeconomic status at a disadvantage simply because of where they live.

In addition to some students not being able to get access to the technology needed to complete online tasks, students also would not be able to do school work at home if they had other more urgent responsibilities. Although needing to take care of siblings/relatives aside from COVID-19 may be responsibilities that also affect the ability for students to have a balanced home life and school life schedule, new family responsibilities may also arise. In a Yale interview [*Connecting the Dots Between Environmental Injustice and the Coronavirus*](#), Scientist Sacoby Wilson who “has long focused on health issues related to environmental injustice” addresses how the health of people in these communities are also disproportionately affected as well. As Wilson put it “folks who are in neighborhoods and communities that have had high case rates of Covid-19, [are] communities that may have, again, limited access to healthcare infrastructure, communities that may be dealing with a lot of air pollution issues”. This means students affected by or have family members affected by COVID-19 will need to take time to take care of themselves or family, with their family’s health as a priority.

Overall some students are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 especially those with lower socioeconomic status or in underrepresented communities.