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Practical Access Transcripts

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## S1 E4: Supporting Students in Online Environments with Low or No Technology

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## Transcript

**Lisa Dieker**

Welcome to Practical Access. I'm Lisa Dieker

**Rebecca Hines**

And I'm Rebecca Hines. And today, Lisa, I think you said our topic is going to be low tech/no tech. What are we doing with the kids who don't have access?

**Lisa Dieker**

I mean, we're hearing this over and over. That's a question I've been posed by six different people already. You know what? If I'm homeless? What if I'm in a remote rural setting? What if I don't have bandwidth, and we know lots of communities you know are really offering kids free bandwidth. Well, that's great. But if I have no device to get on with. I'm just set there it left with what's my least level of technology. And if I don't have any, what are our choices? You got some thoughts there. I can kind of kick it off with something I was thinking about, which is kind of a crazy idea, But one of the school districts I visited they actually have the PTA. do a fund drive. Now you're like, wow, who's going to do a fund drive? Can you imagine sending out a twitter to the PTA saying, if you have a device, will you leave it in your mailbox, wipe it off with a Lysol, wipe an iPod? And could we donate those to kids? I know lots of schools are saying if kids don't have them, but some schools don't even have the resources and finances to do that. Is that something the community could do? I have two iPods sitting in my house, somebody wants them, let me know. I'll wipe them off, disinfect them, leave them in the mailbox. Could we start to deliver those to kids? And then if there's free access, kids have it. If that doesn't work, where do we go back?

**Rebecca Hines**

Well, I was actually thinking about the same thing when I was driving down the road yesterday, and I saw Texas Roadhouse with a big outside umbrella tent.

**Lisa Dieker**

So no eating in.

**Rebecca Hines**

No, you did it. And what I realized is that they had made their own little makeshift kind of drive-through, and everybody was sitting in their cars, one by one, people would walk up presumably to pick up the orders, or maybe even to make orders, and it got me thinking. You know, it's this of model that in these communities where there's really not tech access, could we have some drive up areas where kids could, you know, parents park, teachers take different shifts, kids can walk up and share information that they just read that the teacher might have given the day before. They can ask a question. They could do a quick oral assessment and maybe just to see a familiar face. And I think if we if we look at areas where it's not super rural and kids would have a chance to do that, maybe it may be in church parking lots, maybe in school parking lots, maybe a wide variety of places. But I think we need to be really creative

and look at what business is doing in some of these cases. What are they doing to meet the consumer needs? Because we're in the same boat.

### **Lisa Dieker**

Yeah, and I even wonder about, you know, I was listening. And I know that in some remote place is there gonna be mailing boxes of food to kids and I was really happy to hear that in a webinar I sat on this week. And so you know, if a two week supply of food came, could we not only have a mail forward but a mail back? So here comes your packet, and here's your way to send it back. And again, you and I aren't big fans of worksheets, but they could be really practical things like Go out in your yard and, you know, take a dandelion and blow it and count the number of dandelions that grow the next day. Or, you know, pull up a piece of grass and where's the root to the grass? Now pull up a weed. What's the difference in the root? Take a picture or draw a picture. And so now, when the food is delivered, so does their learning. And when the then that kid gets an envelope to mail it back. So again, I think those are the kind of things that we have to think super simple, because families are already overburdened, and kids really in those communities that don't have access to technology probably don't have access to solve that problem. We need adults to solve that problem for them, not because they're great kids. They just need somebody. I grew up in a rural community, I can't even imagine. My bus ride was a 30 minute bus ride. I wouldn't have taken a bus to go to the Texas Roadhouse learn as you go stand. But at the same time, I did use the mail. I did know how to communicate, and I might have been able to get access if somebody would've given me the tools.

### **Rebecca Hines**

I think that your kickoff point about donated tools, PTA's doing that? Even outside of these trying times? There's lots of schools that do that for kids who simply don't have access. And I think the key there anything we can do that's mobile based. That's phone based. Yes. And if we had a nice map for students of here are the place is in your community that you have hot spots that you can go and connect. And if we put some devices in kid's hands, then we can get back to some of those tools that we mentioned in earlier episodes like Seesaw. That students can just simply upload the information's shoot it right to the teacher.

Yeah, and again, phone. I mean, you know, makes us a little old school. We remember the day when it had a cord. Don't do that anymore. But I do love the fact that if the PTA could even get phones and why we're recommending the PTA again, here's why. 503(c)(3) non for profit is not owned by the school district, so it doesn't have to be tagged and located. It's really a gift. It's a gift to that kid, and that kid, if they lose it, we don't go through the whole things that we might have to is a school district. And again, we're not talking your off the shelf technology. We're talking things that are in your drawers collecting dust. So even just the access to a cell phone would allow some of those students to call in. I know that one of the universities I was talking to their students in a room rural site are actually they're giving them hot spots so they can. They're giving them updated, upping their data plans. So again, when you start to go to that lowest denominator, we think that's also good for kids with disabilities. Don't just assume they can always upload the high end. Maybe it's pick up the phone and actually call me Becky and say, Lisa, what are you thinking about those weeds that you pulled up? We know that's what the virtual school does so well is they do those check in and check outs over phone calls with both parents and students. And I think that's really powerful and really does get rid of that basic access issue for most kids.

**Rebecca Hines**

And I'll be talking about that when we think about assessment in a future episode. That idea of oral assessments is definitely something that we should be thinking about moving forward.