

Westerly food truck provides free meals to students on virtual lunch break



A pop-up food truck in downtown Westerly has partnered together with other Rhode Island businesses to offer free lunch to students and their families.

A big blue truck, courtesy of the Ocean House Management Collection, sits off of Main Street.

Right now, it's the only one in the area legally allowed to operate and has been for the last three weeks.

"The food we had left over, we wanted to be able to distribute it and get it to the families in need," said Devin Bozkaya, the executive chef of the Weekapaug Inn. "We understand the communities are struggling. We wanted to be able to provide for them."

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. everyone is welcome to pick up food which is typically the same time students get a break from virtual learning.

About 100 people have taken advantage of it a day.

"Anyone with children that's at home, out of school, that need help or can use our services are welcome to walk right up," said Bozkaya.

This social distancing setup is called "Off the Menu."

Those picking up food are asked to keep their distance from others. The food truck also benefits those giving back.

"It allows us to keep our distance from the families, we're allowed to distribute we're allowed to be mobile," said Bozkaya. "People have really been enjoying the truck, it's different."

Granny Squibb's, Dunns Corner's Market, Dels Lemonade, Dave's Coffee and Deep River Snacks have pitched in food products.

Everyday, the menu changes offering a variety of meals and sides.

"We do understand that most families do depend on the nutritional value that comes from the school lunches," said Bozkaya.

Besides feeding the community, no questions asked, it's an opportunity for some to get out of the house.

"I like the hour lunch," one student told NBC 10 News. "The BLT I had was great."

Volunteers and those preparing the take-home meals told NBC 10 they're happy to give back in a way they know how.

"For us, it's a little more empowering and it's definitely fulfilling to not just patronize our services, but actually to be needed, is a great feeling," said Chef Bozkaya.

Organizers said the food truck will offer food until the end of the [crisis](#).