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CHILD FOOD INSECURITY AND ITS INFLUENCE
ON EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT:
THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN POLICY AND
REALITY IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL

Delaney Earley

Mentor: Carol Camp Yeakey

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how access to food can act as a determinative influence on one's ability to succeed within a school environment. This research will examine Washington, D.C. as a geographic location that is conducive to food insecurity among youth, and assess how school performance may relate to high levels of childhood hunger and poverty within the region. The research questions guiding this project are as follows: What are the determinants of food insecurity among youth? What are the implications of hunger on childhood well-being? Does a relationship between food insecurity and academic performance exist? If so, why is this significant and how can policy more effectively meet the needs of food insecure children? This last question is particularly pertinent as discourse surrounding social welfare policies in the United States has historically emphasized the needs and well-being of children without providing adequate support to meet these needs. This project will draw on interdisciplinary research to examine the disconnect between political discourse, policy, and reality that exists with regard to child food insecurity and educational achievement in Washington, D.C., a disparity that may have broader implications for other geographic regions across the country.