



CASE STUDY | DISTRICT NUTRITION

A Solution Built for K-12 Nutrition Proves Priceless

CHALLENGES

- Struggled to adapt technology not designed for K-12
- Stored data locally without the ability to update remotely
- Offered disparate, cash-based meal and fee payment processes

SOLUTIONS

[LINQ District Nutrition \(formerly TITAN\)](#)

[LINQ Connect](#)

RESULTS

- Realizing more flexible functionality and improved tech support
- Viewing and updating data and reports instantly in real-time from anywhere
- Giving families a single, app-based meal and fee payments solution

Director of Nutrition Elizabeth Martinez knew Carson City School District's nutrition software needed an update from the day she started in December 2018. The medium-sized Nevada district, home to 10 schools and 7,200 students, used a system not designed for K-12 needs, and she immediately noticed that it required too much work from her team. Data and reports could only be pulled and updated onsite at each building, support was lacking, and the system didn't offer a streamlined meal payments solution.

Martinez says she spent her first days at the district identifying issues with the old system and making a wish list for a solution to replace it. "There are so many details in education," she explains, "so it's important to work with a provider specialized in K-12 nutrition." She says LINQ Nutrition (formerly TITAN) checked all the boxes and was the obvious choice.

Although there was hesitance to learn a new system from some staff members, getting buy-in was pretty easy once they saw how simple the new system was to learn. "It's actually great to be able to tell new applicants in their interviews how easy our system is to use. It's a nice selling point," she says.

They needed a school-specific nutrition software solution

Carson City's previous software wasn't built specifically for education, so they were forced to use workarounds and manual processes to compensate for the software's limitations. With LINQ Nutrition, the system works how they need it to and provides flexibility when adapting it for a report or process.

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For example, Martinez says the items sold, meal count, and claimed meal count reports never matched in the old system. The team didn’t understand exactly why this was the case. For years, they struggled with this frustration, but they soon found out after implementing LINQ Nutrition. “Now I can customize the reports,” says Martinez, “which gives us the ability to catch discrepancies and correct them.” She explains that LINQ Nutrition lets her customize reports so she can separate types of meals sold, and it’s going to help the program operate more efficiently from now on.

Martinez says that because LINQ Nutrition is built for schools, the support team understands how to provide the assistance she needs. “When I need them, they’re there... and they’re working on a solution with me in minutes,” she explains. She also says they’ve built relationships with members of the support team, so they understand her needs even better.

With their experience in education technology specifically, Martinez says it saves her time explaining why she needs the system to support her processes.

Data updates from anywhere thanks to cloud-based data storage

Martinez says the biggest single advantage LINQ Nutrition gave them was its cloud-based design. She no longer had to physically travel to a building to update or correct data. Their old system stored everything locally on individual computers, which meant there was no way to access, input, or update data remotely. “If a cashier made an error and I caught it in my monthly report,” she says, “I would have to go to the school, log in, and fix it there. It was awful.” It also meant automatic updates were out of the question. Reports had to be compiled manually and then sent to the rest of the team or to stakeholders. Recipients had no way to dig deeper into the data, apply new filters, or verify that the information was up to date.

LINQ Nutrition gives Martinez access to everything from her desk

**“It’s made my life
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Elizabeth Martinez
Director of Nutrition

in the district office. She can access any report, set up reporting templates and filters, and even make corrections when needed without stepping out of her office. “It’s made my life so much easier,” Martinez says.

Gaining a simpler, digital way to accept meal payments and school fees

Another problem the district experienced with their previous software was that there was no way to simplify meal payments and school fees. Cash and checks were required for most transactions, and there wasn’t any consistency between processes. A family looking to clear a library fee, pay for a field trip, or settle a student’s meal debt would first have to find the person at the school who could accept that payment. Sending a check or cash with their student also carried the risk of funds being lost, stolen, or simply forgotten.

[LINQ Connect](#), included as part of their LINQ Nutrition solution, gives the whole district an easy way to process meal payments. Each student gets their own digital account, which families can fund via a mobile app. Money goes directly onto the student’s account, and they can set usage preferences to ensure it’s used for the desired lunch and snack items. There’s no more worrying about lunch money being lost or stolen between home and the cafeteria.

Carson City also offers LINQ Connect to families as a simpler solution for all school fees and payments. They’re currently rolling it out to all of their schools, starting with their high school.

“Families all love the LINQ Connect app,” says Martinez. They’re using the system for any fees that need to be collected, including testing, field trips, classroom fees, and yearbook purchases.

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Director of Nutrition

Rolling out LINQ Nutrition POS hardware

Martinez says she's excited about continuing to expand their use of LINQ Connect for school fees and implementing new LINQ Nutrition POS hardware. Going into the 2023-24 school year, she's confident the new devices will work as designed because the rest of the system has been so reliable, and that's a stress saver. "It's one less thing I'm anxious about right now," she says. The new POS system will further streamline checkout for students and staff, helping lines move faster, and simplifying reporting.

Martinez says she's never looking back. Switching to LINQ Nutrition still feels like the right move for their district, and she looks forward to implementing even more of its features in the coming years.

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Nutrition supports
districts like Carson City

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