



### **PUSD to Offer Free Meals for Secondary School Students in 2022-23**

The Piedmont Unified School District (PUSD) is excited to announce it will participate in the National School Lunch Program for the 2022-23 school year, providing all students with access to free breakfast and lunch.

Preparation for the rollout of the program next fall will mean a shift in the operation of our food program. PUSD's dedicated food service staff know what students like to eat and are passionate about preparing quality food items. The creation of menus with known favorite items and introduction of a wide variety of food options will continue. Not all items will be available daily, but will appear regularly on a rotating menu cycle. The greatest challenge will be to accomplish this while meeting the federal requirements for nutritional content and serving size. The State will reimburse the district up to \$1.97 for breakfast and \$3.73 for lunch.

There are weekly minimums to achieve and serving restrictions on calories, fat and sodium for every meal. There are no requirements for gluten-free and vegetarian options, but creating these items for the menu could be achieved with limitations. Students not wishing to participate in the free meal, which is comprised of at least three of five component options, will be able to purchase components a la carte. A limited number of additional a la carte items will also be available every day. Students will still be able to purchase a second meal.

A week-long pilot program is being planned for April. Details will soon be provided via email and your school newsletters. Also, be on the lookout for a survey and ways to become involved with menu creation.

Families have been instrumental in partnering with the District to build a successful lunch program for students. Without their dedication, hard work, and passion for making sure kids receive the nutrition they need to prepare them for learning, we would not have been able to provide this service. Thank you for all you have done to support the education of our students.