

**PRESCOTT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #1**

**FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

**UNPAID MEAL CHARGE POLICY**

The Prescott Unified School District recognizes the important link between proper nutrition and academic success. The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent district procedure for charging meals when students do not have money to pay, preventing meal charges, and ensuring eligible children are certified for free and reduced-price meals. To ensure that households are aware of negative balances and the potential to accrue more meal debt, the Food Service Department may send out negative or low balance notices to parents or guardians.

**Monitoring your student's meal account** - You may monitor your student's meal account for free by setting up an online account with **EZSchoolpay.com**. You may also pre-pay and add funds to their account at the school cafeteria using cash or check. You may use **EZSchoolpay.com** to set up a meal account for your students and pay online with their student ID number. It is easy, convenient, and secure.

**Emergency Meals** - Because hunger is an impediment to learning, no child shall be denied a school meal because of an inability to pay. Children will never be denied a lunch, even if they have accrued a negative balance. Students without lunch money will be served an alternate meal that meets the U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrition standards for school meals. An 'alternative meal' will be provided to students with unpaid meal charges. We may provide alternative meals (cheese sandwich, milk, and fruit or vegetable) at all grade levels. An alternative meal may be offered only after the student has a negative balance.

The school administration will be notified if a student is continually receiving an alternative meal. Negative balances are still the responsibility of the parent or guardian and require immediate payment.

**A la carte** - Students are prohibited from charging an A la carte or 'extra' items' (e.g. a second milk or additional entrée) if the student's meal account is negative.

**Applying for Free or Reduced meals every school year** - Families must submit a new Free and Reduced meal application every school year for meal benefits to qualify for their student's eligibility. New Free and Reduced meal applications are available each school year after July 1<sup>st</sup> and can be accessed online on the PUSD website under the Food Service tab.

**Changes in financial circumstances within the school year** - Families may submit a new Free and Reduced meal application at any time during the school year if the household experiences a change in financial income (income goes down) or the household size goes up.

**Positive balances** - Positive balances will roll over each year. When a student graduates or withdraws, parents or guardians may request a refund from the Food Service Department by emailing the Food Service Liaison or calling #928-717-3232 x71135.