

# PAUSD Student Nutrition Services Newsletter

Volume 1 - December 2021

## Free Meals Offered for All Students-This Year and Forward

The Student Nutrition Service Department has gone through many changes since the beginning of the COVID pandemic.

Our Department is currently operating under emergency COVID waivers and is allowed by both the USDA and CDE to offer free meals to all students through the 2021-22 school year.

Offering free meals to all students within the district has come with some growing pains and a lot of unknowns.

Since the start of school, the Food Service Department has served almost 360,000 meals.

It has been a challenge to identify how many students will choose to eat on a specific day.

Due to the high volume of students eating, our department limited the number of entrée selections offered to keep up with demand and so all students receive a nutritious lunch.

We have begun to transition back to offering more school cooked and prepared from scratch entrees.



It is our goal to continue this trend and to slowly reintroduce some of the build your own bars that were so popular pre-pandemic.

Next school year 2022-23, the Food Service Department will transition to the new CA Universal Free Meal Program.

All students will be offered breakfast and lunch at all PAUSD school sites. PAUSD Administration has begun discussions concerning this new transition and the best ways to offer at each grade level.

USDA and the State of CA only reimburse school districts for one meal per student per meal period (one breakfast, one lunch).

All students will be required to use their student ID card or number to access meals through the computerized Point of sale System. This is the same process that is occurring now.

More details will be coming soon on the new CA Universal Free Meal Program. We will provide an update as soon as we have more information.

## Supply Chain Issues for Food Services Continue

Receiving the supplies that we order for the Food Service Department continues to be a challenge. This is a national issue, not just one that is happening at PAUSD. Below are this month's Inflation Drivers. We are all experiencing an increase in costs and the inability to obtain items.

We recognize that this creates a hardship for parents to decide whether to allow their student to participate when what is listed on the menu may or may not be what is actually served.









The Food Service Department notifies site administrative staff of menu entrée

changes as soon as we are made aware of them.

We appreciate your understanding during this unprecedented time and we all look forward to supplies returning to consistent levels soon.

### Primary Inflation Drivers This Month:

Source: Advanced Economic Solutions (AEC), Sterling Marketing

	<b>+18.5%</b> since Jan 2021		<b>+122%</b> since Jan 2021		<b>+30%</b> since Jan 2021		<b>+53%</b> since Jan 2021
<b>Lumber</b>		<b>Steel</b>		<b>Soy Oil</b>		<b>Pork Bellies</b>	
	<b>-50%</b> since Jan 2021		<b>+8%</b> since Jan 2021		<b>+47%</b> since Jan 2021		<b>+113%</b> since Jan 2021
		<b>Corn</b>		<b>Beef</b>		<b>Chicken</b>	

# Did You Know– Free/Reduced Applications Help PAUSD District Funding as Well as Students & Families?

Just because meals are offered free to all students doesn't mean you should not apply for free and reduced priced meals. Some funding that is provided to school districts is calculated by the number of families that qualify for free and reduced meals through the application process. This funding helps PAUSD!!

You, and your students that qualify may also be helped by multiple items that are available to families that qualify for free and reduced priced meals. Pandemic EBT cards, COMCAST discounts, College Board Testing discounts, some Palo Alto summer programs discounts, the high schools usually have discounts for the prom are some of the items that may be available to you and your students. There are many ways that you are helped by qualifying for free and reduced priced meals.

Please don't miss out on the opportunity to help PAUSD and your family!! Applications are available online on the PAUSD website.



## Food Service Sustainability and Waste Less Efforts

As part of the National School Lunch Program, the PAUSD Food Service must offer specific components as part of each meal. Each student must be offered five components (meat or meat alternative, grains, fruits, vegetables, and milk) to qualify for reimbursement as a lunch. Students must take three out of the five components and one must be a fruit or vegetable. Students can take all of the components but, are not mandated to take them all. Students are required to take a fruit or a vegetable.

Food Services provides "share baskets" at each site as students exit the lunch pick up areas. Students may drop off items they do not want to eat but must take. The Santa Clara County Health Department allows the washing and sanitizing of the packaging of these items and reusing versus throwing them away.

Please help the district and the environment by explaining the use of the share baskets to your students so we can waste less and reuse items.

In other sustainable news, the Food Service Department is looking for staff to help wash our reusable lunch ware items. We are exploring ways to restart our Elementary Reusable Lunch Ware program.

## Pilot/Reintroduction of Secondary Build Your Own Formats

Reintroduction coming to the Middle and High Schools in January–

It is our goal to bring back the Salad Bar, Nacho or Burrito Bowl, and Made to Order Deli Bar formats starting this January. We will pilot the Deli Bar first, and then, rotate the other formats as we see how they affect the volume of students.

