

## PG schools offer help to those affected by shutdown

Posted by [Alan Van Wormer](#) On 01/08/2019

**UPPER MARLBORO, Md.** - On Tuesday, January 8, Interim Chief Executive Officer Dr. Monica Goldson announced a plan offering assistance to students affected by the government shutdown:

Dear Prince George's County Public Schools Community –

As we begin the New Year, many families within our Prince George's County community are dealing with the ongoing impact of the federal government shutdown. All of us at PGCPs recognize that with each passing day, the shutdown is creating uncertainty for many families across the school district. Financial responsibilities extend beyond major expenses like paying rent or the electric bill but also the day-to-day basics like healthy and complete meals.

No parent should fear their child will not eat because they cannot afford to pay. In fact, our existing policy ensures that every child within Prince George's County Public Schools receives something to eat, even if they cannot pay.

While no schools within the district have reported students missing meals because of the shutdown, our team, at the request of our Board of Education, examined a proposal to provide free meals to all students impacted. Under ordinary circumstances, over 83,000 students out of 134,000 already receive free and reduced-price meals. Given the unknown length of the shutdown, expanding this program for weeks to include additional students is cost prohibitive, totaling an estimated \$190,000 a day. While laudable, this unbudgeted expense would be fiscally irresponsible and take funding away from other school district services.

Taking this into consideration, effective immediately, any student that requests a meal due to the federal government shutdown for the remainder of this week (January 8-11) will receive the standard hot entrée available at their school. Additionally, we are providing families that may temporarily qualify, the opportunity to [apply](#) for the free and reduced-price meal program and we are expediting the processing time for affected applicants. Lastly, we have asked school leaders to track the free meals distributed during the week and schools will be reimbursed.

The Prince George's County Public School community is happy to stand beside our neighbors and provide some relief to families during these uncertain economic times.

Sincerely,

Dr. Monica E. Goldson  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Prince George's County Public Schools

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