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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Free Healthy Meals for All Students in the 2023-2024 School Year**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2023 - Alamogordo, NM – Alamogordo Public School District**

Alamogordo Public Schools (APS) is proud to announce the exciting changes coming to our school cafeterias across our district as part of the SB4 bill signed by Governor Lujan Grisham earlier this year. With a focus on scratch cooking and access to healthy, fresh products, the new initiative aims to revolutionize the school meal program, ensuring students receive nutritious meals to support their overall well-being.

In line with this transformative legislation, Sandra Davis, the dedicated Student Nutrition Coordinator for APS, was sworn in as the Vice President of the New Mexico School Nutrition Association on June 9th. Her invaluable expertise and commitment to student nutrition will help lead the way in implementing the new standards and working closely with the Public Education Department (PED) and Kendal Chavez from the Office of the Governor to ensure Alamogordo Public Schools sets an example for the state.

Davis expressed her optimism about the smooth transition, thanks in part to the strong partnership with food management company K12 by Elior. Under this collaboration, APS has already implemented several standards, including the procurement of fresh fruits and vegetables sourced from local New Mexico growers, purchasing New Mexico made tortillas, smoking their own meats, and preparing and cooking scratch-made meals from carefully curated recipes. These practices not only ensure the highest quality of meals but also support the local economy.

To further emphasize sustainability, APS will introduce share tables and offer versus serve policies, effectively reducing school waste and promoting responsible consumption. By providing each student with a free breakfast and a free lunch, APS strives to eliminate barriers to access and ensure that all students have access to nutritious meals that support their learning and growth.

While the new initiative brings free meals to students, it's important to note that USDA regulations will still apply. Therefore, parents of students attending non-title one schools will be required to fill out free/reduced applications. This process is crucial to help schools receive additional state funding and families to benefit from programs like P-EBT.

"Feeding our students the healthiest, best-tasting meals has always been our priority," stated Davis. "With the support of our dedicated staff and the partnership with K12 by Elior, we are confident in our ability to meet the new standards and continue providing nutritious meals that our students deserve."

Alamogordo Public Schools is committed to nurturing the well-being of its students through providing healthy meals and promoting a positive eating environment. By embracing scratch cooking and fresh ingredients, the district is paving the way for a healthier future for New Mexico's school nutrition programs. Additional information and letters will be sent to all parents and guardians, APS asks that you ensure your contact information is up-to-date in Power School so you don't miss a thing. You can also connect with APS through Let's Talk, call or text 575-812-8573 or visit our website at <https://www.alamogordoschools.org/contact.stml>

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