

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Project Help Assisting Students and Families During Pandemic**

*Community supported program offers creative solution to temporary, emergency situations for students and families in need.*

**APACHE JUNCTION, ARIZONA** (July 24, 2020) – A stable home environment most often leads to success in the classroom. With this basic concept and concern, Project HELP emerged over 30 years ago to offer creative solutions to temporary crises for Apache Junction Unified School District students and families in times of need.

Project HELP is a community-based program committed to providing short-term assistance. While dedicated to assisting whenever possible, Project HELP understands the importance of helping families achieve financial independence, build self-sufficiency, and esteem. Therefore, any aid given is considered a "loan" which is then repaid through community service.

"Families repay this aid through service in the community, or attending self-help or parenting classes," said Project HELP Coordinator, Rosie Portugal-Brastad. "Volunteer hours can also be served at any AJUSD school, helping teachers and students. It's a great way to give back to the community who supports so many when needed."

The opportunities for educational success are enhanced when a child is healthy, has a place to live, food to eat, and clothes to wear. Project HELP is committed to facilitating the growth and development of AJUSD students in any way possible, helping them reach their best potential.

Project HELP does not receive funding from AJUSD, but is supported 100% by donations. Donated items include financial, food, new and gently-used clothing, and household goods. Aid is distributed, as funds allow, based on need.

To be eligible for aid, students and families must live within the boundaries of AJUSD; All school-age children living in the household attend an AJUSD school. Aid is contingent on school enrollment and at least two weeks of regular attendance at the school; Written documentation of all income and

expenses must be provided, and; The parent or legal guardian of the student must apply in person at the Project HELP office.

Project HELP encourages families to become self-sufficient, in part by treating aid as a loan. Families repay these loans through community services. Families are responsible for finding their own community service and bringing in written documentation of their volunteer hours. Project HELP also serves as a resource for other services available within the Apache Junction community and will make referrals whenever possible and appropriate.

Project HELP is located in the Roy H. Hudson Pinal County Governmental Complex in Apache Junction, behind the Food Bank at 195 East Superstition Boulevard. The office is staffed Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Assistance days are Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Donation days are Monday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., or by appointment. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, please call for assistance and donations.

For more information, call 480-288-2955 or go to the Project HELP website at [www.ajusd.org/projecthelp](http://www.ajusd.org/projecthelp).

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## **About AJUSD**

The Apache Junction Unified School District serves over 3,200 students in a 217-square mile area that includes the City of Apache Junction, Gold Canyon, Peralta Trail, Queen Valley and the unincorporated areas of the Superstition Mountain foothills. There are five schools in the district including a high school, junior high and a special education facility. Learn more about the Apache Junction Unified School District at [www.ajusd.org](http://www.ajusd.org). This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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AJUSD empowers students by providing them with the knowledge, skills and ingenuity to pursue their dreams and make a positive difference in the world.

