



THE COALITION
FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD



School Food Programs: Contributing to Student Well-Being and Success

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November 6, 2019 - Healthy School Communities National Forum

Presentation



1. The issues
2. A solution: School food
3. The Coalition for Healthy School Food
4. Provincial Chapters and Action
5. #Nourish Kids Now: Ways to get involved
6. Q&A

The issues

In Canada, food has historically been a private affair

Changes to our food system

- Increased processed foods
- Increase participation of women in the workplace
- Shorter lunch-times
- Longer commutes



The issues

All children have trouble accessing nutritious food

Low food literacy rates

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graph TD; A[All children have trouble accessing nutritious food] --> D[Children & youth consume insufficient and unhealthy diets, impacting:]; B[Low food literacy rates] --> D;
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Children & youth consume **insufficient** and **unhealthy** diets, impacting:

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Academic performance

The issues

- A recent UNICEF report ranked Canada 37th of 41 developed countries in providing healthy food for kids.
- Less than one-third of children under 12 years of age eat 5+ servings of vegetables and fruit daily.
- Over 50% of the total energy intake of children aged 4-18 is from ultra-processed foods.
- One-third of students in elementary schools and two-thirds of students in secondary schools do not eat a nutritious breakfast before school.

A Solution: School Food Programs

School food programs that improve access to healthy food, achieve food literacy and healthy eating behaviours from an early age are recognized as a valuable health promotion policy



A Solution: School food



USA



SPAIN



FINLAND



FRANCE

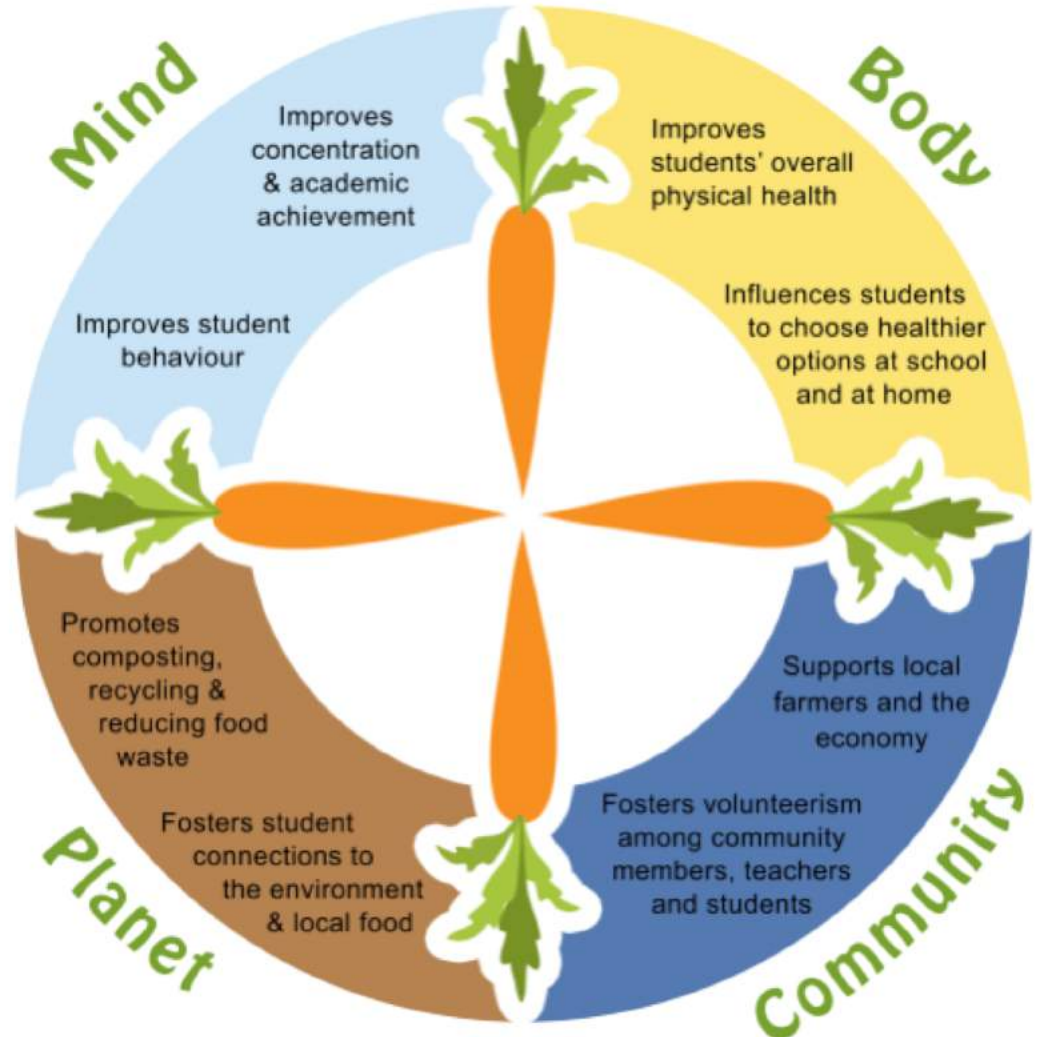


ITALY

The Impact of School Food Programs

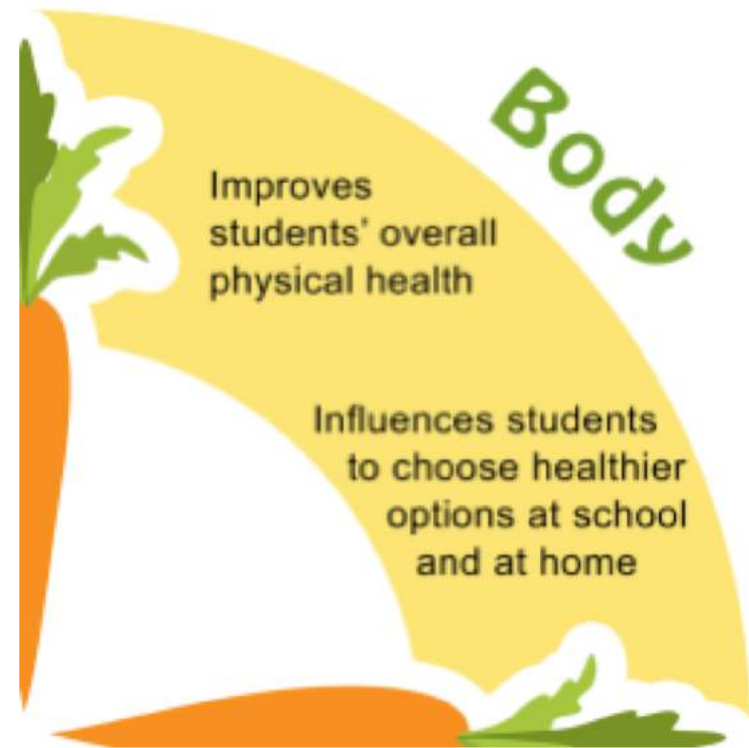
Good Food in Schools
Can Nourish...

Visual prepared by:



The Impact of School Food Programs

- Children who have a school breakfast program available consume a better overall diet, including more vegetables and fruits, and consume less saturated and trans fat, sodium and added sugars.
- Whole grains, fruits and vegetables (such as those provided in student nutrition programs) can contribute to reducing the risk of cardiovascular events and chronic diseases such as stroke, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- Children who eat a morning meal are sick less often, have fewer problems associated with hunger, such as dizziness, lethargy, headaches, stomach aches and earaches.



The Impact of School Food Programs

- Students who eat a morning meal on most days show at least a 10% increase in independent academic work, initiative, conflict resolution, class participation and problem solving.
- Students who ate breakfast on most days were more on track for high school graduation compared to those who did not eat breakfast.
- School food programs have been linked with positive impacts on children's mental health, including reductions in behavioural and emotional problems, bullying, aggression, anxiety, and depression, as well as fewer visits to the school nurse.



The Impact of School Food Programs

- Increase in knowledge and awareness about local foods and seasonality.
- Provides children with an understanding of agriculture and the environment.
- Opportunity for students to learn how to minimize food waste (a huge contributor to climate change) and how to compost.
- A program that follows and promotes the 2019 Canada's Food Guide would help students develop a palate for fresh vegetables, fruit and plant proteins, which is consistent with a diet that emits low amounts of greenhouse gasses.



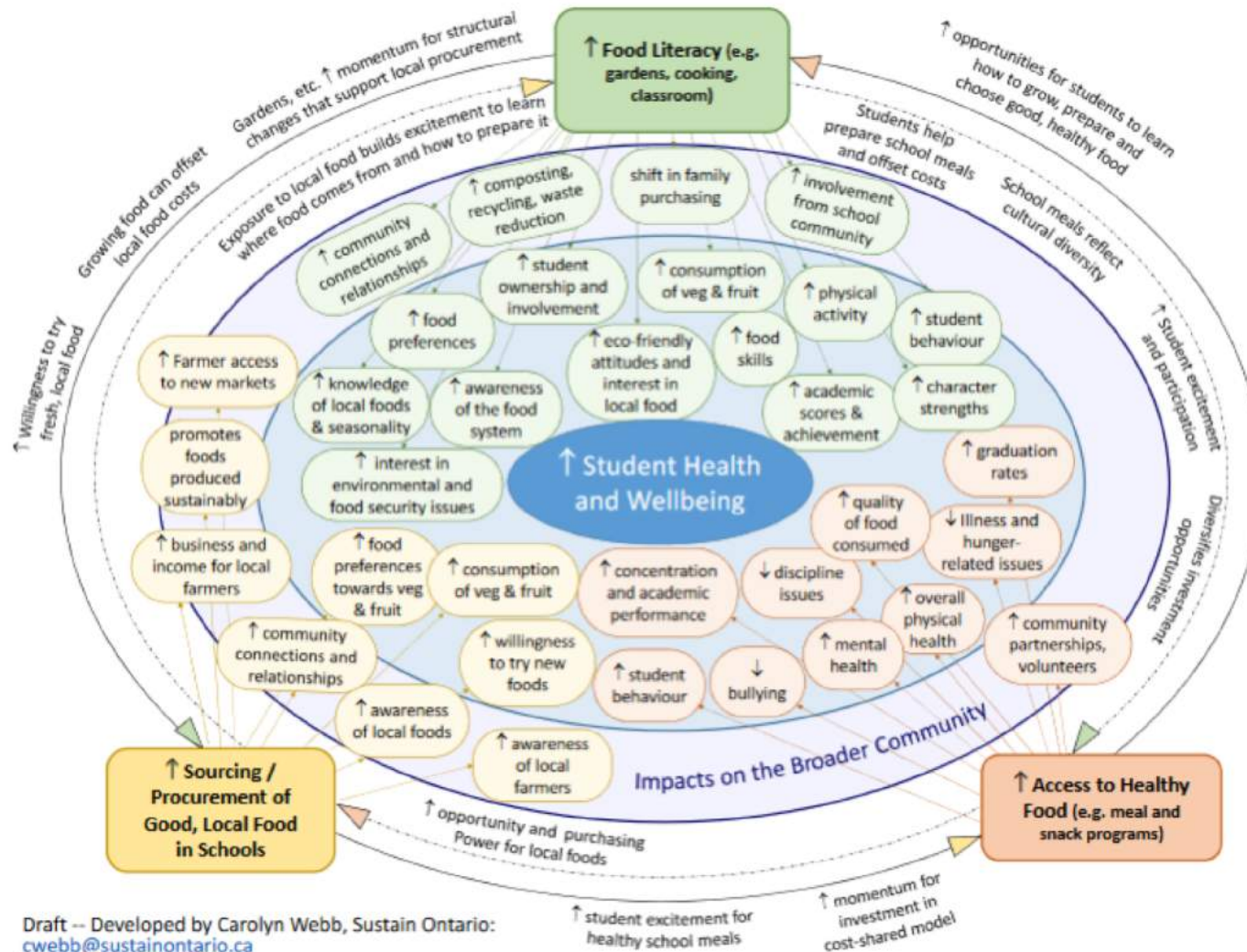
The Impact of School Food Programs

- Each dollar invested in farm to school programs stimulated an additional \$2.16 of local economic activity.
- Increase in community awareness and interest about purchasing local foods.
- A preliminary University of Guelph study suggests that a national program could contribute \$4.8 billion to the local economy by 2029 if 30% was spent on local food purchases as well as stimulate the development of as many as 207,700 new jobs.



A multitude of benefits

The Potential of School Food Initiatives



The Coalition for Healthy School Food

- 100+ members across Canada
- Coordinated by Food Secure Canada
- Seeking an investment by the federal government in a **cost-shared Universal Healthy School Food Program** that will eventually enable all students in Canada to have access to a healthy meal or snack at school every day.



An Ideal School Food Program



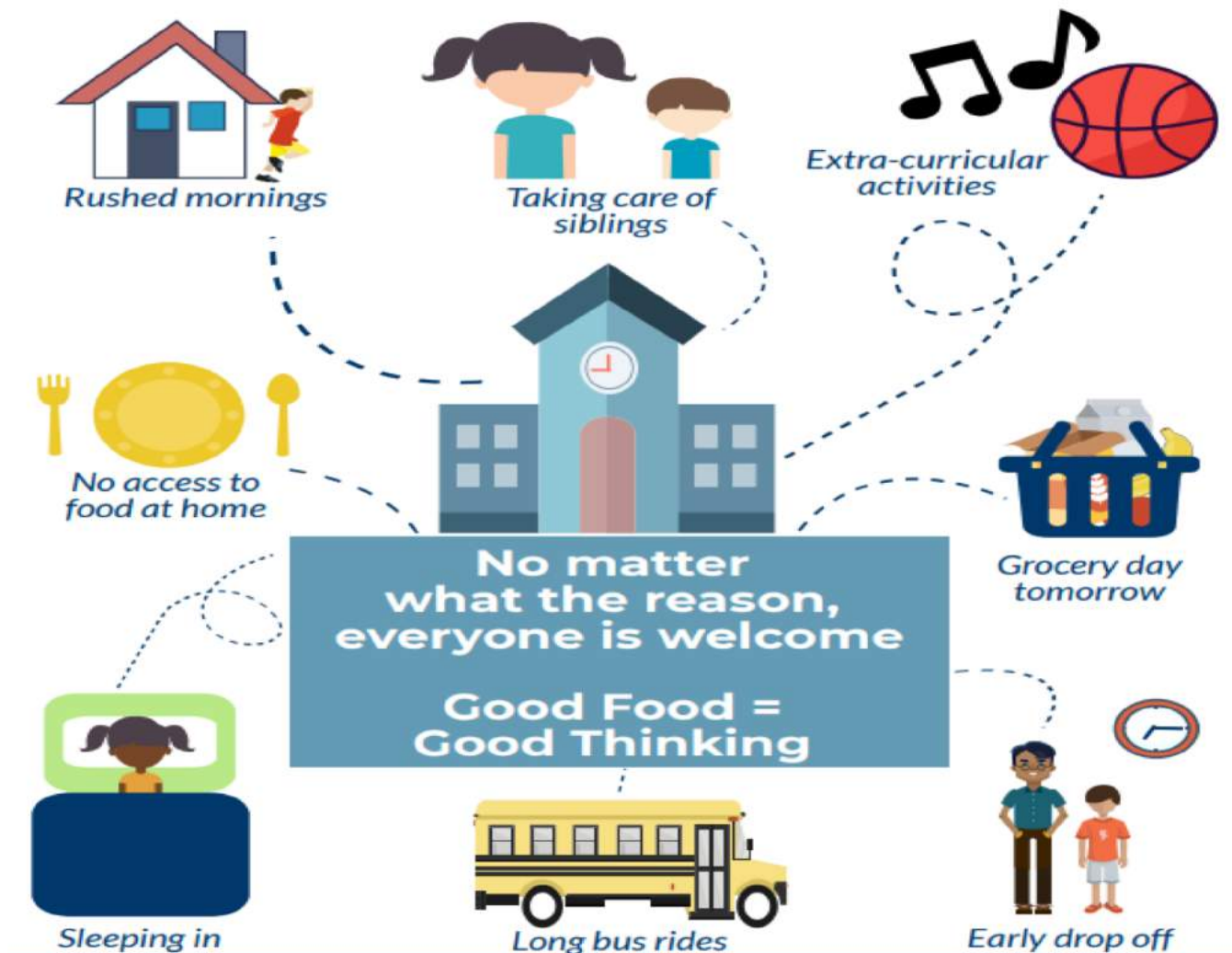
- Guided by National Principles
- Health-Promoting
- Cost-shared
- Universal
- Flexible Food Service Model
- Supporting & Enhancing Existing Programs
- Indigenous control over Indigenous programs

Why Universal?

- Programs with a low-income threshold increase parental resistance and reduce student participation because of the stigma.
- A recent research study showed that only a minority of the intended target population was reached. The test programs failed in their mandate to feed hungry children.
- It's very expensive to assess student eligibility.
- Targeted programs have proven to not meet broader health goals.

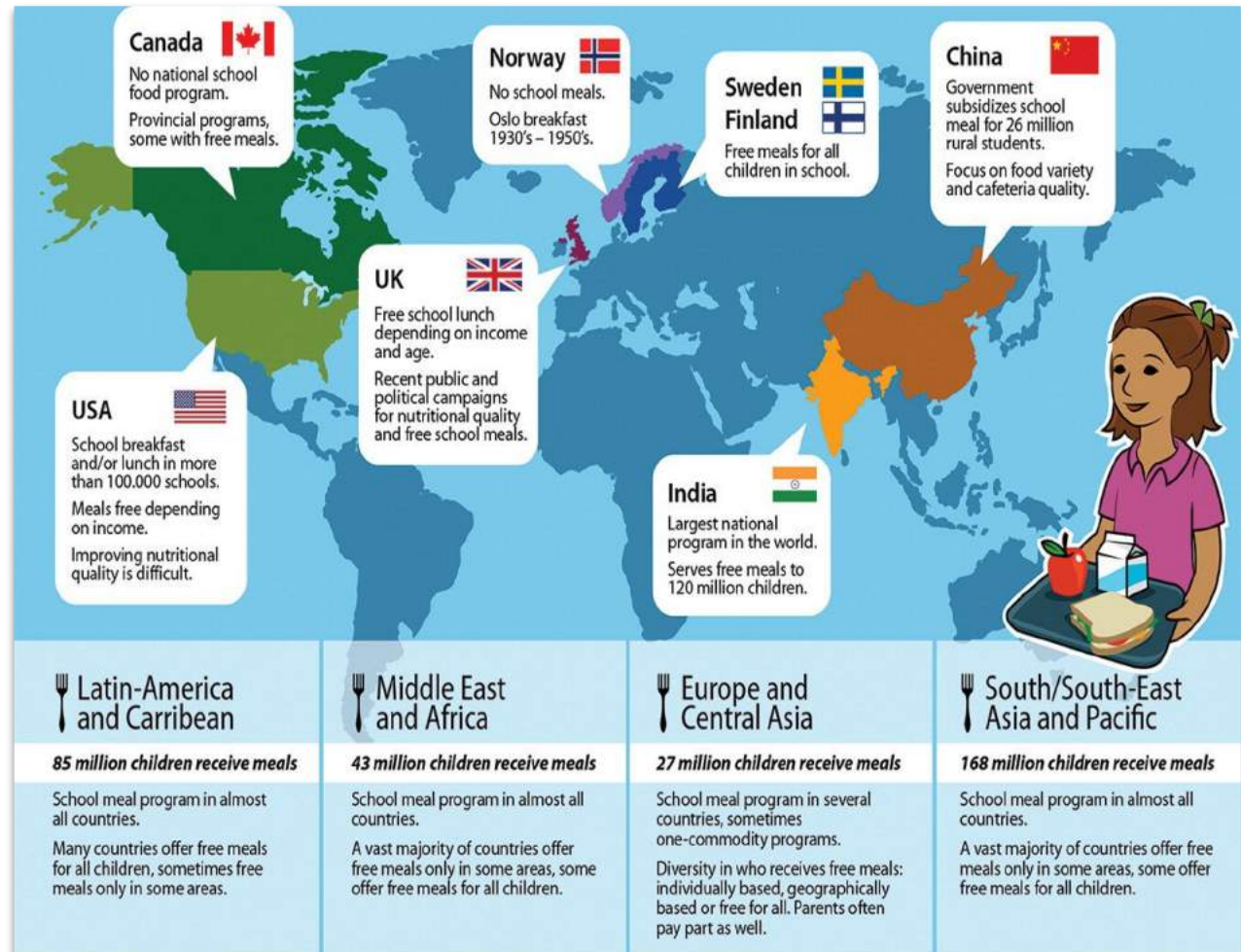


Kids come to school hungry for many reasons



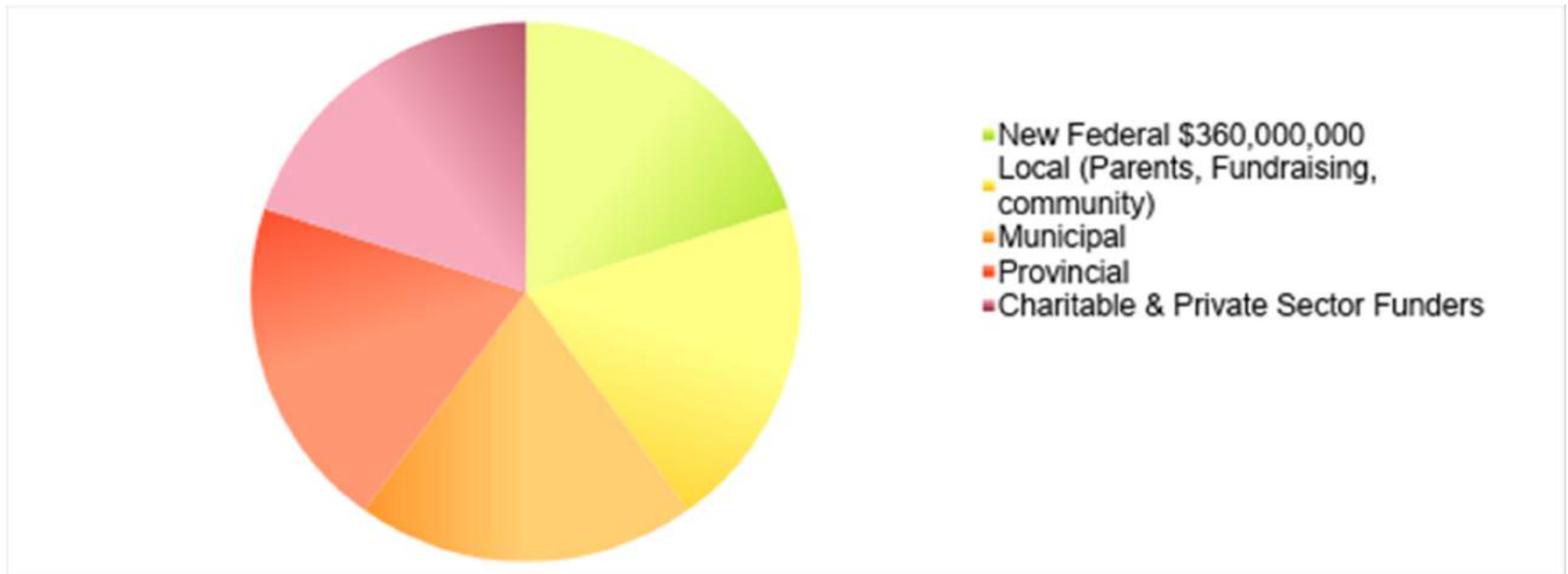
School food around the world

1. **France**
A focus on taste
2. **Italy**
A love of Terroire, Agriculture
3. **UK**
War time poverty focus
4. **USA**
Surplus Agriculture
5. **Japan**
Driven by health
6. **Germany**
Longer School Day



Canadian School Food Program Funding Model

(\$360 million Federal Ask is 20% of Total \$1.88 Billion Universal Program, (5,415,671 students x school days x \$2 a day)



Adapted from City of Toronto (7 Sept 2012) *Student Nutrition Program Operating Budget Request & Proposed Five Year Plan*
Originally developed by Dr. Rod MacRae and Debbie Field in 1991 on behalf of the Coalition for Student Nutrition.

Best Practices

School food programs have the potential to improve children's lives, strengthen communities, and transform food systems. Several principles, based on best practices, can ensure these programs live up to their full potential.

- Universal
- Health-Promoting
- Sustainable
- Respectful
- Connected
- Comprehensive



<https://www.healthyschoolfood.ca/guiding-principles>

Potential Delivery Models

- Federal-Provincial Accord
- Health Canada - PHAC
- Federal - City Accord
- Funding of one national organization
- Funding of one organization in each province/territory
- Pilots
- Other options?



Why Now?

- Food Policy for Canada
- 2019 Food Guide
- Building on poverty reduction commitments - Child Tax Benefit
- Federal responsibility for education in Indigenous Communities
- Gender-Equity Based Budgeting
- On the ground success: 20%-40% involved in school food programs across Canada
- Strength of movement and Coalition– What we Heard Report



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

Building Federal Support



- Motion in the Senate (June 2018)
- 2019 federal budget included a commitment “ to work with provinces and territories towards the creation of a National School Food Program”.
- E-petition presented in the House of Commons (May 2019)
- Private Member’s Bill introduced in the House of Commons (May 2019)
- Commitment to a program was reiterated in June by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, as part of the National Food Policy of Canada.

Building Federal Support

- The First National School Food Roundtable was hosted in Montreal by Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development.
- A National School Food Program was included in the 2019 NDP and Green Party platforms. Liberal candidates confirmed their commitment to enact the budget commitment. Conservative party candidates expressed their support for such a program.



Building Additional Support

The Coalition's proposal has been endorsed by:

- British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA)
- City of Toronto's Board of Health
- City of Toronto
- City of Vancouver
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities

We're looking for more to sign on!



Current Coalition work

- Follow up from 2019 Election - embedding a National School Food Program in federal mandate letters
- Ensuring continuity and integrity of the proposed program in national discussions
- Expanding provincial action and chapter activities
- Expanding information sharing and networking amongst school food programs - including at our in-person Coalition meeting in December



How to join the momentum

#NourishKidsNow: Invest in school food

**YOU HAVE THE POWER TO
CREATE CHANGE, IT'S AS
EASY AS 1-2-3!**



GET INVOLVED

From becoming a member to receiving our email updates, you can get involved in many ways.

[Find out how >](#)



ELECTION ACTIONS

The federal elections are around the corner. Find out how you can reach your elected officials - they do want to hear from you.

[Find out how >](#)




SHOUT, SHARE, TWEET

Shout out what excites you about your school food program.

[Find out how >](#)

1. Get involved

- ❑ Join the Coalition
 - Become a Member or Endorser
 - Subscribe for updates



Your organization
can become
A MEMBER*

*Organizations are giving voting and decision-making privileges




Your organization,
network or coalition
can become
AN ENDORSER*

*Organizations can simply endorse our call for the development of a National School Food Program without becoming a member

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Sign up for updates

Name 	Email
Organization	Province
Message	

SUBSCRIBE

2. Join in Provincial Action (BC example)



- Supports national outreach and advocacy
- Engages diverse stakeholders across BC
- Plans for how BC could use funds and build on existing programs



Join in Provincial Action (NS Example)



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It's time to #SpeakUp4SchoolFood

#SpeakUp4SchoolFood campaign is an opportunity for parents, students, and other concerned citizens to add their voice to the Canada-wide movement.



3. Shout, Share, Tweet

Go viral!

Share on your social media: @C4HSchoolFood

Write a blog post





Thank you!

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