December 9, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Esther Levy
       Director, Child and Youth Development Branch

       Marg Connor
       Director, Safe Schools and Student Well-Being Branch

SUBJECT: Student Nutrition Program Expansion

We are writing to tell you about an opportunity to establish new breakfast programs in some of your schools through Ontario’s Student Nutrition Program (SNP). Many of your schools already operate breakfast, lunch or snack programs with funding through the 14 Lead Agencies funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and other partner organizations.

As part of government’s response to the Healthy Kids Panel, an additional investment of $3M to SNP will establish over 200 new school breakfast/morning meal programs over two years in higher-needs communities. Over the coming weeks, Lead Agencies will be contacting schools eligible to receive funding as part of this investment. Eligible schools that choose to participate will receive one-time funding for the purchase of equipment and supplies and well as funding for up to 15% of food costs.
The government takes the health of Ontario students seriously, and is committed to helping our children and youth lead healthy, productive lives by providing them with nutritious meals. We request that you notify your Principals that they may be contacted by Lead Agencies to start a breakfast program and encourage their participation in the program.

Please find attached a news release with more information about the program. You may direct further questions about the local implementation of SNP to the respective MCYS Regional Office and/or SNP Lead Agency in your community (list attached).

To be successful in providing our children and youth with nutritious meals so they are ready to learn, we must work together. Your support and encouragement will support the establishment of these important programs.

Sincerely,

Esther Levy
Director
Child and Youth Development Branch
Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Marg Connor
Director
Safe Schools and Student Well-Being Branch
Ministry of Education

Attachments:
SNP Expansion News Release
List of MCYS Regional Offices and SNP Lead Agency Contacts
Healthier Snacks and Meals on the Menu at More Ontario Schools
Province Expanding Student Nutrition Program to Help More Kids Get a Healthy Start

Ontario is helping more children and youth eat nutritious meals at school so they can be healthier, concentrate better and learn more effectively.

As part of the Healthy Kids Strategy, the province is investing an additional $3 million in Ontario’s Student Nutrition Program to create more than 200 new breakfast and morning meal programs for approximately 33,000 kids in higher-needs communities, including First Nations communities.

This increased funding will also support the hiring of 14 food distribution and logistics co-ordinators across the province. Co-ordinators will work with new and existing programs to build stronger partnerships with local businesses and food distribution networks resulting in more efficient channels to purchase, transport and store food.

The Student Nutrition Program has been shown to influence overall student health and improve learning and behavioural outcomes. A recent research report found that more than three-quarters of high school students who eat breakfast regularly are on track to graduate, while suspension rates have decreased by half since the implementation of these programs.

Providing nutritious meals and snacks in more schools across the province supports the Ontario government’s efforts to give every child a healthy start in life. This is part of the government's economic plan to invest in people, invest in infrastructure and support a dynamic and innovative business climate across the province.

QUOTES

“Nutritious snacks and meals are critical to the success of every child, so this expansion really is an investment in our families and our future. We want all Ontario children to reach their full potential and help build a stronger, more prosperous Ontario.”
— Teresa Piruzza, Minister of Children and Youth Services

“The expansion of the Student Nutrition Program will benefit more than 30,000 kids so that they can get the nutritional boost they need to succeed at school. Our commitment to healthy food will help our kids get the best start to a healthy life.”
— Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

“We know children are healthier and better able to concentrate and learn when they’re well nourished. This new investment is really important and will make sure that thousands more Ontario children and youth get a healthy start to the school day and are ready to learn.”
— Debbie Field, Executive Director of FoodShare Toronto
QUICK FACTS

- As part of Ontario’s Poverty Reduction Strategy released in 2008, the government has more than doubled its support for the Student Nutrition Program to $17.9 million in 2012-13.
- During the 2011-12 school year, over 690,000 elementary and secondary school students across the province benefited from more than 4,100 breakfast, lunch and snack programs.
- The Healthy Kids Panel was appointed in May 2012 as part of the Action Plan for Health Care to advise the government on how to tackle childhood overweight and obesity in Ontario.

LEARN MORE

- Ontario’s Student Nutrition Program.
- [Nutrition guidelines](#) for the Student Nutrition Program.
- Ontario’s [Action Plan for Health Care](#).
- Check out Eat Right Ontario for tips on making healthier food choices.

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Courtney Battistone, Communications Branch, 416-325-5156  
Public info line, 1-866-821-7770  
[ontario.ca/children-news](http://ontario.ca/children-news)  
Disponible en français
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<tr>
<th>MCYS Region</th>
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