
BRINGING MORE TO THE TABLE

The role of Student Nutrition Programs in promoting the health of children and youth in
York Region

A presentation on behalf of York Region Food for Learning
York Region Council Committee of the Whole
November 30, 2023



Who we are

York Region Food for Learning is a diverse community partnership dedicated to supporting breakfast and snack programs in schools. York Region Food for Learning is a volunteer-run committee, made up of representatives from local school boards, schools, community organizations, York Region, and Student Nutrition Programs. We meet regularly to discuss challenges and solutions to advance Student Nutrition throughout York Region. When possible, we secure donations/grants to help schools in need.

VISION

All students in York Region will have access to inclusive nutrition programs within the school community that support their learning and health

Key Stakeholders

Ministry of Children,
Community and
Social Services

MCCSS provides
initial seed funding,
program
requirements and
oversight to Student
Nutrition Programs

Peterborough Child
and Family Centres

Lead Agency for SNO
Central East. PCFC
administers funding
and reporting on
behalf of MCCSS &
national donors

School Boards in
York Region

School boards assist
with the distribution
of funding to schools,
procurement and
administration of
programs

York Region Food
for Learning

Volunteer based
advocacy committee
with members from
YRDSB, YCDSB,
PCFC, York Public
Health and YRFN

By the Numbers

10,972,450

In 2022-2023 Student Nutrition Programs served over 10 million meals - an increase of more than 4 million meals from the last school year.

270

In 2023-2024 there are 270 Student Nutrition Programs operating in our region. These programs are on track to serve over 13 million meals this year.

5%

Funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services represents approximately 5% of estimated program costs (based on meals applied data)

Funding Case Study

EJ S AND PS

Thornhill, ON

School Population: 330

Students in low income households: 35%

Students whose first language is not English: 75%

Newcomers to Canada: 30%

Daily Meals Served	Estimated Cost of Program	MCCSS Funding 2023/2024	Projected Deficit
400	\$90,000	\$5688.00	\$84,312.00

Social Determinants of Health

E

EDUCATION

In schools where SNP is offered students have better literacy rates, higher math test scores and are more likely to graduate high school.

S

SOCIAL INCLUSION

SNP fosters a sense of community and inclusion in schools. Students experience improved mental health, reduced social isolation and are able to participate in meals in a stigma-free way

F

FOOD INSECURITY

While not a food insecurity program, SNP address issues surrounding food insecurity by ensuring consistent access to healthy foods and positively supporting the mental and social health impacts of living with food insecurity

S

SOCIAL SAFETY NETWORK

In schools with SNP students attend more often and are more engaged. Through this engagement they are able to access a variety of supports to ensure success.

STUDENT NUTRITION PROGRAMS ARE ONE EXAMPLE OF AN UPSTREAM APPROACH TO PUBLIC HEALTH

Community, Safety and Well Being Plan

Northern Georgina

14% less than high school

- Black River P.S.
 - Sutton P.S.
 - Sutton D.H.S.
- St. Bernadette CES
 - Keswick H.S. *
 - Newmarket H.S.*

Central Newmarket

17% less than high school

- Canadian Martyrs CES
 - Maple Leaf PS
 - Dr. Denison H.S. *
 - Newmarket H.S.*
 - Poplar Bank P.S.*

South-Central Richmond Hill

8.7% less than high school

- Crosby Heights P.S.
- Beverly Acres P.S.
 - Access iGrad
- Walter Scott P.S.
- 16th Avenue P.S.
- St. Joseph CES
 - Bayview S.S. *
- Ecole Norval Morriseau
- Our Lady Queen of the World CA

South-Central Markham

27.1% less than high school

- Milliken Mills P.S.
- Highgate P.S.
- Wilclay P.S.
- Highgate P.S.
- Armadale P.S.
- Parkland P.S.
- Markham Gateway P.S.
 - Middlefield C.I.
 - Coppard Glen P.S.
- Unionville Meadows P.S.
 - Bill Crothers H.S.
 - Milliken Mills H.S.

Key Challenges for SNP

RISING COSTS

Schools struggle to prepare annual budget due to rising food costs

FUNDING

Lack of stable funding prevents schools from running optimal programs

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Schools struggle to run programs at capacity due to drop in volunteers post COVID

The Support We Need

Advocate

Support from all levels of government is crucial for the continued success of SNP. Members of YRFFL request support from the Region to:

- Encourage the Provincial Government to provide additional funding support to Student Nutrition
- Advocate at the federal level for the implementation of the proposed national school food program

Invest

In recognition of the alignment of Student Nutrition Programs in York Region with the goals and policies of York Region we would like to request the creation of a standing line item in the Region's budget. We request that this is formalized by the allocation of \$500,000 to support Student Nutrition in the 2024 budget with a 2% annual increase to help support growth and rising program costs.

Thank you

X @yrfood4learning

Instagram @york_region_food_for_learning

www.foodforlearning.com

