



August 23, 2022

Attn: Mayor Amanda McDougall, NSFM Board President

The Kings County Community Food Council is a group dedicated to working towards a healthy, just, and sustainable food system. We are writing today to invite the NSFM to **join us in calling for a universal healthy school food program, where all students have access to food at school, regardless of their family's income.** We are working with the Nova Scotia Advisory of the Coalition for Healthy School Food to urge federal and provincial governments to make this important investment in our future.

**Why this matters:**

All students need access to good food to fuel their minds and bodies, but many students come to school without food for many reasons - long commutes, early morning practices, not being hungry when they wake up, busy family routines, and household food insecurity. Grassroots organizations, charities, and provincial and territorial funding enable one in five children in Canada to access a school food program - **YET Canada is the only G7 country without a national school food program.**

A universal, cost-shared healthy school food program is imperative to help the following issues:

- **Help kids reach their full potential in the classroom and in life.**  
Nova Scotia research has identified a strong association between diet and academic performance. Without proper nutrition, children and youth's learning and skill development is significantly impaired.
- **Curb rising rates of chronic disease.**  
1 of every 3 Nova Scotians are not getting enough vegetables and fruits, dramatically increasing their risk of developing chronic life-changing diseases, such as diabetes and heart diseases.
- **Support the local economy.**  
Our food choices impact more than our bodies, they impact our economies and our environment. Purchasing from local farmers and food producers supports local economies and enhances awareness about eating sustainably for people and the planet.

Good nutrition impacts children's health, well-being, and learning. If children are not adequately nourished during childhood, the impact can last a lifetime. Hunger in childhood has long-term adverse consequences for health.

The **Coalition for Healthy School Food** (CHSF) is non-profit of over 200 members across the country, advocating for a universal cost-shared school food program for Canada that would see all students having daily access to healthy food at school. The CHSF is urging municipal governments across Canada to endorse their efforts. "Municipal governments can play a crucial role in advocating for universal school food programs," said Debbie Field, Coordinator of the Coalition for Healthy School Food. "Whether or not they provide direct funding, as do Toronto, Vancouver, Moncton and County of Kings (Nova Scotia), [municipalities] can bring together the many players at the local level who have an interest in designing and operating successful school food programs."

Our ask today is that the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipality sign on as an endorser of the Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF). By becoming endorser, the NSFM would indicate agreement with the 8 guiding principles as outlined by the CHSF (attached) and add your voice to the call for a cross-country universal school food program.

You would not be alone in the endorsement. The Canadian Federation of Municipalities became endorsers of the CHSF in 2018 and many municipal units across the province have already signed on (You can find a full list of endorsers [www.healthyschoolfood.ca/our-endorsers](http://www.healthyschoolfood.ca/our-endorsers).) Endorsement is a simple process – you can also go to the link above to find the google form to sign up.

We hope you will consider endorsing the CHSF and joining your voice with ours in the calling for a universal healthy school food program. Please reach out with any questions you may have at [info@kccfoodcouncil.ca](mailto:info@kccfoodcouncil.ca)

Sincerely,

**Sarah MacDonald**, on behalf of the Kings County Community Food Council

**Lindsay Corbin**, on behalf of the NS Advisory of Coalition for Healthy School Food