

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM32.9	ACTION			Ward:All
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Supporting a National School Food Program - by Councillor Mary Fragedakis, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Board of Health. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mary Fragedakis, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc, recommends that:

1. City Council endorse Coalition for Healthy School Food's National School Food Program campaign.
2. City Council request the Government of Canada to implement a cost-shared universal healthy school food program that would enable all students to have access to healthy meals at school every day, as advocated by the Coalition for Healthy School Food.
3. City Council request the City Manager to write to the Coalition for Healthy School Food and the Government of Canada to advise them of City Council's decision.

Summary

Student nutrition programs greatly enhance the success of our education system. Education is the foundation of our prosperity and of our democratic society. A hungry child cannot focus on studies and many children go to school without breakfast or snack. These school program's meals improve students' mental health, including reductions in behavioural and emotional problems; improve cognitive skills and increase scholastic success. All students benefit from an improved learning environment.

Canada remains one of the only Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development nations without a national school food program. Canada's current patchwork of school food programming reaches only a small percentage of our over 5 million students. A recent UNICEF report ranked Canada 37th out of 41 high-income countries around access to nutritious food for children,

School food programs help children develop healthy eating patterns. They have been shown to increase children's consumption of vegetables, fruits and other healthy foods and decrease the consumption of unhealthy ones. This has many societal benefits including cost savings for our

public health care system.

The Coalition for Healthy School Food is working at a national level to advocate for the creation of a cost-shared Universal Healthy School Food Program that will enable all students in Canada to have access to healthy meals at school building on existing programs across the country and including food education to serve culturally appropriate, local, sustainable food to the fullest extent possible. The Coalition for Healthy School Food comprises over 30 organizations from across Canada and includes the Vancouver Food Policy Council, Food Share and the Dietitians Canada.

Toronto City Council has voted to provide funding for local school food programs and has previously called for the Federal government to provide support to these programs. Toronto City Council should add its support to this important national campaign as the Federal government is currently developing both a national food policy that will identify actions for food-related health and social goals and a Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy to “achieve positive solutions to persistent social problems”.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM32.9