

## **2021 Student Nutrition Program Service Subsidies**

**Date:** April 25, 2021

**To:** Board of Health

**From:** Medical Officer of Health

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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This report outlines recommendations for the 2021 Student Nutrition Program service subsidy allocations. The proposed combined allocations to the Angel Foundation for Learning (AFL) and the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS) total \$16,407,857 which includes \$276,006 held in reserve for appeals/late applications.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the Medical Officer of Health to enter into agreements totalling \$16,407,857 with the Angel Foundation for Learning (\$4,335,993) and the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (\$12,071,864) to administer the 2021 approved municipal funding to eligible student nutrition programs across the City of Toronto.
2. City Council authorize the Medical Officer of Health to take the necessary actions to give effect to Recommendation 1 above, including the execution of legal agreements with the Angel Foundation for Learning and the Toronto Foundation for Student Success, on behalf of the City of Toronto.
3. City Council and the Board of Health request the Federal Government to provide core funding for a national school food program.
4. City Council and the Board of Health request the Provincial Government to increase its grant funding investment proportionally to match the increased City of Toronto investment.
5. The Board of Health direct that this report be forwarded to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education, the Toronto District School Board, the Toronto Catholic District School Board, le Conseil scolaire Viamonde, le Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir, the Angel Foundation for Learning, and the Toronto Foundation for Student Success.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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The 2021 Approved Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health includes funding of \$16,437,857 gross and net for municipally-funded student nutrition programs as follows:

1. \$16,137,857 toward the cost of nutritious food for eligible existing programs at 609 school communities across the City of Toronto. Funding will help existing programs maintain their funding level amid program growth from increased student participation levels and the increased cost of food.
2. \$300,000 toward the cost of nutritious food, capacity building and assessment for eligible independent schools at 7 school communities across the City of Toronto. This funding is allocated as follows: \$230,000 toward the cost of nutritious food; \$40,000 to support program success through capacity building of expansion sites and oversight of municipal grants; and \$30,000 to support the assessment of eligibility of interested independent schools.

This report recommends an allocation of \$16,407,857: \$4,335,993 to the Angel Foundation for Learning and \$12,071,864 to the Toronto Foundation for Student Success, which includes all funds held in reserve as outlined in Tables 1 and 2.

There is no financial impact associated with this report beyond what has been approved in the 2021 Approved Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed the report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## DECISION HISTORY

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At its meeting held on February 18, 2021, City Council approved 2021 municipal funding for student nutrition programs of \$16,437,857.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX21.2>

## COMMENTS

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### **Community Partnership Model Supports for Student Nutrition Program**

Student Nutrition Ontario-Toronto (SNO-Toronto) recommends the allocation of municipal and provincial funding to Toronto's student nutrition programs, provides program support and monitors program quality and accountability. SNO-Toronto is made up of a committee and two sub-committees, including an Allocations Sub-Committee. The SNO-Toronto Committee is comprised of student nutrition stakeholders, including representatives from Toronto Public Health (TPH), Toronto District School Board (TDSB), Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), Angel Foundation for Learning (AFL), Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS), and two community representatives. Standardized meal costs per student are used to estimate program costs and are adjusted annually for food inflation, when applicable.

## Annual Review of Applications

The joint application process for municipal and provincial student nutrition program grants began in December 2020, when all currently funded student nutrition programs in Toronto were notified of the grant opportunity. Staff from each SNO-Toronto partner agency, except for Toronto Public Health, provide individual program sites with assistance to complete grant applications.

Annually, applications are reviewed by a panel of staff from Toronto Public Health, the TDSB, the TCDSB, TFSS and AFL, using standardized review procedures and following conflict of interest guidelines. The Applications recommended for funding are forwarded to the SNO-Toronto Committee for approval. The process satisfies the requirements laid out in the [City of Toronto Community Grants Policy](#), approved by City Council on July 16, 2019.

## Year-round Accountability for Student Nutrition Program Grants

The charitable foundations which administer the municipal grant to student nutrition programs in Toronto, TFSS and AFL, enter into legal agreements with the City of Toronto in advance of receiving municipal funds. Legal agreements include a requirement that each foundation provide the City with consolidated financial reports detailing its administration of municipal funds to student nutrition programs, with associated performance measures, twice a year, as well as annual audited financial statements. The foundations also collect detailed reports from individual student nutrition programs receiving municipal grants on a regular basis. Both foundations consistently meet all of their contractual requirements.

## Summary of Allocations and Recommendations

The SNO-Toronto committee received and approved the following recommendations for the distribution of municipal funds for existing programs as outlined in Tables 1 and 2.

*Table 1 - Summary of Allocations and Recommendations: Existing Programs*

<b>Foundation</b>	<b>Funding Amount</b>
Angel Foundation for Learning (167 school communities)	\$ 4,335,993
Toronto Foundation for Student Success (442 school communities)	\$11,671,864
Toronto Foundation for Student Success (held in reserve for late applications and appeals)	\$ 130,000
<b>Total</b> (609 school communities reaching 215,215 participants)	<b>\$16,137,857</b>

The money held in reserve for appeals and late applications will be used to make adjustments to the allocations as required prior to December 31, 2021. The entire municipal grant for existing programs is distributed to programs and directed towards the cost of nutritious food.

*Table 2 - Summary of Allocations and Recommendations: Independent School Expansion*

<b>Foundation</b>	<b>Funding Amount</b>
Toronto Foundation for Student Success (7 independent schools reaching 1,127 participants)	\$ 83,994
Toronto Foundation for Student Success (held in reserve for late applications and appeals)	\$146,006
Toronto Foundation for Student Success (for community capacity building)	\$ 40,000
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$270,000</b>
Administered by TPH to support the assessment process	\$ 30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>

The municipal expansion for independent schools continues through to December 31, 2021, when the money held in reserve for appeals and late applications will be used to make adjustments to the allocations as required. The municipal grant, except for the portion allocated to community capacity building and assessment, is distributed to programs and directed towards the cost of nutritious food. The funds for community capacity building will be allocated to align with the current capacity and program coordination model used by the SNO-Toronto partnership with a focus on supporting the start-up needs of new programs in independent schools.

All student nutrition programs approved for funding will receive municipal funding in instalments. They must meet program requirements, including financial reporting to their respective Foundation, to receive subsequent instalment cheques.

### **Use of Municipal Budget Enhancement for 2021**

The 2021 allocation of the municipal investment continues to support the vision endorsed by the City in 2012 to strengthen and grow student nutrition programs in Toronto, by:

- Focusing investment on breakfast/morning meal programs;
- Strengthening existing programs; and
- Strengthening the partnership funding model.

For the Toronto Public Health 2021 Operating Budget, City Council approved an increase of \$378,231 to total \$16,437,857 for student nutrition programs. This funding aligns with the 2021/22 school year. The enhanced funding will help existing programs offset the increased cost of food and maintain their municipal funding level at 18.7% percent of total program costs.

Also, \$300,000 of the base 2021 municipal funding will support student nutrition programs to eligible independent schools which meet needs-based eligibility criteria, an initiative that began in 2019. Combined across 2019 to 2021, 47 independent schools

expressed interest in offering student nutrition programs. Of those, 27 schools met the initial screening assessment criteria and submitted student postal codes for further needs assessment analysis. In total, 11 schools met needs-based eligibility criteria, while 7 submitted a grant application and have been funded to provide a student nutrition program reaching 1,127 students. The grant appeals and late application process which will conclude by December 31, 2021 may change these numbers.

### **Impact of COVID-19 on Student Nutrition Programs**

As reported to the Board of Health in January 2021, COVID-19 impacted the operation and accessibility of Toronto's student nutrition programs. To ensure the safety of children while in school, student nutrition programs modified their delivery models, adapted their menus, and explored alternatives in order to reach both in-school and remote learners. Fortunately, most student nutrition programs were able to continue to operate. Those which could not, such as before-school breakfast programs in elementary and secondary schools and afternoon-time lunch and snack programs in secondary schools, continue to be on hold until safe to resume. Toronto Public Health continues to meet regularly as part of the SNO-Toronto partnership to identify and understand school community needs and take action to support student nutrition programs.

### **Provincial Funding**

The TFSS is the Lead Agency for the Ontario Student Nutrition Program funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and is accountable to ensure provincial program criteria are met. The TFSS subcontracts with the AFL to administer the provincial funding for programs located in TCDSB sites and support program-level community development. Programs will receive their provincial funding at the same time as their municipal funding.

The 2021 provincial investment for Toronto's student nutrition programs has not been confirmed to date; however, it is not expected to be greater than the current base funding for 2020. In 2020/21, the Government of Ontario's investment in Toronto's student nutrition programs was as follows: (Table 3). The one-time provincial 2020 funding was part of the federal Safe Return to School funding and had separate reporting requirements compared to the main provincial funding received.

*Table 3 - Summary of 2020 Provincial Funding Investment*

<b>Funding Use</b>	<b>Funding Amount</b>
Base funding for new and existing programs towards food cost	\$6,340,170
One-time funding to reach and support remote learners and address COVID-19 delivery costs	\$3,009,500
Community development and administration funding	\$2,147,638
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,497,308</b>

**Federal support for national school food program**

As reported to the Board of Health in March 2021, the Emergency Food Security Fund included funding for Breakfast Clubs of Canada (BCC), a national non-profit organization providing funding support for breakfast programs across the country. The provincial network, Student Nutrition Ontario, has contacted BCC regarding the allocation process, but details have not been released to date.

**CONTACT**

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**SIGNATURE**

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Medical Officer of Health