

# Attachment 1: Background on Student Nutrition Programs

## Student Nutrition Ontario-Toronto Partner Roles and Responsibilities

Student Nutrition Ontario-Toronto (SNO-Toronto) is a community advisory partnership which provides oversight, monitors program quality and accountability, recommends the allocation of municipal and provincial funding, and provides program support to student nutrition programs in Toronto. SNO-Toronto is comprised of representatives from Toronto Public Health, Toronto District School Board (TDSB), Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), Angel Foundation for Learning (AFL), and Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS). Table 1 outlines the roles and responsibilities of the partner agencies.

**Table 1: Roles and Responsibilities of Student Nutrition Ontario-Toronto Partner Agencies**

Organization	Roles and Responsibilities
Toronto Public Health	Stewards municipal funds; has a contractual relationship with the AFL and TFSS for the administration of municipal funds; chairs the partnership; administers the annual grant application and renewal process; provides nutrition and food safety training and expertise, nutrition quality assurance, and food safety inspections.
School boards	Operationalizes and integrates the program into the school day in collaboration with schools and parent communities, supports program operations, provides space, maintains equipment, mobilizes parents and volunteers.
Angel Foundation for Learning, and Toronto Foundation for Student Success	<p>Fundraises, administers government grants and other donations, ensures program accountability, supports local fundraising, trains coordinators to operate programs, supports volunteer recruitment, coordinates in-kind donations.</p> <p>The Angel Foundation for Learning administers the municipal grant to programs affiliated with the TCDSB.            The Toronto Foundation for Student Success administers the municipal grant to programs affiliated with the TDSB, Conseil scolaire Viamonde (CSV), Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir (CSCMA), independent schools, and community locations.</p>

## 2026 Grant Application and Review Process

The joint application process for municipal and provincial student nutrition program funding for the 2026-2027 school year launched in December 2025 and closed mid-February 2026. All currently funded programs were invited to submit a renewal application. Outreach occurred to the remaining 78 public school communities that are not offering a student nutrition program for the 2025-2026 school year.

Staff from SNO-Toronto partner agencies assisted applicants to complete grant applications. All applications were reviewed by a panel of staff from Toronto Public Health, AFL, and TFSS using standardized review procedures. The applications recommended for funding met municipal and provincial funding criteria and were forwarded to the SNO-Toronto Committee for approval. Standardized meal costs per student were used to estimate program costs, which are adjusted annually for food inflation. The process satisfies the requirements laid out in the *City of Toronto Community Grants Policy*, approved by City Council in 2019 (Item [2019.EC6.19](#)). TPH and partners are actively working with the remaining schools to support Phase 4 applications.

## **Increasing Community Demand in Student Nutrition Programs**

The 2026 grant application process highlighted increased community demand among currently funded school communities. Twenty-six (26) sites currently funded for at least one student nutrition program requested funds to offer an additional program, collectively to provide approximately 4,000 more meals per school day to meet a growing student need.

Increased rates of food insecurity and increasing financial pressures were cited as common rationale for the request to add new programs among currently funded school communities. SNO-Toronto was unable to extend funding to these 26 sites for additional programs as requested, as the 2026 program expansion was prioritized to the 78 public school communities without a currently funded student nutrition program.

The main operating pressure faced by student nutrition programs is increased cost of food. Breakfast programs and secondary school programs, which often serve less than the full school enrolment, are seeing an increase in participant demand. Often programs have difficulty generating funds from non-government sources (e.g. fundraising, corporate and parent donations). Access to deep food discount prices from bulk food purchasing contracts negotiated by the TFSS and AFL, are available to programs to help reduce food costs.

Additional funding from the federal and provincial governments is needed to ensure all programs can be sustainable.

## **Government of Ontario Funding**

The Ontario Student Nutrition Program, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, is administered by 14 lead agencies across Ontario. The TFSS is the lead agency in Toronto and is accountable to ensure provincial program criteria are met. TFSS subcontracts with the AFL to administer the provincial funding for programs located in TCDSB sites and support program-level community development.

In 2025, with the advent of National Funding, the Government of Ontario amended its provincial Student Nutrition Program to include:

- extension of eligibility to include all publicly funded school communities; and

- expansion of lead agency capacity in the areas of bulk food procurement, volunteer support, and fundraising.

In 2025, student nutrition program funding from the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada, via the National School Food Funding, was combined and distributed by the province. As a result, the funding commitments for Toronto programs increased from \$8.5 million in 2024 to \$19.8 million in 2025. The Government of Ontario's 2026 investment for Toronto's student nutrition programs, and its' designation, has yet to be confirmed.

### **Government of Canada Support for National School Food Program**

In the 2025 Budget, the federal government committed \$216.6 million per year starting in 2029–30 to permanently fund the National School Food Program. This commitment was put into law in March 2026 through the National School Food Program Act. Federal funding for Ontario is integrated into the provincial funding reported above.