

2025/2026



in partnership with **SUSTAIN**  **ONTARIO** and



The "nourish to flourish" grant stream helps schools cultivate an ecosystem where children eat nourishing food and develop a deep understanding and appreciation for food

\$161,000 provided
to **46** schools
serving **22,572** k-12 students



At Viola Desmond Elementary School (Hamilton), new equipment opened the door to freshly prepared meals, taste tests paired with food literacy conversations, and enthusiastic student and parent volunteers. [Read their story.](#)

Impact Statements

- “ As the Nutrition Team is now able to do more than just deliver prepackaged foods, slowly we are getting more parents interested in the program and they are beginning to volunteer with the program. Many of the parents comment that their child won't eat something at home such as carrots but they talk about eating them at school with their peers.”
- “ The grant allowed our snack program to shift from a "one size fits all" model to a student-centered approach. By specifically purchasing a variety of items—such as gluten-free options and texture-sensitive snacks... —we ensured that every child, regardless of dietary restrictions or physical needs, felt included. ”
- “ The purchase of a freezer has allowed us to store a greater quantity and variety of nutritious foods, including frozen meals, meats, and produce. This ensures students have consistent access to healthy options, even when fresh supplies are limited.”
- “ The school has made meaningful connections to third-party community agencies that support nutrition programming to provide balanced meals and food literacy curriculum.”
- “ We have developed a much deeper understanding of local produce and limiting food waste due to the cooking program that we developed with the grant. Students understand how to use all parts of the products we are using, what produce is local at what time of year, and how that can be used to support our community's health.”
- “ Many of our primary and junior age students had no idea that strawberries were grown locally and that June is the perfect time to find them locally. Many expressed that they didn't know strawberries could be, "so good!".”

Grant Activities



took place between September 2025 and June 2026.



95% of schools plan to continue school meal program activities after the end of the grant term



90% of schools plan to continue food literacy activities after the end of the grant term



Newly launched school produce market at Connaught Public School (St. Catherines), integrating food literacy, community connection, and dignified food access.

[Read their story.](#)

Grant Impacts

Public Health

93% of schools increased the **amount of healthy food that their school procures** and provides to students

83% of schools increased the **amount of food produced or harvested by members of the school community and served at school**

88% of schools increased students' ability to **access healthy food in a dignified way** regardless of their ability to pay

90% of schools increased the amount that **students' cultural food traditions are respected and celebrated** at school

Education & Learning

88% of schools **created a greater sense of vibrancy and excitement** in the school

78% of schools increased the number and quality of **opportunities for students to learn and demonstrate food skills** (ex. gardening, food preparation, etc)

Community Economic Development

80% of schools increased the **amount of local food they procure and provide** to students

Environment

68% of schools increased the amount of students that are **engaged in their local food system** while at school



Stories

“At first, I thought we'd just be making cookies. Now, I'm managing the 'sauté station' and making sure the potato rosti don't burn, and the chicken thighs are properly caramelized. It's stressful, but when the dish looks beautiful and tastes amazing, it's the best feeling.” – Student from York Street Public School (Ottawa). [Read the full story.](#)

“Students are not only more aware of nutrition and healthy eating, but they are also excited to experiment in the kitchen, nurture plants, and engage with the broader agricultural community.” – Project Coordinator from June Ave Public School (Guelph). [Read the full story.](#)

“The new freezer has made a tremendous difference for our nutrition program. We are now able to provide more variety and consistency for students.” - Teacher at Sherwood Secondary School (Hamilton). [Read the full story.](#)



Hospitality students at Chippewa Secondary School (North Bay) cooking for their cafeteria service. [Read the full story.](#)



Sustainable garden project at Monetville Public School, a seed for procuring local food for their meal programs. [Read the full story.](#)



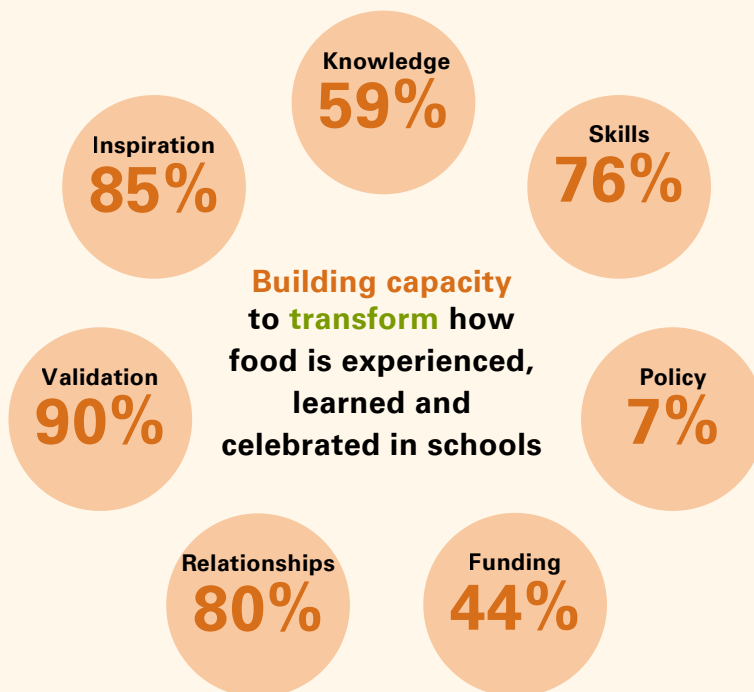
"You're the Chef" program at Willowbrook Public School (Thornhill) inspiring students to try new foods. [Read the full story.](#)

Capacity Building Impacts

In our work, we strive to **grow capacity in 7 key ways**:

- **Knowledge & skills** about key themes
- Ability to **influence policy** (federal, provincial, or local)
- **Funding** and fundraising capacity
- **Relationships** and connections
- **Validation & inspiration** around the importance of the work

"nourish to flourish" grant recipients shared that their grant increased their capacity in these areas:



Thank You!

We're so proud of the 2025/26 "nourish to flourish" grant recipients and are inspired by their achievements! A very big thank you and congratulations to the participating school communities including educators, administrators, parents, volunteers, community partners & STUDENTS for their dedication and hard work in bringing these initiatives to life.

Thank you to Farm Boy for their generous support of the "nourish to flourish" grant program, which is enabling vibrant school food programs throughout Ontario.



Appendix A: A complete list of program impacts as reported by recipients of the 2025/26 "nourish to flourish" grants

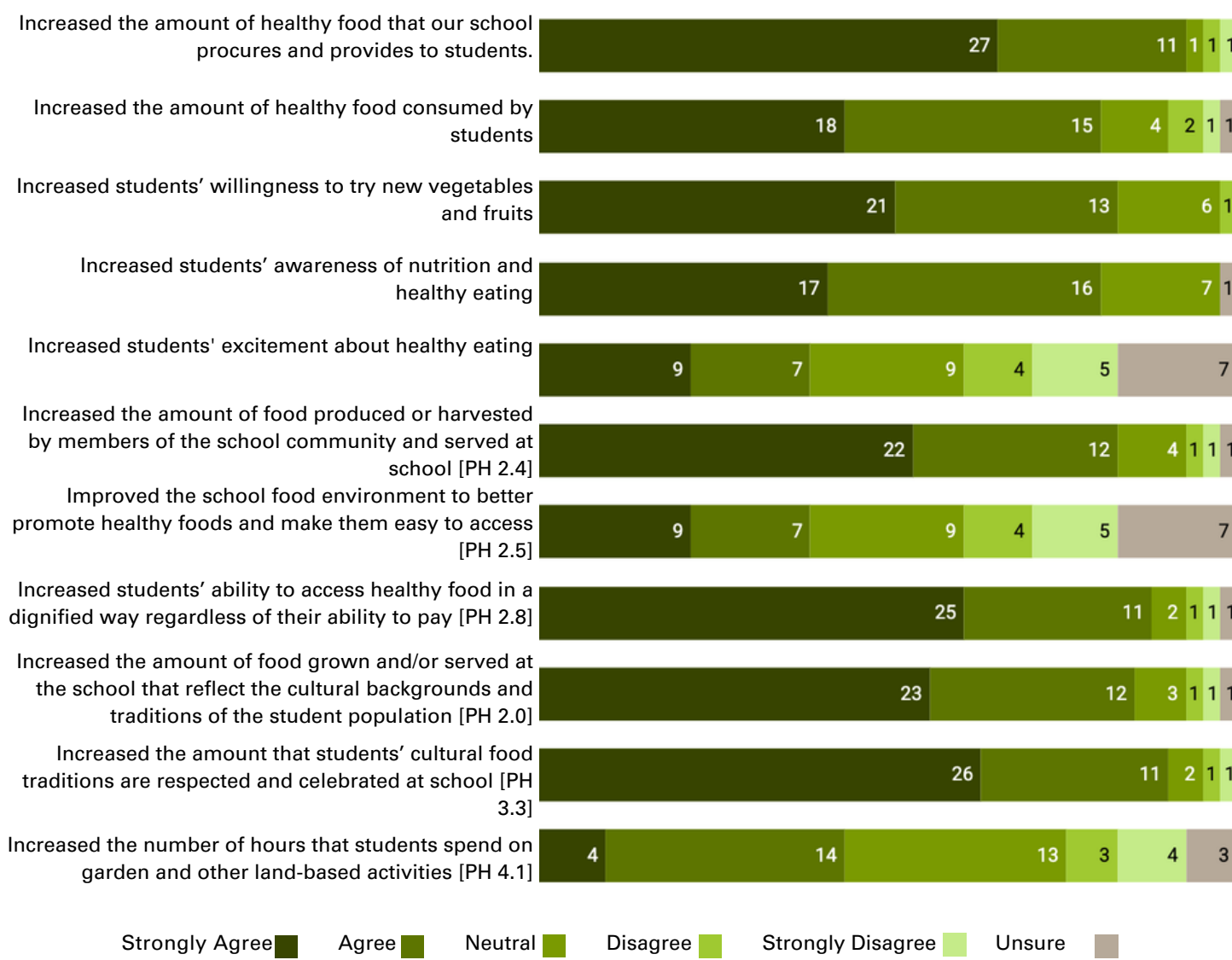
This section provides a fuller set of evaluation data using the indicators in the Farm to School Evaluation Framework for Canada. **The Framework, along with other evaluation tools and resources, can be found [here](#).**

Please note:

- All Farm to Cafeteria Canada grant recipients report on impact areas defined in the Evaluation Framework. Some outcomes may be achievable in the short-term, while others are expected to be medium to long-term. Progress reported is expected to vary depending on the scope and term length of the individual grant stream.
- **[Brackets]** after a statement reflect a specific Framework indicator that has been determined to be a "priority" indicator, and therefore assigned a unique identifier.
- The number on each bar section indicates the number of schools who selected that category.
- The figures show responses from 41 of the 46 2025/26 grant recipient schools.

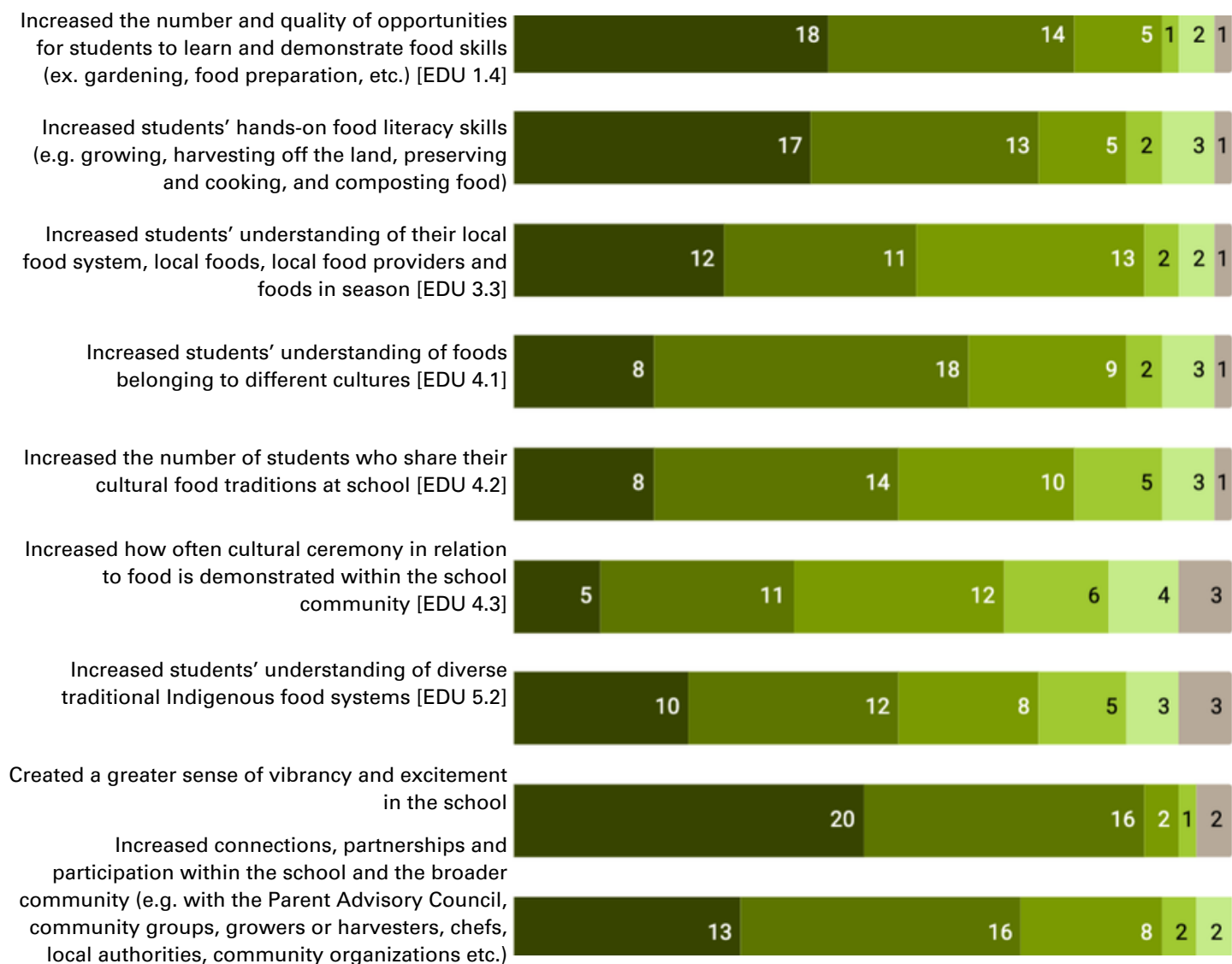
Public Health

Receiving a "nourish to flourish" grant has impacted our school community in the following way(s):



Education & Learning

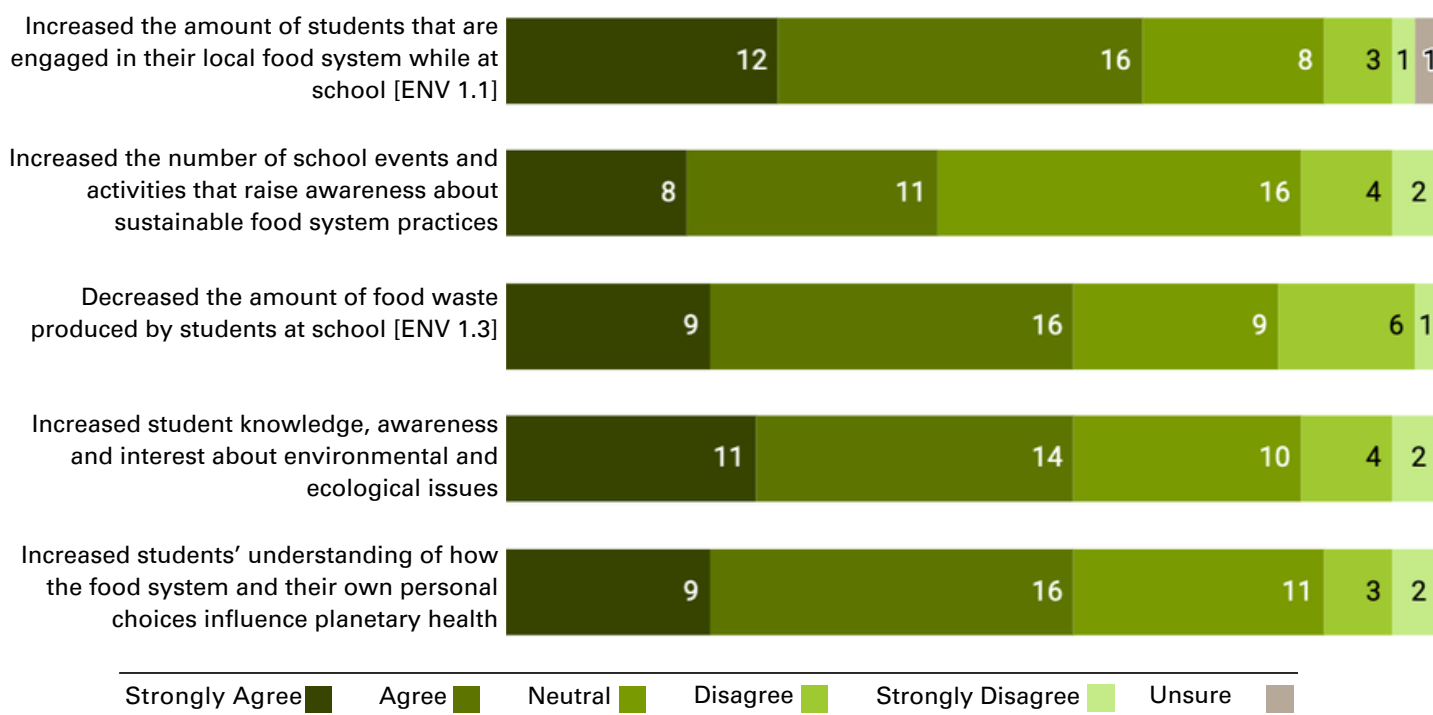
Receiving a "nourish to flourish" grant has impacted our school community in the following way(s):



Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Unsure ■

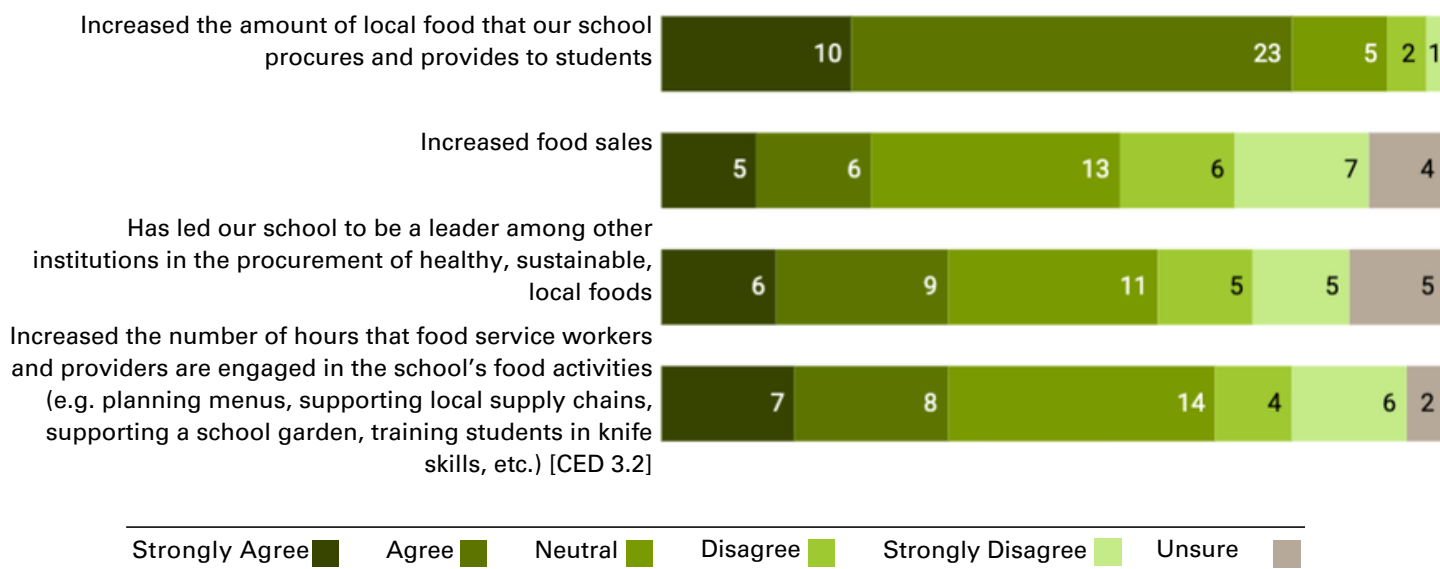
Environment

Receiving a "nourish to flourish" grant has impacted our school community in the following way(s):



Community Economic Development

Receiving a "nourish to flourish" grant has impacted our school community in the following way(s):



Appendix B: Student demographic information as reported by recipients of the 2024/25 "nourish to flourish" grants

Schools that serve...

