

# Opportunities for the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services to



## Through governance:

- **Collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders to develop a visionary document** that acknowledges what it will take to advance a universal SNP and broader school food program.
- **Develop an accountability framework for school food programs** with clear and measurable goals, a strong evidence-based understanding of community impacts, mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, and measures for accountability.
- **Undertake a thorough evaluation of the current SNP model.** Such an evaluation would explore what gaps exist using a food literacy lens, strive towards the provision of high-quality meals, and would suggest opportunities to align the current program with a broader vision for school food.
- **Better coordinate Student Nutrition Programs with the Ministry of Education's Healthy Schools efforts.**
- **Champion an inter-ministerial working group to focus specifically on school food** and to support the achievement of targets amongst various ministries.
- **Work with other ministries to jointly invest in and market school food programs.**
- **Advance comprehensive school health and healthy school food environments.** The OSNPPH's Nutrition Tools for Schools sets out a strong framework for a healthy school nutrition environment and would be an excellent model to use and expand.
- **Provide broader oversight, guidance and coordination support** to ensure that Student Nutrition Programs are able to interpret program goals consistently, that they can use common messaging to communicate information about the program, that programs can work together to achieve common aims, and that they are able to advance the Community Partnership Model.
- **Review, update, and enhance the Student Nutrition Program guidelines in line with providing more extensive guidance to programs.**
- **Support the collaboration function of the Ontario Student Nutrition Program Network (OSNPN).** This would ideally include funding a staff person for ongoing network coordination. Support could also be provided to hire a consultant to help the OSNPN develop a collaborative vision and common working guidelines for network members.

## Through policy and guidelines:

- **Support harmonization and greater clarity around the multiple nutrition standards that apply to schools.**
- **Revise and update the 2008 Nutrition Guidelines** to reflect current nutrition best practices.
- **Support the development of food safety purchasing and handling guidelines** so that school boards and schools would have more clarity and a consistent understanding about how school food programs can be safely implemented and to better facilitate access to healthy food, local food options, and food literacy.

- **Develop guidelines to set out direction for healthy corporate sponsorship for SNPs.**

#### Through funding and in-kind support:

- **Fund school coordinators and/or community partners to work with school and Student Nutrition Program staff.** These dedicated staff can champion and support food programs and work to achieve goals relating to comprehensive school health. Some Ontario school boards have funded Education Assistants to support programs. Individuals could also be hired at the board level to work across schools.
- Help with **outreach and advocacy to municipalities** to make a case for financial support for school food programs and that there is a strong municipal role to be played.
- **Support additional SNP coordination when programs are expanded**, rather than only providing funding to expand the number of students or communities served.
- **Facilitate provincial data collection for SNPs, local food and food literacy** so that players can better understand the demographics, scope and nature of existing programs.
- **Become a partner on the Fresh from the Farm – Healthy Fundraising for Ontario Schools program.** This program was highlighted by several participants as an excellent opportunity that could be expanded and used to support and provide community education about school food programs. MCYS could be brought on as a partner alongside the Ministry of Education and OMAF so that schools could fundraise for SNPs.
- **Continue to enhance support for centralized food production and distribution.**

#### Through partnership building:

- **Provide forums for stakeholders to engage**, better understand each other, and partner to advance school food programming.
- **Support SNPs to work with schools** to connect their programs to the curriculum.
- **Support opportunities for different SNP players to network and share information** so that they can learn from one another.

#### By championing school food:

- **Visit and learn about programs.**
- **Advocate for all Ontario schools to run a Student Nutrition Program** that is accessible to every child and youth every school day; help these programs to receive stable funding.
- **Support public relations, the development of communications materials, and ongoing education** about these issues to create broader awareness about the importance of Student Nutrition Programs and school food initiatives.
- **Declare a SNP celebration and appreciation day** to gain media support and give credibility to the work that's happening.
- **Participate in and support public education programs** such as FoodShare's Great Big Crunch.

Visit [sustainontario.com/work/edible-education/say-yes/](https://sustainontario.com/work/edible-education/say-yes/) for more *Say Yes! to Good Healthy Food in Schools* resources.