

Coalition for Healthy School Food applauds Newfoundland and Labrador for investing in school food

November 16, 2023 - The Coalition for Healthy School Food and its members across the country are incredibly pleased to see the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador increase its investment in school food programs.

On November 8th, Andrew Furey, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, announced that funding would be provided to bring school food programs to every Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 9 student in the province over the next two years.

“Expanding school food investments will provide significant support to so many students and their parents,” said Debbie Field, Coalition for Healthy School Food Coordinator. “NL joins other provinces who have increased their funding this year and signals to the federal government that it is time for the federal government to work in partnership with provinces and territories to make sure all children have access to healthy school food.”

Over the coming months there will be a great deal of planning and coordination involved in this scale-up. Food First NL, a Coalition member, has been funded to lead a large-scale planning process that will engage stakeholders across the province to envision the future of school food. With this funding announcement, that work takes on even more urgency.

The province’s existing charitable school lunch program, the School Lunch Association, currently operates in 42 schools, using an innovative “pay-what-you can” model and has been in operation since 1989. Their model has been adopted by other programs around the country.

John Finn, Executive Director of the School Lunch Association, stated that the timing of this historic announcement could not come at a better time. “In addition to inflationary pressures affecting the cost of food, many schools throughout the province have been requesting our program as they are without a current lunch provider. I applaud the provincial government for their investment as it will provide us the opportunity to feed thousands of children across the province who otherwise may go without a lunch. We will continue to work with the Coalition for Healthy School Food and Food First NL to advocate for a National School Food program as this provincial announcement is a first step that will require federal support.”

