

February 18th, 2022

Mr Danny Muise, Warden
Municipality of Argyle
15, Rue J. E. Hatfield Court
Tusket, Nova Scotia
B0W 3M0



By email to: dmuise@munargyle.com

Re: Requesting Municipality of Argyle's endorsement of a Universal School Food Program

Dear Mr. Muise,

I am writing to request that the Municipality of Argyle add its voice to the growing number of municipalities across Canada who are in favour of a universal, cost-shared healthy school food program.

The Yarmouth County Community Health Board is an endorser of the [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#), a growing network of over 170 non-profit member organizations from every province and territory. We are advocating for public investment in and federal standards for a cost-shared universal school food program that would see all Canadian children having daily access to healthy food at school. Building on existing programs across the country, we hope that all students will eventually eat a healthy meal or snack at school daily in programs that will include food education and that will serve culturally appropriate, local, sustainable food to the fullest extent possible.

Healthy school food programs are [known](#) to improve students' diets, mental and physical health, school performance, attendance, and social cohesion. [Canadian research shows](#) that school food programs improve health and education outcomes in children from all socio-economic backgrounds. Yet, **Canada is the only G7 country without a National School Food Program** and [UNICEF](#) has ranked Canada 37th of 41 wealthy countries when it comes to children's food security and nutrition. Covid-19 has demonstrated that school food programs are an essential service; with food insecurity rates increasing across the country, universal, healthy school food programs are needed more than ever.

After years of grassroots advocacy, the 2019 Federal Budget committed "to work with provinces and territories towards the creation of a National School Food Program" and the newly re-elected federal Liberal party included a commitment of \$1 billion over 5 years towards the creation of a national school food program in their election platform. The [momentum](#) towards a universal school food program is building, and the Coalition for Healthy School Food is seeking endorsements from supporting organizations, agencies, school boards and local governments. There is a wonderful opportunity for the Municipality of Argyle to join with other voices in Nova



Scotia and across the country to take a position on the need for a Canada-wide school food program that meets strong [guiding principles](#) including universality, health promotion, cultural relevance and respect for local conditions.

Among the priorities of our Health Plan, Food Security and the implementation of a National School Food Program are paramount. We know that our area has one of the highest rates of child poverty. We have already taken many steps to achieve this priority and are seeking your help.

To demonstrate the Municipality of Argyle's support for a universal school food program, we request that you bring forward a motion to fellow council members, with the following recommendations:

1. That the Municipality of Argyle endorse the efforts of the Coalition for Healthy School Food to advocate for a universal, cost-shared healthy school food program. This support is based on a shared belief that all children and youth in Nova Scotia should have daily access to healthy food at school.
2. That the Municipality of Argyle call on the Federal government to begin to implement a universal, cost-shared, healthy school food program for all K-12 students in the country and to sign onto the global School Meals Coalition Declaration, as per the [Coalition's 2022 Pre-Budget Consultation Submission](#).

Please see motions passed by [the City of Vancouver](#), [the City of Victoria](#), the [City of Courtenay](#) (page 3), and the [City of Toronto](#). See [here](#) an example of a letter to the Federal government written by the City of Vancouver.

In addition to these municipalities, the Federation for Canadian Municipalities ([see here](#)) and the Union of BC Municipalities ([see here](#)) have passed motions in the last 5 years to advocate for a universal school food program.

Please reach out if you have any questions or require a delegation to council. Thank you for your leadership and support in building momentum for a federally supported healthy school food program for K-12 students in Canada.

Warmly,

Brian Doucet
Chair
doucetbl@gmail.com



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COUNTY**
Community Health Board

