



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 15, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Student Nutrition Programs and Food4Kids (BOH17015) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Vicki Edwards (905) 546-2424, Ext. 3632
SUBMITTED BY:	Kevin McDonald (A) Director, Healthy Environments Division Public Health Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Emergency and Community Services Committee at its meeting on January 17, 2013 approved the following:

“That the delegation (Lena Bassford, Food4Kids Hamilton Halton Niagara, to provide general information about the Food4Kids Program Item 6.1) be received and the information be referred to staff for consideration in the broader plan on how to best support student nutrition and report back to Committee.”

Emergency and Community Services Committee at its meeting of June 9, 2014 approved the following:

Items from the outstanding Business List be transferred to the Board of Health:

- Item D(a) – Staff to consider the information regarding the Food4Kids Program and report back, and
- Item D(b) – Report back on Universal School Nutrition Program.

This report fulfills that request and the items can be removed from the outstanding business list.

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Information:

Nutrition is important to people of all ages, but it is particularly important to the well-being of children and youth. Nutritious food helps kids learn. Research shows that students have trouble learning when they are hungry at school. They are better able to focus and learn if they eat nutritious meals and snacks.¹

In Hamilton, free and low cost food can be accessed from food banks, free meals and other community food programs at various agencies around the city including places where children gather such as the Ontario Early Years Centres and the Boys and Girls Clubs. A complete listing of places with free and low cost food can be found in the Food Access Guide at <https://docs.hamiltonfht.ca/dsweb/Get/Document-63270>.

One of the Hamilton Food Strategy’s goals is to “Support food friendly neighbourhoods to improve access to healthy food for all residents.” A sign of success in reaching this goal includes all schools having healthy food and beverage choices. Student nutrition programs with nutrition guidelines contribute to increasing healthy food options for children within the school setting.

Two programs in Hamilton that specifically focus on feeding school-aged children are Tastebuds and Food4Kids. These programs provide access to food and play a role in alleviating hunger. Table 1 provides a comparison of these two programs.

Table 1: Comparison of Tastebuds Student Nutrition Program (SNP) and Food4Kids

	Tastebuds²	Food4Kids³
Program Description	On weekdays during the school year, SNPs provide all students in the school healthy snacks and/or meals (breakfast or lunch)	Each Friday, Food4Kids provides weekend packages of healthy food to kids aged 4-14 years who have been identified by the school as having limited or no access to food at home. Each child in the home receives their own food package.
Reach (2015-2016 school year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 171 student nutrition programs (elementary and secondary schools) • 117 locations • average of 32,440 students per day • 1,301 volunteers served • 433,011 breakfasts • 2,583,154 morning meals • 25,032 lunches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44 schools in Hamilton • 1010 students during school year • 500 children during the summer (450 children are on the waiting list in Hamilton)

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	Tastebuds²	Food4Kids³
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 932,862 healthy snacks 	
Governance	Hamilton, Brantford, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, and the Counties of Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk Management Consortium under lead agency Resource, Education And Counselling Help (R.E.A.C.H.), and a Steering Committee under the Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) of Hamilton	Board of Directors
Staffing	4.6 FTE staff (Hamilton)	2.5 FTE staff (Hamilton) 2.0 FTE staff (Halton)
Funding	Up to 15% funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS); 85% funded through donations, fundraising and grants (including the Ward 1 Area Rating Budget)	100% funded through fundraising, donations or one-time grants
Nutrition Guidelines	Ministry of Children and Youth Services Student Nutrition Program Nutrition Guidelines 2016	Food packages contain healthy food such as: soup, whole grains, cereal, dairy, fruit and vegetables. The summer program food supply contains 50% fresh whole foods.

The Role of Public Health

Program supports which are within the mandate and scope of Public Health are the following:

- Connect interested schools with available local programs such as Tastebuds and Food4Kids,
- Contribute to the development and interpretation of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) Student Nutrition Program Nutrition Guidelines,
- Advise community volunteers and coordinators on safe and healthy practices for food programs, and
- Participate at SNP governance tables.

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The following is a summary of the City of Hamilton Public Health Services involvement in student nutrition programs:

- A Public Health Registered Dietitian (RD) is an active member of the Management Consortium which is responsible for ensuring the quality of local program delivery by developing program and evaluation guidelines,
- A Public Health Nurse (PHN), a Public Health Inspector (PHI) and an RD participate as members on the Tastebuds steering committee,
- PHIs inspect facilities and consult on food safety (preparation, storage and distribution),
- In the summer of 2016, a Public Health Registered Dietitian (RD) participated on a 14-member committee (with other provincial public health registered dietitians and the Ontario Public Health Association Nutrition Resource Centre) to inform and establish the Ministry of Children and Youth Services [Student Nutrition Program Nutrition Guidelines 2016](#), and
- An RD consults directly with SNP volunteers and Tastebuds staff to interpret the nutrition guidelines and assist with sourcing recipes.

Additional planned City of Hamilton Public Health Service activities for 2017:

- A Public Health RD will be providing two workshops for SNP volunteers on using the new 2016 SNP Nutrition Guidelines to plan menus, and
- As per Hamilton's Food Strategy, Priority Action 1: Funding Criteria Process, the Food Strategy Interdepartmental Steering Team is currently developing a process to assess requests for City funding for food related programs.

Footnotes:

¹Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Student Nutrition Program <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/professionals/studentnutrition/studentnutrition.aspx> accessed February 7, 2017.

²Source: Email correspondence from Patti McNaney, Senior Social Planner, Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton, February 14, 2017.

³Source: Email correspondence from Lena Bassford, Executive Director, Food4Kids on February 14, 2017.