

AGENDA – PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 5th, 2023 - 6:00 PM
(In-Person and Virtual)
Limestone Education Centre
220 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, ON
Link: https://bit.ly/PICOct5_2023

Acknowledgement of Territory: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
- 3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 4.1 PIC Meeting – May 4th, 2023
- 5. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION**
 - 5.1 Message from Director Burra
- 6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**
 - 6.1** Chair Update – V. Wood
 - 6.2** Trustee Update - Trustee Godkin
 - 6.3** Board Update - Associate Superintendent Gollogly
 - 6.4** 2SLGTBQIA+ Focus Group – S. Bradley
- 7. REPORTS FOR ACTION - None at this time.**
- 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None at this time.**
- 9. NEW BUSINESS**

- 9.1** Elections.
- 9.2** Parent Reaching Out (PRO) funding committee.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

- 10.1** Letter to PM Trudeau, Minister Gould and Minister Bibeau, re Student Nutrition Program, dated 2023-05-24
- 10.2** Letter to Premier Ford, Minister Lecce and Minister Parsa, re Student Nutrition Program, dated 2023-05-24
- 10.3** Letter from Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (ON), dated 2023-06-01
- 10.4** Letter from Premier Ford, dated 2023-06-02
- 10.5** Letter from Employment and Social Development Canada, dated 2023-06-21

11. NEXT MEETING – Thursday, November 16, 2023.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Gould and Minister Bibeau

As co-chairs of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee, we are writing to express our deep concern about growing food insecurity among families in our community and across the country. We know, just as you know, that every child deserves access to nutritious and healthy food, and we urge you to **take action by implementing a national school food program funded through the federal budget.**

[According to the Food Sharing Project](#), food insecurity affects one in nine families in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. This staggering number highlights the critical need for action.

As parents and caregivers, we have seen firsthand the devastating impact of food insecurity on children. It not only affects their physical health but also their mental and emotional well-being. Hungry children cannot concentrate in class, leading to poor academic performance and decreased motivation to learn. No child should go hungry in Canada.

We are proud of and immensely grateful for the work done by the Food Sharing Project, which is sending out over \$25,000 worth of food every week in the 2022-23 school year to every school in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. However, the organization faces a budget shortfall due to increasing demand and skyrocketing food costs. It is not sustainable for school councils and individual parents to fundraise and donate to fill in the gaps left by a lack of government funding, particularly when many families are facing financial pressures and food insecurity as it is.

A national school food program would provide a much-needed solution to this problem. We can improve student achievement and well-being by ensuring that all children have access to nutritious meals, regardless of their family's income. We cannot afford to neglect this vital issue any longer.

We are disappointed that the federal budget did not address this issue. **We urge you to take the necessary steps to implement a nationally-funded school food program so that our children can thrive and succeed in school and life.** A comprehensive, coordinated approach that involves all levels of government is needed to ensure that no child in Canada goes hungry.

We look forward to hearing about the concrete steps you will take to address this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Shayla Bradley

Vanessa Wood

Co-Chairs of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee

Sent via email to:

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould

Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Marie-Claude Bibeau

CC:

LDSB Director of Education Krishna Burra

LDSB Associate Superintendent Patty Gollogly, Safe and Caring Schools

LDSB Chair Robin Hutcheon

LDSB PIC Trustee Bob Godkin

Brenda Moore, Food Sharing Project Chair

John Barlow, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Agri-Food and Food Security

Michelle Ferreri, Shadow Minister for Families, Children and Social Development

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

Dear Premier Ford, Minister Lecce, and Minister Parsa,

As co-chairs of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee, we are writing to express our concern about the increasing food insecurity many Ontario students face. While we call for federal action, we also recognize that the Ontario Government and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services are key to ensuring that our students are not hungry.

[According to the Food Sharing Project](#), food insecurity affects one in nine families in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. This staggering number highlights the critical need for action.

As parents and caregivers, we have seen firsthand the devastating impact that food insecurity can have on children. It not only affects their physical health but also their mental and emotional well-being. Hungry children cannot concentrate in class, leading to poor academic performance and decreased motivation to learn. No child should go hungry in Ontario or Canada.

We are proud of and immensely grateful for the work done by the Food Sharing Project, which is sending out over \$25,000 worth of food every week in the 2022-23 school year to every school in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. However, the organization faces a budget shortfall due to increasing demand and skyrocketing food costs. It is not sustainable for school councils and individual parents to fundraise and donate to fill in the gaps left by a lack of government funding, particularly when many families are facing financial pressures and food insecurity as it is.

While we are calling on the federal government to fund a national school food program, we also urge the Ontario Government to do its part to ensure that Ontario students have access to nutritious food. Every jurisdiction needs to do more to address this critical issue.

We urge you to increase funding for student nutrition programs in Ontario schools and to work with school boards, parents, and community organizations to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing food insecurity among Ontario students.

A coordinated approach that involves all levels of government is needed to ensure that no child in Ontario is left behind.

We look forward to hearing about the concrete steps you will take to address this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Shayla Bradley and Vanessa Wood

Co-Chairs of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee

Sent via email to:

Premier Doug Ford

Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario, Stephen Lecce

Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Michael Parsa

CC:

LDSB Director of Education Krishna Burra

LDSB Associate Superintendent Patty Gollogly, Safe and Caring Schools

LDSB Chair Robin Hutcheon

LDSB PIC Trustee Bob Godkin

Brenda Moore, Food Sharing Project Chair

Monique Taylor, Critic, Children, Community and Social Services

Chandra Pasma, Critic, Education

**Ministry of Children,
Community and Social
Services**

**Children with Special Needs
Division**

**Child Development and
Specialized Services Branch**

101 Bloor Street West
3rd Floor

Toronto ON M5S 2Z7
Phone: (416) 892-6926

**Ministère des Services à
l'enfance et des Services
sociaux et communautaires**

**Division des services aux enfants
ayant des besoins particuliers**

**Direction du développement des
enfants et des services spécialisés**

101 rue Bloor ouest
3^e étage

Toronto (Ontario) M5S 2Z7
Tél : (416) 892-6926



June 1, 2023

Shayla Bradley and Vanessa Wood
Co-Chairs of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee
ldsbpiccochairs@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Bradley and Ms. Wood:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee and your collaboration with the Student Nutrition Program (SNP) and the Food Sharing Project. As the Director of the Child Development and Specialized Services Branch in the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), it is a pleasure to respond.

The Ontario government funds a range of services to support vulnerable children, youth, and adults in Ontario. This includes programs such as the SNP delivered by lead agencies, which brings together partners in communities across the province to provide meals and snacks to children and youth in schools to support them to learn, develop healthy eating habits, and feel a sense of belonging at school.

These partnerships include charitable funders, corporate donors, local businesses, community fundraising and local volunteers who all contribute to the success of the program.

The ministry also funds the First Nations Student Nutrition Program, which is a First Nations-led program that helps provide nutritious meals and snacks in more than 120 educational settings in First Nations communities.

To address concerns such as those raised in your letter, the ministry has engaged KPMG to conduct a program review and explore options for SNP sustainability. This review will include identifying cost drivers, assessing alternative delivery mechanisms and facilitating innovative partnerships to expand the program's reach and improve outcomes for children and youth. KPMG is currently engaging key

stakeholders across multiple sectors and will include lead agencies and their identified partners.

Additionally, as part of Ontario's effort to support children, youth and families, I am pleased to share that the government is providing an additional \$1 million as a one-time investment to support the SNP in 23/24.

As we continue to navigate changing circumstances related to program delivery, I want to acknowledge your efforts to continue to serve the community by providing nutritious food to children and youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ziyaad Vahed', written in a cursive style.

Ziyaad Vahed
Director

Fri, Jun 2, 2023 (via email)

Thanks for reaching out on behalf of the Limestone District School Board Parent Involvement Committee about funding for student nutrition programs. I welcome your insight, as it helps guide our government when it comes to improving and developing programs.

I note that you've shared your correspondence with the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. Minister Lecce or a member his team will respond to you as soon as possible.

Thanks again for contacting me.

Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario

c: The Honourable Stephen Lecce

Wed, Jun 21, 2023 (via email)

Dear Shayla Bradley and Vanessa Wood,

On behalf of the Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, I am responding to your letter regarding a National School Food Policy.

Ensuring that every child gets the best possible start in life is a priority for the Government of Canada. The Government of Canada is committed to working with the provinces and territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners and stakeholders to develop a National School Food Policy and explore how more Canadian children can receive nutritious food at school.

School food programming falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, except programming for First Nations children on reserve. There are different approaches to school food programs across the country with significant variation in design. The Government of Canada is working collaboratively with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous partners and stakeholders to build a National School Food Policy that reflects regional and local needs.

To inform the development of the National School Food Policy, the Government has and continues to engage with diverse stakeholders from across Canada, including through bilateral conversations and roundtables, and has also sought the views of Canadians through an online questionnaire. Additionally, many quantitative data and literature from diverse sources in both domestic and international contexts on school meal programs are informing the development of the Policy. Finally, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development has visited school food programs and met with stakeholders in many communities across Canada.

Through these engagement activities, we have gained a better understanding of the current school food landscape, as well as views on principles and objectives that could shape a National School Food Policy. Moreover, stakeholders, and experts have highlighted that school meal programs can have multiple social, health, environmental and economic benefits and can play a role in increasing access to nutritious food for children, especially those from low-income or food-insecure households.

I appreciate the circumstances that prompted you to write. Food insecurity and food prices have been on the rise, putting pressure on household finances and making it more difficult for many families to afford nutritious food.

School meal programs on their own, however, are not a solution to financial hardship or food insecurity; the commitment to develop a National School Food Policy is part of a comprehensive approach to supporting children and their families that complements other investments that address poverty and food insecurity.

The Government of Canada has made significant investments through targeted social programs and income supplements to reduce poverty and increase well-being. This in turn helps improve Canadians' access to nutritious food. These programs and benefits include the following:

- the Canada Child Benefit, which provides substantial tax-free income support to families raising children;
- Old Age Security, which provides income security for Canadian seniors;
- the Guaranteed Income Supplement, which provides additional financial assistance to eligible seniors who receive little to no income beyond their Old Age Security pension;
- the newly expanded Canada Workers Benefit, which supports workers earning lower wages;
- the Employment Insurance program; and

the creation of a Canada-wide early learning and child care system with a significant reduction in fees.

These programs and initiatives support many Canadians, enabling them to decide how to spend their money, reduce their financial burdens and improve their access to essentials, including nutritious food.

Your insights are valuable to the development of this policy, and we appreciate you reaching out to voice your views. Thank you for taking the time to write.

Marebame Longe
Director
Strategic and Horizontal Social Policy Division
Social Policy Directorate & Strategic and Service Policy Branch
Employment and Social Development Canada

c.c. Office of the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau

Mark Gerretsen, MP for Kingston and the Islands

Scott Reid, MP for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston

John Barlow, MP for Foothills

Michelle Ferreri, MP for Peterborough–Kawartha