



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

February 8, 2024

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Finance & Deputy Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, O.N. K1A 0A6
chrystia.freeland@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister Freeland,

Subject: Federal Budget 2024 – National School Food Program

With the federal government conducting pre-budget consultations, I wish to add support to calls from other [provincial public education associations](#) to request that \$1 billion over five years, with a minimum of \$200 million per year, be included in Budget 2024 for a National School Food Program.

My concern is similarly rooted in the lack of mention in last year's budget, as a National School Food Program was introduced as part of Budget 2019 and subsequently reaffirmed in the 2022 budget's reference to mandate letters to related ministers. Including the National Food Program in Budget 2024 is a vital signal to all Canadians that the federal government intends to fulfil its commitment to improving student nutrition nationwide.

As you know, provinces and territories across Canada are prepared to work toward agreements with the federal government on a cost-shared National School Food Program, and we are confident that federal funding will positively influence student outcomes as proper nutrition provides a vital base for learning and success. This funding would also go far in combating affordability issues that many families struggle with.

I am proud to support Member of Parliament Serge Cormier's Bill C-322 (an act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program). As president of the British Columbia School Trustees Association, I regularly communicate with our members about their advocacy priorities, and concerns related to food insecurity are a consistent topic of conversation. While we have advocated provincially as an association, I must emphasize that it is also a national concern. Children cannot learn effectively when hungry and cannot properly develop into the leaders and change-makers we need if we do not help them meet their most basic needs.



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BCSTA will continue to advocate for change at the provincial level, and while we intend to pursue more for B.C. families and students, we know that federal support would contribute to our goal.

I hope to see the inclusion of dedicated funding to support a National School Food Program in Budget 2024. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Broady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Broady
President
British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: A20237

CC: The Honourable Jenna Suds, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food
BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors