September 30, 2016

Hon. Jane Philpott, MP  
Minister of Health  
Jane.Philpott@parl.gc.ca

Hon. Bill Morneau, MP  
Minister of Finance  
Bill.Morneau@parl.gc.ca

Hon. Scott Brison, MP  
President of the Treasury Board  
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Hon. Amarjeet Sohi, MP  
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities  
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Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos  
Minister of Families, Children and  
Social Development  
Jean-Yves.Duclos@parl.gc.ca

Dear Honourable Ministers:

At the September 14, 2016 meeting of the Board of Health for Peterborough Public Health, correspondence from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit regarding food security and universal hot meal programs in schools was received.

Peterborough Public Health is one of the many partners of Food For Kids Peterborough and County who work to ensure that Student Nutrition Programs (SNPs) are offered and available in local elementary and secondary schools. In 2013, the Board of Health endorsed a local report entitled “Student Nutrition Programs: Best Practices, Actions for and Call to Action for Food for Kids Peterborough County”.

In the 2015-16 school year, Food For Kids Peterborough and County served over 2.5 million breakfasts and snacks to over 17,000 local students with the dedication of 1,000 volunteers. The Board of Health has endorsed the vision of SNPs, delivered in Peterborough County and City schools by Food For Kids Peterborough and County, that all students who would benefit can achieve the positive health, learning and behavioural outcomes that result from this key nutrition strategy and sound public policy.

In December 1997, a “national school nutrition program” was recommended by the Standing Committee on Finance. Despite evidence supporting the need for universal SNPs and local programs meeting international best practices, funding for local programs is at a critical point. Increasing student need, expanding programs, increasing food costs and decreased funding from foundations traditionally supporting SNPs, means that Food For Kids Peterborough and County programs are currently vulnerable.

Currently local programs receive financial support in the form of grants from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, administered for the Central East SNP through the Peterborough Family Resource Centre, along with additional funding and donations from grants, businesses, service clubs, school boards, community members and parents.
We request/urge that the Canadian government invest to leverage provincial efforts for student meal programs, through the development of a national Universal Healthy School Food Program. This partnership with provincial governments would allow funding to better reflect program costs of existing universal student nutrition programs in elementary and secondary schools across the country, while supporting student learning in regions currently lacking such programs.

In closing, we look forward to working with you, as well as our active community partners to address the need for increased funding for SNPs. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Yours in health,

*Original signed by*

Scott McDonald  
Chair, Board of Health

/at  
Encl.

*cc:* Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, MOHLTC  
Maryam Monsef, MP, Peterborough-Kawartha  
Kim Rudd, MP, Northumberland-Peterborough South  
Jamie Schmale, MP, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Ontario Boards of Health
September 30, 2016

Hon. Mitzie Hunter, MPP
Minister of Education
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Hon. Helena Jaczek, MPP
Minister of Community and Social Services
hjaczek.mpp@liberal.ola.org

Hon. Michael Coteau, MPP
Minister of Children and Youth Services
mcoteau.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Dear Honourable Ministers:

At the September 14, 2016 meeting of the Board of Health for Peterborough Public Health, correspondence from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit regarding food security and universal hot meal programs in schools was received.

Peterborough Public Health is one of the many partners of Food For Kids Peterborough and County who work to ensure that Student Nutrition Programs (SNPs) are offered and available in local elementary and secondary schools. In 2013, the Board of Health endorsed a local report entitled “Student Nutrition Programs: Best Practices, Actions for and Call to Action for Food for Kids Peterborough County”.

In the 2015-16 school year, Food For Kids Peterborough and County served over 2.5 million breakfasts and snacks to over 17,000 local students with the dedication of 1,000 volunteers. The Board of Health has endorsed the vision of SNPs, delivered in Peterborough County and City schools by Food For Kids Peterborough and County, that all students who would benefit can achieve the positive health, learning and behavioural outcomes that result from this key nutrition strategy and sound public policy.

Despite a decade of evidence supporting the need for universal SNPs and local programs meeting international best practices, funding for local programs is at a critical point. Increasing student need, expanding programs, increasing food costs and decreased funding from foundations traditionally supporting SNPs, means that Food For Kids Peterborough and County programs are currently vulnerable.

Currently local programs receive financial support in the form of grants from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, administered for the Central East SNP through the Peterborough Family Resource Centre, along with additional funding and donations from grants, businesses, service clubs, school boards, community members and parents.
We request/urge that the Ontario government enhance funding to better reflect program costs of existing universal SNPs in elementary and secondary schools across the province. This is in line with recommendations of both the local report previously noted as well in the 2012 provincial report, *No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy*.

In closing, we look forward to working with you, as well as our active community partners to address the need for increased funding for SNPs. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Yours in health,

*Original signed by*

Scott McDonald
Chair, Board of Health

/at
Encl.

cc:  Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, MOHLTC
Jeff Leal, MPP, Peterborough
Laurie Scott, MPP, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock
Association of Local Public Health Agencies
Ontario Boards of Health