



Coalition for Healthy School Food

The Honourable Jane Philpott, MD, PC, MP

November 19, 2015

Minister of Health

House of Commons, Parliament Buildings

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A9

By email to: Minister_Ministre@hc-sc.gc.ca and Jane.Philpott@parl.gc.ca

Re: Emphasis of a national universal healthy school food program in the **Speech from the Throne** and the agenda of the January **Federal/Provincial/Territorial meeting of Ministers of Health**

Dear Minister Philpott:

Congratulations on your success in the recent federal election and appointment as Minister of Health. The appointment of someone so vocally committed to health promotion is a harbinger of a new government approach to improving the health of Canadians, especially children and youth. In addition, we are encouraged by your government's commitment to improving its relationship with the Indigenous peoples of Canada and to correcting some of the inequities related to healthcare and food insecurity. Furthermore, we applaud the inclusion of a national food policy in the mandate letter from the Prime Minister to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Poor diet is the leading risk factor for disease and death in Canada and globally. We urge you to advocate including in the Speech from the Throne a national universal healthy school food program as part of a broader national food policy. Doing so will help your government to foster real change and fulfill its election platform commitments to help Canadians live healthier lives and to ensure that children have more equal access to opportunities early in life.

A national universal healthy school food program will help redress both ill health and inequity by ensuring that children can choose nutritious foods in schools, rather than being sold food that does not meet minimal nutrition standards. Indeed, research demonstrates that school food programs increase children's consumption of healthy foods, reduce the risk of chronic diseases, and improve mental health. School food programs also improve educational outcomes and increase graduation rates by reducing hunger in classrooms, a known barrier to concentration and learning. Furthermore, school food programs have the potential to create thousands of new jobs and to grow local economies by investing in local agriculture and food businesses.

Historically, the federal government has provided little or no funding for school food programs, even for federally funded schools in First Nations communities. However, several of your cabinet colleagues, including Ministers Bennett, Duncan, and Goodale, have been vocal proponents of a national healthy school food program. We see leadership emerging on healthy school food programs from the Governments of Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the City of Toronto, and sincerely hope that federal government will lead a

The Coalition for Healthy School Food is a pan-Canadian coalition seeking government support for a national school food program. The Coalition comprises 31 organizations representing millions of Canadians.

more collaborative approach to this issue with provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments.

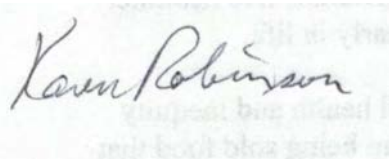
We urge you to help ensure that the Speech from the Throne and the agenda for the upcoming Federal/Provincial/Territorial meeting of Ministers of Health both reflect a commitment to explore ways to implement a national universal healthy school food program in the context of a broader national food policy aiming to make our food system more healthy, more equitable and more sustainable.

We wish you all the best in your new challenges. Our members are committed to supporting your efforts as we work towards our goal of healthy, well-fed children in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail Black, Vice President,
Development
Canadian Feed the Children



Karen Robinson
Canadians for a Safe Learning
Environment



Bill Jeffery, LLB, National
Coordinator
Centre for Science in the Public
Interest



Viola Prowse, Former Executive
Director
Child Nutrition Council of
Manitoba



Marie Tellier, Coordonnatrice
Collectif de la table des écoliers



Christine Gascon, Éducatrice
alimentaire
Croquarium

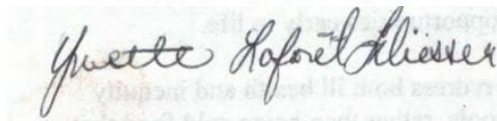


Dr. Sara FL Kirk, Canada
Research Chair in Health Services
Research, School of Health
and Human Performance

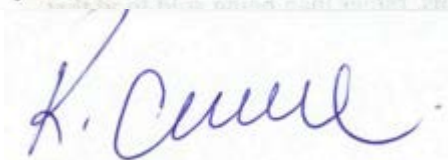


Dalhousie University

Annette Woudstra, Director of
Nutrition and Community Services
E4C



Yvette Laforêt-Fliesser, Public
Health Consultant
Edellys Training Corp.



Karen Campbell, Farm School
Director
Everdale



Roxana Atkinson, National Farm
to School Liaison
Farm to Cafeteria Canada



Suman Roy, Chair of the Board
FoodShare Toronto



Diana Bronson, Executive
Director
Food Secure Canada



Marc Schutzbank, Co-Executive
Director
Fresh Roots Urban Farm Society



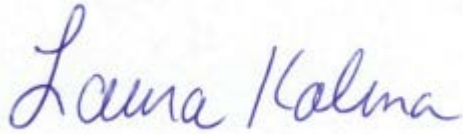
Sunday Harrison, Executive
Director
Green Thumbs Growing Kids



Mary Lewis, Vice-President,
Research, Advocacy and Health
Promotion
Heart & Stroke Foundation



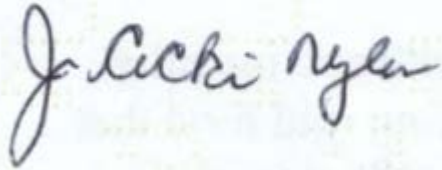
Dr. Victoria Crosbie
Pediatric Specialist, Janeway
Children's Hospital



Laura Kalina, Co-Chair
Kamloops Food Policy Council



Celina Stoyles, Executive Director
Kids Eat Smart Foundation
Newfoundland and Labrador



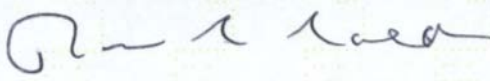
Jacki Nylon
Manitoba Physical Education
Teachers Association
New Brunswick Physical
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Carol Peters
Manitoba Physical Education
Teachers Association



Ross Campbell
New Brunswick Physical
Education Society
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Ross Calder
New Brunswick Physical
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Lori Biernat
New Frontiers School Board



Kara Johnstone, Coordinator of
Educational Services
New Frontiers School Board



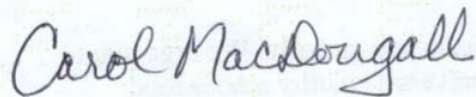
Lisa Lemieux
New Frontiers School Board



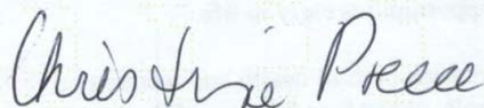
Sarah Taylor, Physical Education
Teacher
Northern Lights School District
#113



Margo Riebe-Butt, Executive
Director
Nourish Nova Scotia



Carol MacDougall, Co-Chair
Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition



Christine Preece, Co-Chair
Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition
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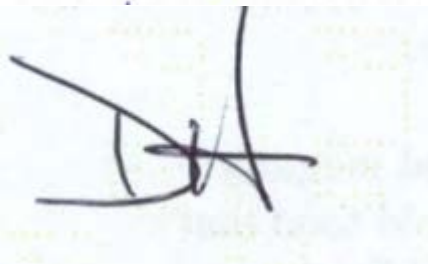
Sally Collins, OCT, Chair Healthy
Eating Committee, Norman
Johnston Alternate Site
Ottawa Carleton District School
Board



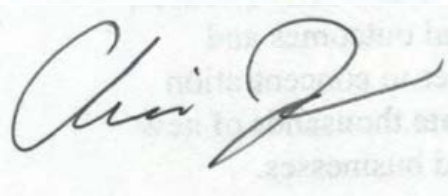
Peter Rukavina, President
PEI Home and School Federation



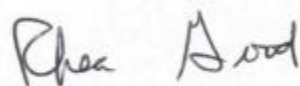
Natalie Isford, Teacher
Pembina Trails School Division



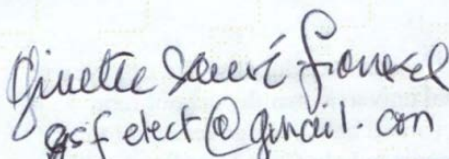
Don Hutchinson
Directory of Agencies for School
Health
Physical and Health Education
Canada



Dr. Chris Jones, Executive
Director
Physical and Health Education
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Rhea Good, President
Pilot Project for Universal
Lunches in Schools Inc.

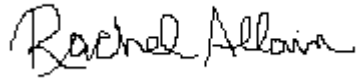


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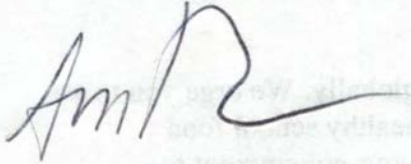
Ginette Sauvé-Frankel, Director
Quebec Federation of Home and
School Associations



Janet Nezon, Founder
Rainbow Plate



Rachel Allain, Directrice générale
Le réseau des cafétérias
communautaires Inc.



Anita Verlangen, Health
Promotion Schools Coordinator
Saskatoon Health Region



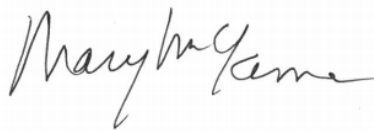
Brenda Green, Superintendent of
Education
Saskatoon Public School



Kristy Taylor, Executive Director
Show Kids You Care



Philip Groff, Executive Director
Sustain Ontario



Dr. Mary McKenna, RD,
Professor, Faculty of Kinesiology
and Acting Assistant Dean, School
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University of New Brunswick



Chris Wilson, Senior Research
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University of Ottawa



Jillian McCallum, Regional
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