

School District No. 8
2014-2015 Budget
Project Description Form

Date: Jan. 17, 2014

Site: Two grade 5/6 classrooms in two schools in Nelson

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Food Awareness Education Program – Phase 1

Project Overview:

Project Categories:

Academic success: Students will learn to fuel their bodies and build healthy relationships. An increased awareness of the local food cycle develops skills, habits and attitudes for life.

Creativity & Imagination: Increased confidence to cook and garden allows for a daily dose of creativity in the everyday routine.

Citizenship: Volunteer work with community partners such as the Nelson Food Cupboard to contribute to their share a garden or harvest rescue program contributes to the development of responsible citizens within the local community.

Resiliency: Students will have the opportunity make important connections of the food cycle in their community. An awareness of community food resources will enable student to make healthy choices to fuel themselves. This will allow for increased ability to focus on school tasks and build social and emotional strength as a result.

Transitions: Regular field trips and experiences outside the classroom with a shared altruistic purpose will promote positive interactions and confidence building in students.

Critical Thinking Skills: The curriculum will include opportunities for reflection and problem solving that involve real-life scenarios. Students will have to consider social, economic and environmental factors to make a seemingly simple grocery shopping choice for instance.

Social and Emotional Well-being: Children that are able to make informed decisions about their food consumption will then develop the confidence to assert themselves on their own personal needs in and outside the classroom.

Date/Length of Project:

This is a multi-year program with higher initial costs in Phase 1 to pilot, evaluate and validate the program. Phase 1 will include curriculum development and tailoring for our region's needs and training of instructors. Subsequent years will attempt to expand the program to other schools and age groups. Partnerships have already been proposed with interested organizations in the Nelson community. Potential long-term collaboration with the Nelson Food Cupboard, a local non-profit organization that operates a food bank and aims to relieve poverty through education and Wildsight, an organization that has education programs aimed to protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable communities in the Columbia and southern Rocky Mountain region.

Description:

Why increase Food Awareness in school-aged children?

A food awareness education program is not a new concept. There are numerous provincial and non-profit organizations that have developed food education programs providing healthy lunches for students from local farmers, and promoting school gardens and cultivation for example. Cooking as a life skill has been taught for decades in public schools. This program will not reinvent the wheel, rather tailor these programs to the needs of the students of our region and incorporate many aspects of these programs that would work for our schools.

Obesity and weight issues are prevalent in children and youth in Canadian schools. Nutrition and food education programs have been shown to be effective in lowering their rates of obesity, improving diet and increased physical activities for Canadian students in grade 5 (Veugelers P.J. & Fitzgerald A.L. 2004). Another study cited in the Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report of 2008 suggest that obesity and overweight issue particularly affect children and youth aged 6-11 (26%) and ages 12-17 (29%) (An Ounce of Prevention Revisited). As a result our Phase 1 of the program will start with targeting students 10/11 years of age and phase 2 in the 12/13 age range. This program proposal is for phase 1. Like the Farm to School program of the Public Health Association of British Columbia, the success of this type of program is under the assumption that once students have an understanding as well as access to healthy local food they will more likely develop positive attitudes towards healthy foods and hopefully continue to make healthy food choices for life, especially if they start at an early age (Joshi A, Misako Azuma A. 2008).

The issue of food security in schools and public policy is an emergent one. According to a report on municipal food policy in Canada, there are 64 local and regional municipalities across Canada with some sort of food policy. In January 2013 the City of Vancouver developed a Food Strategy and Kaslo's Food Security Project has developed a food charter for their community (MacRae R., Donahue K. June 2013). There is much cause for concern because as the Farm to School Program of the Public Health Association of British Columbia lists so clearly on its website: "One in five children in British Columbia lives below the poverty line; One in four children is overweight; Type 2 diabetes is being diagnosed in children as young as 9 and 10; Small farms, below 5 acres makes an average of \$750/acres per year; The average age of farmers in B.C. is 54." Additionally, the British Columbia Agricultural Land Reserve is currently under scrutiny by our provincial government (Evans C, November 24, 2013).

As a result this food awareness program will aim to combine nutritional, food system and security information that is pertinent to our region.

Goal of Project:

The purpose of Phase 1 of this food awareness program is to stimulate children in this school district to experience local food systems and make lasting connections in themselves and their community. This will include: where food comes from, how it can be grown, cooked, eaten, digested, preserved, processed, packaged, transported and discarded. The affiliation of this program with the Nelson Food Cupboard will allow there to be a component reflecting on the abundance vs. scarcity of food and its impact on our local community. The program will be designed according to the three seasons of the school year: fall, winter and spring. Each season will take approximately two months to complete with 8-10 hours of instruction and 6-8 hours of experience through field trips and activities.

A facilitator will be assigned to teach and a coordinator to organize guest speakers, activities and field trips throughout the year for two classrooms in two different schools at the same grade 5/6 level that have expressed

interest in the program. A bulletin board will be maintained throughout the year with pictures of the activities the kids do and learn about and a final food links challenge at the end of the school year will help measure students' understanding of food security in the Nelson community. This will involve a scavenger hunt to be held in June where teams of students go to different stations based on the themes of each season experienced. Some examples of challenges are calculating how many kilograms of food waste is discarded per week at a local restaurant or creating a human face out of fruit and vegetables to eat later.

Measurement of Project:

A program evaluation of Phase 1 of the program will include all those involved: students, teachers and administrators, farmers and guest speakers, parents, community stakeholders and consider potential policy impacts. Student shall be evaluated through a variety of methods including the scavenger hunt exercise, journaling their experiences, a survey, ordering a set of cards depicting stages of a food system and a 24 hr dietary recall (Joshi A., Misako Azuma A. 2008). For the remaining adult stakeholders a combination of focus groups will be organized and interviews and informal discussions will be reported.

Budget Impact:

Phase 1 Program Curriculum Development - Adaptation and modification of past programs to suit our region (approximately 40 hours per season) Research, writing and consultation with partners	\$4000
Instructor Training	\$1000
Evaluation and validation of Phase 1	\$1500
Curriculum Revision	\$300
Illustrator/Graphic artist of program booklet	\$500
Facilitation and Coordination pay of programs in 2 classes in 2 different schools. 8 weeks per season, 3 seasons per school year with a total of 6 field trips per school year per class.	\$3500
Guest speaker stipend/remuneration	\$500
Overhead (10%)	\$1500
Program materials – booklet, gardening equipment	\$1000
Field trip costs: bussing and other logistics for school year for 2 classes	\$3000
Publicity/promotion	\$200
Total	\$17,000

References:

British Columbia Provincial Health Officer 2008. An Ounce of Prevention Revisited: A review of health promotion and selected outcomes for children and youth in B.C. schools. Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report 2006. Study cited House of Commons Standing Committee on Health (2007).

Evans Corky, November 24, 2013. Former Agriculture Minister Corky Evans: Time to speak up for the ALR. The Common Sense Canadian. Website. <http://commonsensecanadian.ca/former-agriculture-minister-corky-evans-time-speak-alr/>

Joshi Anupama, Misako Azuma Andrea, 2008. Bearing Fruit: Farm to School Program Evaluation Resources and Recommendations. National Farm to School Program, Centre for Food and Justice, Urban & Environmental Policy Institute, Occidental College.

MacRae Rod, Donahue Kendal, June 2013. Municipal food policy entrepreneurs: a preliminary analysis of how Canadian cities and regional districts are involved in food system change.

Veugelers Paul J., Fitzgerald Angela L., 2004. Effectiveness of School Programs in Preventing Childhood Obesity: A Multilevel Comparison. American Journal of Public Health: March 2005, Vol. 95, No. 3, pp 432-435.