

ETFO applauds National School Food Program, calls on Ford government to allocate funds efficiently

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TORONTO, ON – Yesterday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced [Canada's first National School Food Program](#). This significant federal investment of \$1 billion over five years will provide meals to 400,000 more children every year, beyond those served by existing school food programs.

“By investing in this program, the federal government is demonstrating its commitment to the well-being of Canada's youth and the nation's prosperity,” says Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) President Karen Brown. “However, for the program to be successful, the funds must be administered efficiently and effectively. Ontarians cannot afford another failed implementation by the Ford government akin to its mismanagement of federal child care funding, which led to delays and frustration.”

Access to healthy meals is fundamental to ensuring children can thrive in school. This new program, which the [Canadian Teachers' Federation has advocated](#) for, for over a decade, will help ensure that children in need across Canada have access to nutritious meals, improving both their health and learning outcomes, and overall success. Programs like this are necessary to foster equitable access to education and to promote well-being.

We know that the lack of access to food disproportionately impacts children from lower-income families and those from racialized and Indigenous communities. The program is a much-needed support for children who need it the most, and we are thankful it will be available to students in Ontario.

We call on the Ford government to ensure allocated funds are distributed swiftly so that these resources reach those who need them most as quickly as possible. We cannot afford to repeat the same mistakes when it comes to providing essential services for our children.

[ETFO](#) represents approximately 83,000 members, including public elementary teachers, occasional teachers, designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel. Visit BuildingBetterSchools.ca.

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