

Breakfast/Snack Programs in Saskatchewan Elementary Schools: Evaluating Benefits, Barriers,
and Essential Skills

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study shares findings from various stakeholders about their experience, perceived benefits of and barriers associated with breakfast and snack program delivery in Saskatchewan elementary schools, and the *Essential Skills* needed by Nutrition Coordinators to deliver these nutrition programs. The study also sought to learn about the involvement of community partners associated with the breakfast/snack program delivery. Seventeen schools participated in this study. Individual and group interviews were conducted with two sample sets of stakeholders.

Stakeholders in sample set 1 were: children participating in the breakfast/snack programs, parents of children participating in the breakfast/snack programs, volunteers, teachers, nutrition coordinators, community school coordinators, and principals. Schools were selected from a list provided by Breakfast For Learning as schools who were currently receiving or had previously received funding support from BFL. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore three central research questions: (1) What are the perceived benefits for student participants and non-participants in breakfast programs? (2) What barriers exist for supported breakfast programs? (3) What strategies can be used to overcome barriers identified?

The second sample set of schools came primarily from a list provided by CHEP Good Food Inc. A shorter interview process with Nutrition Coordinators from 12 schools addressed three further research questions: (4) What are the roles of community-based partnerships associated with these programs? (5) Is there a clear delineation of “capacity building” component in the program? (6) What are the essential skills needed by nutrition coordinators to deliver the breakfast/snack programs?

Stakeholders, including children, parents, school volunteers and staff expressed that there were nutritional, educational, social, economic as well as other benefits from the breakfast/snack programs. Nutritional benefits included, increased food security and access to healthy food choices new food experiences, and improved nutrition knowledge. Educational benefits included classroom management and the ability to connect the food provided with improved learning capacity and well-being. Economic benefits included support for local agriculture and grocers, as well as providing employment for the nutrition coordinators and added support for families when food budgets are depleted.

Resources, funding mechanisms, and the dynamics of the schools appear to influence whether a school provides breakfast or snack programs. Funding support is received from a variety of sources such as government agencies, charitable organizations, and community groups. Schools designated as community schools receive set funding support for nutrition programs. In some schools universal snacks are offered as a school division policy initiative of the community school program implementation.

The study identified several challenges to the long-term sustainability of the programs, namely, access to adequate resources, vulnerability to loss of funding and changes in priorities for funding sources, increasing number of families in need, and community indifference or unawareness of local need. Strong partnerships between the school and the community

(parents, funding agencies, and other stakeholders) were viewed as vital to the long-term sustainability of these breakfast/snack programs.

This study recommends that government agencies, schools, and community partners continue to strengthen an interagency and community-based approach to the delivery of children's nutrition programs in schools. The recommendation is based on the perceived importance of nutrition programs as a community capacity building strategy to assist the vulnerable and food insecure and the need to ensure that "every child comes to school ready to learn". Integral to this is the efforts of organizations such as Breakfast For Learning and CHEP Good Food Incl who strengthens breakfast/snack programs not only as funders but as leaders in setting 'best practice' goals to ensure the quality of the programs. There is a need for a united voice to advocate for more stable funding, acknowledgement and investment in nutrition coordinators and the development of an integrated nutrition programming and policy within schools. To reduce stigmatization, a discourse on universality would be beneficial. The study finds that nutrition programs have the potential to be change agents in school communities where they exist.

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We would also like to acknowledge the financial support made by the following partners: Thought For Food Essential Skills- CHEP Good Food Inc research partnership; Breakfast For Learning Canadian Living Foundations; and the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR.), University of Saskatchewan. The initial call for the study was made by breakfast For Learning. Breakfast For Learning saw the need for an in-depth qualitative study that would explore the perspectives, the perceived benefits and barriers associated with breakfast program delivery from a variety of stakeholder groups within selected Saskatchewan elementary schools. The study was later broadened to include schools other schools offering breakfast/snack programs in both urban and rural areas including those served by CHEP Good Food Inc.

Finally, special thanks also to our partners, Breakfast For Learning, CHEP Good Food Inc and the Thought For Food Essential Skills Research Group for fine-tuning the research protocol.

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Background of the Study

Research has shown that children who eat breakfast are more likely to meet their daily nutritional requirements than those who skip breakfast. Skipping breakfast may lead to dietary inadequacies that are not compensated for through other meals (Nicklas et al., 1993). In schools, the breakfast/snack programs exist to address the nutritional needs of students. Studies have shown that children who eat breakfast or participate in School Breakfast Programs (SBP) experience improvements in school performance, in dietary status, in health, and in school attendance (Nicklas et al. 2000; Pollitt & Mathews, 1998; Wahlstrom & Begalle, 1999). Although children who eat breakfast have better overall diet quality (Basiotis, 1999), the rate of school-aged children skipping breakfast ranges between 5% and 31% (Nicklas et al., 1993; Nicklas et al, 1995). A major concern for children in school breakfast/snack participation is fear of being considered poor by their peers.

The availability of breakfast in schools appears to increase the likelihood that children from low-income households will eat breakfast (Devaney & Stuart, 1998) making them less likely to go hungry for the day. The School Breakfast Program (SBP) also resulted in a better overall diet quality for these students than those students who either eat breakfast at home or skip breakfast altogether (Basiotis, 1999). The positive effects of school breakfast on academic performance, as well as reduced rates of absenteeism and tardiness are affirmed by other authors (Meyers et al., 1989; Murphy et al., 1998).

Breakfast consumption is also inversely related to body weight and total blood cholesterol levels, two risk factors for cardiovascular and other chronic diseases (Resnicow, 1999). The School Dietary Assessment Study (Burghardt et al, 1993) found that children who participated in SBP had higher intakes of both macro and micronutrients such as energy, riboflavin, phosphorus, and magnesium than did non-participants. Researchers have reported that hungry children and those at-risk for hunger suffer from impaired mental function and increased hyperactivity (Murphy et al., 1998) and are more likely to have clinical levels of psychosocial dysfunction than those who are not hungry. Anxiety and aggression, in particular, have been found to be closely associated with hunger (Kleinman et al., 1998).

Despite the benefits of school breakfast, barriers to implementation have been reported (Food Research and Action Center, 2002). These include student unwillingness or inability to arrive at school early, opposition from teachers and/or administrators to breakfast provision in the classroom, insufficient time for students to eat school breakfast, a lack of parent awareness of the academic and behavioral benefits of school breakfast, and a stigma associated with participation. A pilot study with students in grades four through six receiving a universal free breakfast perceived a lack of time and not being hungry in the morning as barriers to eating breakfast (Reddan et al., 2002).

Child nutrition programs in Canada, including breakfast programs, are not mandated and generally fall under the purview of formal school structures. Consequently, availability and participation vary, as do attitudes towards the establishment of these programs. Studies have shown that the quality of human and financial resources can influence the operation and long-term viability of such programs. In Saskatchewan, nutrition programs operate in many schools

and are administered or funded by various charitable organizations, government agencies or are self-funded.

Because schools provide a way to reach the youth of the nation they are the most systematic means available to improve children's health by establishing healthy dietary behaviors through positive lifestyles promotion and the development of effective decision-making skills (ADA, 2003). Schools provide an opportunity for children to learn about healthy eating behaviours, and to make food choices during school mealtimes and through nutrition-related activities.

Understanding perceptions relating to the benefits and barriers associated with breakfast/snack participation may assist planners in designing successful comprehensive health education programs and approaches to promoting school breakfast / snack programs. This study works under the premise that local sustainable community building opportunities are beneficial.

Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Report

This study uses a multidisciplinary approach to gain insight into: the experience and the perceived benefits and barriers associated with breakfast/snack participation among elementary children; the role of school-community partnerships in capacity building; and the role of, and the essential skills needed by, nutrition coordinators and volunteers to deliver the breakfast/snack programs.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived benefits for student participants and non-participants in breakfast programs?
2. What barriers exist for supported breakfast programs?
3. What strategies can be used to overcome barriers identified?
4. What are the roles of community-based partnerships associated with these programs?
5. Is there a clear delineation of "capacity building" component in the program?
6. What are the *Essential Skills* needed by Nutrition Coordinators?

School Meal Programs: The Saskatchewan Context

In Saskatchewan, there are no specific policies or legislation governing school meal provision. Rather, the approach to nutrition programming has been multifaceted. While many nutrition programs were initiated to alleviate hunger, undernourished children in Saskatchewan may not always be "hungry", rather, they eat foods that do not provide the nutrients they need to grow and develop to their full potential. Nutrition programming seeks to address this with the support of various funding sources.

Within the Saskatchewan's school system some schools are designated as Community Schools. The first Community Schools in Saskatchewan were designated in 1980 with the express view of addressing poverty and other complex social issues using community education principles, which in turn, are rooted in community development. The program serves schools with student populations that are "at-risk" as well as First Nations and Métis students (Saskatchewan

Learning, 2005). In 2004 there were 98 designated Community Schools representing 12% of publicly funded schools in Saskatchewan. Collaboration between schools, parents, and the community at large is viewed as essential to ensuring appropriate education and children's health and well being (Saskatchewan Learning, 2005).

Because children learn best when they are nourished (Saskatchewan Learning. (revised 2004). nutrition programs such as universal snacks are a part of the Community School philosophy and therefore assisted with funding. Nutrition remains a priority service area in the new conceptualization, School ^{Plus} (2001) which embraces community education principles and actively seeks to involve agencies and community members in helping ALL schools in Saskatchewan to become centres of learning, support and community for the children and families they serve (Government of Saskatchewan. (2003).

In those designated community schools nutrition programs receive a set funding formula of \$10,000 with an additional \$40.00 for each student beyond an enrollment of 200. This average allocation formula suggests that larger schools and rural or northern schools, particularly those in areas where food cost is higher, may find it difficult to meet the nutritional needs of students. Community and Nutrition coordinators seek further resources.

There are other funding sources available to both community and non-community schools, namely, the Prevention and Support Grants, the community component of Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children, periodic community initiative grants. The Department of Community Resources and Employment (DCRE) also funds nutrition programs through a child development program. Funds are also available through application process from both charitably based and community-based organizations (Henry, 2000).

For example, Breakfast For Learning a national, non-profit organization dedicated to supporting child nutrition programs across Canada supports many Saskatchewan schools. Unique to Saskatoon and vicinity is the involvement of CHEP Good Food Inc. (formerly the Child Hunger and Education Program), who provides support to school meal programs (funds and supplies) highlighting the use of local resources.

Some band schools (term used for First Nation's reserve schools) also incorporate many of the tenets of community education philosophy in their programs. Band schools receive federal funding through the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Players in the Saskatchewan nutrition program context include:

Community School Coordinators:

Community school coordinators, an intrinsic part of the community school philosophy are hired to oversee the activities within the community school and the surrounding neighbourhood or town; children's nutrition programming falls within their scope. Regarding meal programs, their duties and responsibilities include supervision of the nutrition coordinator and management of the budget for food and facilities. There are a few exceptions; in some schools, nutrition coordinators may take on the food budgeting, menu planning, and shopping. Because of their roles and close ties with the community, community school coordinators, in most cases, were assigned responsibility for liaising with the research team throughout the data collection process.

Food / Nutrition Coordinators:

Most schools in Saskatchewan have members of the community that deliver the breakfast/snack programs (purchasing, preparation, and service). The position is referred to as a Food Coordinator or a Nutrition Coordinator. These coordinators may be strictly volunteers (with no monetary compensation), they may be volunteers but receive some honorarium, or they may be a Teacher / Education Associate employed by the school division and performs some or all of the aspects of a nutrition coordinator. For the purposes of this study, the term nutrition coordinator (NC) is used. Students often refer to them as the "lunchroom lady". All Nutrition Coordinators interviewed for this study were women. Nutrition coordinators often live in the neighborhood where their school is located and they are selected because of their commitment to the delivery of food service in schools. Many are drawn to the program by a desire to be more involved with their children's school experience. Even though the title of the position varies many of the basic duties are the same: to organize, prepare, and deliver nutrition programs in the schools. Nutrition program delivery ranges from serving breakfast, morning and/or afternoon snacks, noon lunches, and even some supper meals.

Volunteers:

In some locations, nutrition coordinators are often referred to as volunteers. Strictly speaking, however, they are hired by a three-way partnership between CHEP, the school, and community/parent association. They receive an honorarium from the community/parent association for services associated with the school meal program. There are other volunteers involved in the nutrition programs. These volunteers, family members of the student body or members of the wider community, support the work of the nutrition coordinator but do not receive any recompense. Most of the participants interviewed indicated challenges in finding and keeping volunteers.

Teacher Associates / Education Associates:

School divisions use different terms that talk about the three additional positions for Teacher/Education Associates (TA/EA) that are given to community schools in addition to special needs TAs. Some schools, as indicated in our sample schools, have given some or all of the nutrition coordinator duties to these TA/EAs. Some schools are seeking a distinct designation for this position, namely, an Education Associate of Nutrition (EAN).

School-Community-University Partnerships:

According to the American Dietetic Association, school- community partnerships share the responsibility of providing children with access to high quality foods to encourage healthy eating behaviours (ADA, 2003). Collaborative efforts with government agencies, professional organizations, and the private sector represent a first step to the successful implementation and sustainability of child nutrition programs in schools. Local community involvement that includes parents is essential. There have been increasing calls for universities to assume a role that helps inform the community and school system of the present state of affairs in children's nutrition programming, to define the shifts in the community-school relationship, to make recommendations on policy and program changes, and to contribute to Canadian academic data on breakfast/snack programs. The interaction of researchers and stakeholders (Breakfast For Learning (BFL), the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR), Thought For Food Essential Skills Research Group, and CHEP Good Food Inc) has provided further opportunity to enrich the dialogue and critical discourse around the benefits and barriers

associated with breakfast/snack programs delivery, as well as the changing roles of child nutrition programs in strengthening the capacity of children, their families and communities to sustain healthy behaviours.

Breakfast For Learning (BFL):

BFL is a national child nutrition advocate whose mission is “to ensure that every child in Canada attends school well nourished and ready to learn” (Breakfast For Learning, 2005). In Saskatchewan BFL provides financial resources to schools to assist with the delivery of school meal programs including breakfast/snack programs. Schools interested in nutrition programming initiatives may access support in application processes. Best practices standards for child Nutrition programs are also available to programs to help ensure food quality; financial accountability; food safety; parental involvement; as well as, efficiency in program management. The BFL model encourages local partner engagements and ownership of local programming. In Saskatchewan BFL has had a long relationship with the Child Hunger and Education Program (now known as CHEP Good Food Inc) which sought to broaden the delivery of child nutrition programs in Saskatchewan through the former Saskatchewan Child Nutrition Network (SCNN, 2002). The first sample set of five schools selected for an in-depth study of stakeholder groups were selected primarily from a list of schools that indicated that they had received financial support from BFL.

An important contribution of BFL has been research linking nutrition and learning. To this end, BFL initiated the call for this study in an effort to gain insight into the perceived benefits and barriers of breakfast and snack programs and to strengthen local initiatives

CHEP Good Food Inc. (formerly the Child Hunger and Education Program):

As previously stated CHEP Good Food Inc. is a non-profit organization (describe later) that has been pivotal in initiating, developing, maintaining, and advocating for children's nutrition programs in schools in Saskatoon and vicinity. Today, CHEP's mandate has been broadened to include numerous food security ventures that are often linked to the roots of child poverty and hunger; thus the name change to CHEP Good Food Inc. in November 2004. Along with providing needed resources to support school meal programs (funds and supplies) the CHEP model stresses the use of local resources and local community-based research. This study reflects a CHEP partnership with academics, the Community University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) and the Thought For Food Essential Skills Research Group.

In Saskatoon, CHEP, the school, and the community or parent association, through a three-way partnership agreement, hire, train, and support the nutrition coordinators. CHEP organizes this partnership and administers funds to the community/parent association who pay the nutrition coordinators and purchase some food. As mentioned above, people refer to the nutrition coordinators as volunteers because the honorarium is a nominal amount and does not reflect the many extra hours and expenses the coordinators give to their work. CHEP has also provided consultation, support, and training as requested to schools and communities outside of Saskatoon for various types of nutrition programming initiatives.

Community University Institute for Social Research (CUISR)

CUISR is a partnership between various community-based organizations, faculty, and graduate students from the University of Saskatchewan (2005). They provide academic resources and community support to many organizations and individuals to pursue predominantly more

community-based research studies. CUISR awarded a teaching release stipend for the Principal Investigator to work on this research study.

The Thought For Food *Essential Skills* Research Group:

The *Thought for Food Essential Skills Research Group* (ESRP), funded by Human Resource and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC, 2005) and delivered by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council has identified nine *Essential Skills* that cumulatively comprise the capacities required by an individual to learn all other skills to participate fully in the workplace and in the community. Over 200 occupations requiring from less than a high school diploma up to a technical certificate have been analyzed and occupational profiles developed to identify the *Essential Skills* required for the successful performance of each occupation. One of the main goals of this study is to explore community applications of *Essential Skills*. As a new human resource development technology the *ESRP* extends workplace job analysis and training into a broader consideration of literacy, embedded work tasks, a new approach to the identification of workforce training needs, and the development of more authentic learning resources and curricula. However, as a new instrument for workforce capacity development the *ESRP* has not yet been subjected to widespread empirical validation or critical analysis. This study intends to apply the reality of a local context to the criteria and structure of the *Essential Skills* program.

Study Design and Methodology

This section describes the design and methodology used to assess the benefits, barriers and *Essential Skills* needed by nutrition coordinators to deliver the school breakfast/snack programs. This section details the objectives and research questions, the schools surveyed data collection methodology, and analytic approach.

Research Design

The study was exploratory in nature and employed qualitative in-depth interview techniques to investigate perceived benefits and barriers to breakfast/snack program delivery as well as the *Essential Skills* needed by nutrition coordinators and volunteers.

Study Sample

Seventeen schools participated in this study. Data was collected from two sample sets of schools. The first sample set of five schools was selected for an in-depth study of five stakeholder groups, namely children (C) who participate in the breakfast/ snack programs, parents (Pt) of breakfast/snack participants, nutrition coordinators (NC), community school coordinators (CC), volunteers (V), teachers (T), and principals (P). Schools chosen in this group were selected primarily from a list of schools provided by Breakfast For Learning as schools who are currently receiving or who had previously received funding support from BFL. Three of the five schools (1 urban, 1 rural, and 1 Band) indicated that they had received funding support from BFL. The remaining two urban schools received some of their overall funding from the three-way partnership of CHEP, the school, and the parent/community association. An overlapping of funding is not uncommon in Saskatchewan since both BFL and CHEP have had a long-standing relationship in collaborating about the delivery of breakfast programs, primarily in Saskatoon.

The main purpose of selecting these five schools was to address the first three research questions:

- (1) What are the perceived benefits for student participants and non-participants in breakfast programs?
- (2) What barriers exist for supported breakfast programs?
- (3) What strategies can be used to overcome barriers identified?

In the second sample set of schools, nutrition coordinators from 12 schools were approached to participate in the study. The primary purpose for the selection of these schools was to address the three remaining research questions:

- (4) What are the roles of community-based partnerships associated with these programs?
- (5) Is there a clear delineation of "capacity building" component in the program?
- (6) What are the essential skills needed by nutrition coordinators?

This group of schools was chosen primarily from a list of schools provided by CHEP Good Food Inc. who are currently administering funding support for children's nutrition programs in Saskatoon. All study participants, however, were given an opportunity to respond to questions pertaining to each of the six research questions. For example, children were asked about the "lunch lady", and both principals and community school coordinators were asked to provide

their perceptions of the skills needed by nutrition coordinators to provide appropriate breakfast/snack program delivery. In turn, nutrition coordinators, because of their relationship with the breakfast/snack programs, were invited to comment on the operation of these programs, and benefits and barriers to program delivery. Please refer to Appendix A for a comparison of the questions asked of each stakeholder group.

Initially, the goal of the study was to explore the perceived benefits and barriers associated with breakfast programs. However, during the process of selecting the schools it became evident that schools providing snacks needed to be included. A total of six schools (2 in Sample Set I, and 4 in Sample Set II schools) provided snacks without breakfasts and were included in the study. There was intent to include schools, which had in the past provided a breakfast program but may have since switched to providing snacks for a variety of reasons. This will be discussed later in the profiles of Sample Set I schools.

Interviews:

Sample Set I:

In Sample Set I, individual and focus group interview techniques were used to collect information from the five stakeholder groups invited to participate in the study. The stakeholder groups were: children who participated in the breakfast/snack programs (n=3 focus groups), parents of participating students (n=5 individual and n=1 focus group), nutrition coordinators (n=6), community school coordinators (n=4), teachers (n=5), principals (n=5), and volunteers (not nutrition coordinators, n=2 individual interviews, n=1 focus group). A snowballing technique was used to locate interview participants within the stakeholder groups. The method adopted for this study was to begin with a selected informant at each school (often the principal or community school coordinator) who, in turn, pointed to other information-rich sources. This approach allowed us access to sample interviewees with interest in the provision and service of breakfast/snack programs, but we also gained a better understanding of the school's governance as it relates to community-school partnerships. Seven schools were invited to participate in this in-depth study of the breakfast/snack programs, two declined (See Table 1: Characteristics of Sample Set I Schools).

Sample Set II:

In Sample Set II, interviews focused on nutrition coordinators from 12 schools from the CHEP supported schools as previously indicated. Nine of the twelve interviews were with nutrition coordinators from community schools and three were from non-community schools. In these schools, nutrition coordinators were selected primarily to meet the goals of the research questions revolving around training history, needs, and perspectives (see Table 4: Characteristics of Nutrition Coordinators).

The interview protocol developed for the inquiry sought to address research questions identified earlier within the conceptual framework. The interview guides included questions intended to probe:

- (1) Characteristics of the programs.
- (2) Perception of benefits related to breakfast/snack programs.
- (3) Participant's view of the challenges and opportunities in maintaining appropriate practices related to the delivery of programs.
- (4) Community-school partnerships.

- (5) The essential skills needed by nutrition coordinators for the delivery of such programs. Prospective participants (students, parents, and teachers) received a letter of information requesting their participation. All stakeholders signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the study. Alternate interviewees replaced persons who decided not to participate.

Data Collection and Analysis

Researchers conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions in Spring 2005 for Sample Set I and II. Each session was held at a location and time convenient to each group of participants. Interviews were conducted in the form of a conversational interview, which, according to van Manen (1990), is part of gathering "experiential material:"

The conversational interview method . . . [serves] as an occasion to *reflect* (italics in text) with the partner (interviewee) of the conversational relation on the topic at hand. . . [It] turns increasingly to a hermeneutic interview as the researcher can go back and again to the interviewee in order to dialogue with the interviewee about the ongoing record of the interview transcripts. The hermeneutic interview tends to turn the interviewees into participants or collaborators of the research project. (p. 63)

Each focus group lasted between 30-45 minutes for children and 45-60 minutes for adults. The principal investigator and/or the research assistant moderated these sessions. The sessions were taped, transcribed, and entered into a computerized data analysis program.

A procedure sensitive to community-based research work was utilized in this study. The researchers arranged individual visits to the schools in sample Set I. In Sample Set II researchers attended the monthly nutrition coordinators' meeting to present the goals and procedures of the study to them. The purpose of these visits was to develop a relationship with school personnel in order to build trust and awareness of our intent. The researchers shared their reasons for being involved, which was to enable capacity building through community education opportunities.

During the visits, arrangements were made to return to the schools where necessary. This proved to be valuable because the stakeholders were able to reflect on the purpose of our study as well as their own responses and participation in the research. Follow-up was done through visits, phone calls, and sending transcripts back for review.

Interviews were professionally transcribed. The researchers coded and synthesized data into descriptive reports of each school site with a summary analysis for emerging and recurring themes and patterns in the responses relating to benefits, and perceived barriers to participation, as well as strategies for overcoming barriers. Selected verbatim quotes that capture participants' sentiments, views and opinions are also included in the text of this report.

Confidentiality and Ethics

The study was approved by the University of Saskatchewan's Advisory Committee on Behavioural Ethics in Human Experimentation. In addition, permission was sought from the appropriate school divisions to approach the schools where the study was carried out.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and the anonymity of those who chose to participate was assured. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time. Transcripts were sent to each participant to assure accuracy of the data and to get permission to quote from the interview. Child-informed consent, adult-informed consent, and teacher-informed consent were obtained from all participants before the beginning of the study (see Appendix B).

Triangulation

The triangulation of data happened in a variety of ways, including comparison with the literature, comparison of the questions, responses, and issues across different types of schools (rural, urban, and First Nation) and across different stakeholders (nutrition coordinators, community school coordinators, students, teachers, principals, parents, and volunteers). Interview transcripts were returned to participants for feedback. Respondents were invited to make changes where necessary.

Characteristics of the Schools: Models and Approaches to Breakfast / Snack Delivery

Data from the interviews and observations, including field notes, were used to develop an observationally-based description of the breakfast/snack programs participating in the study. Table 1 depicts characteristics of the schools sampled.

To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, the following designations are used in reporting the findings. Sample Set I schools are identified as schools A-E, and, principals (A-E), community school coordinators (A-E), and coordinators (A-E) are identified correspondingly where appropriate. All references to Sample Set II Nutrition Coordinators are identified as F – Q. As shown in *Table 1: Characteristics of Sample Set I Schools*, three schools were urban schools, one rural and one band school. Of the three urban schools, one was from a religious minority school division. Four of the five schools were designated community schools. Table 1 presents a summary of the characteristics of the schools including types of school meal program offered, years of operation of meal programs, and key funding sources (BFL, CHEP, community school funding, or band funding sources).

Table 1: Characteristics of Sample Set I Schools

Schools	Grades	School	Program (s)	Years of Operation	Funding Partner(s)
A	Pre K-8	Urban	Breakfast	25	Community school BFL / CHEP
B	Pre K-8	Urban	Breakfast Snack	14	Community school CHEP
C	Pre K-12	Rural	Snack (informal toast and fruit stations)	5	Community school BFL
D	Pre K-8	Urban	Snack	6	Community school
E	Pre K- 9	Band/ First Nations	Breakfast (2001-02)		BFL (2001-02) Band/Other

Profile of the Schools

School A:

School A is an example of an Elementary Community School in an urban Saskatchewan school division. This school was one of the first designated community schools in Saskatchewan. This school is located in a large urban centre in Saskatchewan with a population of 205,000 people. The school A neighbourhood is considered a “rough” area with a concentration of drugs, sex trade workers, and gang activity. Children often come to school on their own motivation. However, many families care about their children and struggle to provide for them and desire to

live in a safe and dignified environment. A key goal of this program is hunger relief for those children in need.

The breakfast program is available to all students. This school has an average student population of 280 children offering classes for Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8. The nutrition room is equipped with a full kitchen including 2 dishwashers, numerous fridges, stoves, and freezers. There is enough space to seat about 50 people in one setting. Approximately 20% of children participate in the breakfast program, which is served from 8:45 AM to 9:20 AM. The school has an alternate day schedule, 9:20 AM to 3:00 PM with two five-minute recesses and a shorter lunch break. This schedule attempts to reduce the number of students that would leave the school ground during the day and relieve playground stress. About 20 Grade 4-6 students ate a breakfast of oatmeal porridge, milk, a piece of fruit, and toast on the day of our visit.

Children who arrive at school late (after breakfast service), but who are hungry can access a snack either by asking their teacher or by going to the nutrition room. Lunch is served to 70 - 85% of the students. Funding is received from Saskatchewan Learning (Provincial Government) and a portion of this fund is used to fund the breakfast program. In addition, respondents expressed that organizations such as Breakfast For Learning and CHEP Good Food Inc. provide valuable resources such as equipment and supplies. This school is also involved with several community and business partners.

Two nutrition coordinators manage the school meal program (breakfast and lunch) on a part-time basis and receive a small honorarium from the parent/community association. Other decisions related to the program are generally made by the community school coordinator who is responsible for budgeting, nutrition programming, and food purchasing. Details about the nutrition coordinator's position are described in section titled *Essential Skills and Training Needs of Nutrition Coordinators*.

School B:

School B serves a Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8 student population of 280, in an urban Saskatchewan school division. Principal B explained that although more than half of the students are from the surrounding middle class community, the school also enrolls children from homes in a lower socio-economic neighbourhood. The school represents a minority religious population and is a designated community school. In previous years, students were bused from the surrounding vicinity and served a dual population with Ukrainian Immersion and English stream students.

Principal B explains that the primary goal of the nutrition program is to ensure "that there aren't any hungry children in the school for the whole day". Approximately 25-30 students participate in the breakfast program; however, breakfast is available to all students in need. Breakfast is served from 8:45 – 9:15 AM and includes a variety of foods, including cereals, porridge, bagels, pancakes, yogurt, milk, juice, and fruits served on different days. Cold cereals are made available to students who arrive after the breakfast period but who are hungry. The breakfast program has been in operation for seven years; previously the school offered a snack program.

As a designated community school, School B receives funding from Saskatchewan Learning; a portion of which is used to fund the breakfast programs. CHEP assists in funding a bag lunch program that is generally available to students in need. Students may self-identify or teachers,

nutrition coordinators, and others may assist in identifying those who need a lunch. There is a paid Teacher Assistant who helps with meal preparation and service. However, it is the volunteer nutrition coordinator who continues to be responsible for food and supply purchases for the meals served. In addition, a few teachers, of their own volition, serve snack food in their classrooms when there is a need.

A unique feature of this school is its kitchen and dining area called the “servery”. This room has a medium sized kitchen with a dishwasher, stove, some fridges and freezers as well as seating for approximately 30 people. The facility appears welcoming with good lighting, bright colors, and food posters. Lunch service is a bagged lunch provided to children in their classrooms. The school also provides “take home” food for those children who have requested additional support. The principal explains that often food program staff or a member from administration will bag leftovers or donated foods so that children who express a need for additional support can take supplies home for supper. This generally happened at the end of the month when family food budgets are depleted. Without this service, some students go hungry.

In general, the school purchases food from approved grocery stores with the goal of providing mainly “fresh” foods to students, very little donated food is used. In addition, School B has chosen to be a “Nutrition Positive” School, which is a school program that adopts a positive philosophy towards nutrition through specific food activities. The impetus for the Nutrition Positive Philosophy came from concerned parents and community members interested in encouraging and maintaining a healthy nutrition environment in schools. The program is supported by various community partners including CHEP, the Saskatoon Health Region, the Dairy Farmers of Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon School Divisions and the University of Saskatchewan.

School B receives funding from CHEP therefore the nutrition coordinator receives a small honorarium from CHEP Good Food Inc. and is considered a volunteer. This coordinator has been involved with the school food program since before the school received community school designation. The nutrition coordinator is responsible for menu planning, budgeting, and shopping and some of the food preparation. Interestingly, the volunteer coordinator’s parents also serve as volunteers (without honorarium) in the kitchen. The principal explained that this family has lived in the neighbourhood for three generations and has been an integral part of the school’s life for many of those years. The support provided by the nutrition coordinator and her family is much appreciated as the school finds it a challenge to attract other parent and community volunteers for a sustained period.

Finally, School B takes a team approach in offering good food experiences, nutritional education opportunities, and other programming that includes food in their school and neighbourhood. Included in the delivery of school nutrition programs and other numerous community meals are the following people: a volunteer nutrition coordinator with ties to CHEP, a paid Teacher Assistant who aides with the delivery of the breakfast program, and a community school coordinator who is responsible to oversee the nutrition programs in addition to administrative and organizational duties. The school also has a Home and School liaison worker, a paid position by the school board that is involved with community meals, class cooking, and other community-based projects.

School C:

School C is a designated community school and is located in a rural school division. This school received designation in 2000. School C serves a population of an average 280 Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 students with the majority being of Aboriginal descent. , Snack is provided daily to all students, and a hot lunch is available on special days. Both meals receive partial funding from Saskatchewan's Community School program (Saskatchewan Learning). This includes funding for the nutrition coordinator who manages the meals. Important to program delivery is the financial support received from external sources such as BFL.

This school does not offer a structured breakfast program. Each classroom is equipped with a toaster and the children are offered bread, condiments, and fresh fruit daily. Students are allowed to prepare their toast or bagels before the beginning of class (9:30 A.M.), at recess, or during work periods if they are hungry. Teachers explain that they found the arrangement workable. Teachers and staff report that there is little abuse of this program either in food wasted or in over consumption. Everyone, including staff, is encouraged to participate to minimize stigmatization. We visited the classrooms and observed children picking fruit from the fruit basket. When asked what they liked about the snack program both focus groups of children explained that they liked the "good food" that was served to them.

A unique feature of this school's food program is their lunch concept called the "Health Hut". At lunch, elementary students are served in their classrooms, but high school students are allowed to purchase food from the Health Hut. The main course is priced at \$2 and includes an entrée; milk, salad, and dessert (generally a fruit or home baked product) are extra. Lunch is available on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. On Mondays, the Student Representative Council (SRC) hosts a fundraiser lunch. Lunch is not served on Wednesdays. Charging a minimal price for the lunch meal resulted in the ability to offer a more nutritious menu. The coordinators shop locally, thereby supporting local producers and grocers. School personnel are able to purchase lunch for an increased cost.

Elementary teachers pre-order the lunches they will need. Elementary students who can not afford to pay are given lunch at no cost. However, to alleviate a problem with high school students purchasing generally high fat, sugar and sodium foods at the local cafe or loitering in the nearby down town the "Health Hut Coupon Solution" was recently implemented. A package of coupons for a free lunch meal were have been given to all school staff, including janitors and bus drivers, to be handed to youth as rewards and incentives or as needs arise; including hunger. Teachers reported to us that the solution has been successful in that more youth are choosing to eat at school thus lessening the amount of time spent downtown and it helped to reduce stigmatization. A nutrition coordinator is hired part-time from the extra assistant positions (referred to as Educational Associate) designated to a community school. The nutrition coordinator plans the menu, manages the budget, shops for groceries, prepares the food, and coordinates the delivery of the meals. The community coordinator assists in shopping and menu planning. The nutrition coordinator seeks opinions from children and staff for menu ideas and food service delivery options. This person is highly regarded by staff and students as someone who provides good food, a safe and inviting environment, as well as a caring attitude to all students.

Notably, the SRC also stopped the sale of junk food and pop in their vending machines. To support healthier beverage choices water coolers were installed in all hallways for all to use. Although there are a few regular community and parent volunteers, getting more people to help with food service delivery is a challenge.

School D:

School D is located in a small urban centre and was designated a community school in 1999. The school is situated in an inner-city neighborhood with a diverse cultural mix of children. Prior to 2003, School D had a dual French Immersion and English stream and much larger student numbers. Currently the school provides Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8 classes and primarily serves the surrounding neighbourhood. There is now an average of 240 children. School D operates on a regular day program from 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM.

This school offers a universal snack program. Snack is served to every child and is served in each classroom. This is a school division policy for community schools. As with other community schools, set funding is received from Saskatchewan Learning. Student volunteers take the bins of snack to their classrooms where the teacher assists with the distribution, usually before or after recess. With everyone participating there is less opportunity for less fortunate children to be singled out creating stigmatization. Also, all students then benefit from the healthy and varied snack menu. The kitchen is equipped with a dishwasher, two stoves, fridges, and freezers as well as a small preparation area.

The nutrition coordinator, an Education Associate, hired by the school division, plans the menus, shops for groceries, and prepares food as part of her half-time paid position. Other duties include assisting the community coordinator and providing some classroom nutrition programming with children and adults. The challenge that these people face is to include more parents and community members in the activities of the school.

School E

School E is located in a First Nation community. It does not have community school designation, and offers classes from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 9 with an average of 240 students. High school students are bused to a neighbouring rural town. School E does not currently offer a breakfast/snack program. Principal E indicated that in 2001-2002 the school received a Breakfast for Learning (BFL) grant that supported a universal morning snack program offering toast, muffins, and fruit to students in their classrooms. This program and grant was not renewed due to changes in staff and administration. However, school staff and community were supportive of this program and are interested to see it reinstated. Nevertheless, children of families in great need are encouraged to come to the kitchen for breakfast food. In addition, children in Kindergarten to Grade 2 receive toast every morning.

This school offers a lunch program. The funding for this program comes via reinvestment dollars from casino profits. In the past, this lunch program has been offered to community members at a nominal cost. However, the lack of proper kitchen facilities and dining area has made providing these lunches very difficult. Nevertheless, lunches are made for children and are distributed in the classrooms. They have a paid lunch coordinator along with some assistance by volunteers from the community.

Summary

All five schools utilized in Sample Set I demonstrate very different approaches to implementing child nutrition program in their schools. Resources, funding mechanisms, and the dynamics of the schools, appear to influence whether a school provides a breakfast or snack program. Schools designated as community schools receive set funding, a portion of which supports nutrition programs. In some community schools universal snacks are offered as a policy initiative of the community school program. Hunger relief appears to be the primary goal of the programs studied. Although the focus of this research is on breakfast and snack programs, the study also highlighted other food programs observed such as a school lunch program.

Benefits of and Barriers Associated with Breakfast / Snack Programs

This section describes participants' perceptions of the benefits of and barriers associated with breakfast/snack delivery. Issues that became apparent through the interview and analysis process are explored as well as distinctions across schools.

Strengths / Benefits of the Programs

Participants interviewed were very passionate about the impact that their program is having on the children, the families and the community in which the school is located, and expressed a variety of benefits associated with their participation in the program. Tables 2.1 through 2.7 present the comments of each stakeholder group in Sample Set 1. An overall summary will explore significant themes.

Table 2.1: Perceived Benefits by Children

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "That there is a food program here at the school and it's available if you don't have lunch at home or if you forget to bring a lunch." ✓ "Vegetables is healthy food. [What's considered not healthy food?] Chips, chocolate, candy bars." ✓ "Different foods, right on." ✓ "They try to make something different every day."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We get to help" ✓ "Can eat two helpings sometimes three if I'm really hungry" ✓ "The lunch lady is nice . . . very nice. But she does put her foot down sometimes."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "You can eat as much as you want." ✓ "Always fresh good food – awesome." ✓ "It has vitamins." ✓ "The food they give us is healthy, tasty, and its pretty fun."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "They serve lots of good food." ✓ "I like the food here." ✓ "I eat it because it's healthy for you."

Summary of Perceived Benefits By Children

All the children were interviewed in focus groups. Through these focus groups, the researchers were able to see the meal program through the eyes of the children. It is evident that these children do not take their meal programs for granted; they spoke openly about the access to good food. As well, the children did not make any distinction between the benefits of one meal type over another. However, they are very aware of the benefits to themselves and their peers as well as the effort made by others to prepare and serve them food. Most students expressed that they felt comfortable asking for additional portions or food when they were hungry. The children were eager to talk about their food experiences. They are proud to be able to help in the kitchen; through this experience, they reinforce values such as respect, manners, and

responsibility as well as some nutrition education. Students volunteered information about vitamins and other nutrients in their food displaying evidence of some knowledge of nutrition concepts.

In general, students were very positive and enthusiastic about the nutrition programs they and their siblings attended. They gave high praise for their nutrition coordinators and quality of food served, "Uhh, it tastes good, its not like, its always cooked right, its never, its never like cooked bad or nothing ever wrong with it, its always fresh and tastes good" (S-C). They were specific about personal likes and dislikes of food but many expressed a willingness to try new foods, "Oh, I had cornflakes and I asked them to kind of put strawberries and prunes and it was actually very good" (S-B). They gave the impression that other kids had a range of views of the program, mostly around choosing to participate in the program and food quality comments. One student asked a question that indicated a very good awareness of why there is a nutrition program in their school, "Do you write things like the breakfast and the lunch program is important and that we need it here?" (S-A).

Table 2.2: Perceived Benefits by Parents

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "It does meet the needs of the community, with very little financial support from us . . . allowing us to pay for other personal things at home" ✓ "It also provides partial income for lunch lady" ✓ "The kids eat more of a variety and they are willing to try new foods and of course I have to try to if they're trying and some stuff I still don't like. Like they like yogurt and I can't stand, I think it's the grossest thing and I can't believe they eat it but they do and it's good for them though and that's okay. And it's like certain vegetable I won't eat but you know they'll eat them and because of them I eat broccoli now and I eat cauliflower and I never used to."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "But there are times that we just don't have food at home, we send them so they can have it here". ✓ "At home if I would have bought [different foods], they probably wouldn't even try it, but here at school they'll try it and they realize they like it". ✓ "It's usually healthy food that they eat."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "When you run out of something you know that you can't send a healthy snack, it's nice to know that it's going to be offered there." ✓ "I like the program, there is a variety and my kids all love it." ✓ "The food programs are convenient." ✓ "My kids choose healthier snacks at home now."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "They offer variety of snacks." ✓ "I'm pretty happy with the way it works." ✓ "I like that my kids come home and say "We tried this, can we do it here?" ✓ "It's presented in a different way at school."

Summary of Perceived Benefits by Parents

The parents were interviewed individually and in focus groups. School A parents spoke of the meal programs as meeting a need in their community. They were grateful that the meal programs were at no cost to them. They felt that paying for periodic fundraising meals was enough. These parents were clear about the benefits to their community when the nutrition coordinator was hired locally; providing evidence of community capacity building values. Parents from other schools with a lower socio-economic status did not focus on the community but rather focused on access to food at school. School D parents indicated a willingness to pay a nominal amount for their children's lunches. They appreciated the convenience and were relieved to know that there was nutritious food at school for their children as sometimes both parents were working.

The children's willingness to eat different, and often more nutritious foods, at school affects the eating behaviours of the parents. As well students ate foods at school that parents had previously tried at home unsuccessfully. This study provides evidence that the nutrition program at schools contributes to the knowledge of good nutrition and this knowledge is transferred from the school to the home to the community.

Parents were generally appreciative of the nutrition program in their school. They all struggled with perceptions of accessing food in school. "I think some people feel that it's just kind of like a hand out, don't do it or whatever, but I believe that if you need it, it's there and it's to be used" (Pt-B). Some parents were very conscious of the benefit of the program on their children, "they did do cooking class in Grade 2. Like we had started cooking classes here years ago when we had funding just to teach kids simple things and they would all get together and it was like collective kitchens and they would cook once a week and then they'd take that home for supper. And now my child is a teenager and he's learnt from that how to cook" (Pt-D).

Table 2.3: Perceived Benefits by Volunteers

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "They cover all the four basic food groups, which is good." ✓ "They don't get all that food choice at home." ✓ "Yesterday's lunch is probably the last time they had something to eat."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Lots of support from administration." ✓ "Children feel free to talk to us." ✓ "Call us Grandma / Grandpa"
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Children enjoy food tremendously" ✓ "Some can really use a good meal" ✓ "They look forward to it"
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Program shows how to choose a healthy snack over other food." ✓ "Everyone gets the snack"

Summary of Perceived Benefits by Volunteers

The volunteers interviewed here are not the nutrition coordinators; they assist the nutrition coordinators in the preparation and delivery of meals. They are very committed to their work. Most have been in their position many years; many have seen their children or grandchildren go through the school in which they work. They are involved because they either had experienced scarcity in their own lives or have witnessed it first hand in others. Whereas the volunteers from School A are more interested in the access to good food and the nutritional needs of the children, other volunteers, such as School B, are aware of the social benefits of having children participate in the meal programs. The support of the volunteers strengthens nutrition programs. For children, these volunteers often provide a listening ear. One volunteer shared a story that demonstrated how the child “started unwinding to us” (V-B).

The volunteers we spoke to were committed to working with the nutrition program. All volunteers were from the neighbourhood and several had been part of the school program for many years. The reason for being involved was to meet the need of feeding hungry children.

Table 2.4: Perceived Benefits by Teachers

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “I am able to connect to classroom learning about food preparation and nutrition ✓ Children eat nutritious food
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “There’s laughter, a kind of warm homey atmosphere in the servery.” ✓ “Children get more than food they get some human contact.” ✓ “I like the opportunity to take the special needs children come to help in the kitchen.”
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “Before, they were hungry so the parents would just keep them at home – they don’t even hesitate to let me know as a teacher that they need lunch today.” ✓ “I like the fact that our meals are homemade.” ✓ “Since the meal programs began the attitudes of teachers have changed – they are more supportive and understanding.” ✓ “Nutrition education is not just a reading and writing lesson – the kids get to experience it.”
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “The snack program provides us with a wide variety of food choices.” ✓ They are exposed to new foods – This is one of the first places I’ve seen where kids love veggies & dip.” ✓ “They are good at offering snacks that don’t take a great deal of time to eat.”
E	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “Access to good food is necessary for children.” ✓ “Some come without proper supper or breakfast. They come in here hungry & tired, so we feed them.” ✓ “Letting kids eat helps keep some problems from getting bigger. . . Food affects the total school environment.”

Summary of Perceived Benefits by Teachers

Table 2.4 depicts comments from teachers about the benefits of the breakfast/snack programs. Teachers were unanimous in their views about the educational value of the nutrition programs. They commented on the ability of children to access good, nutritious food as well as the ability of the teachers to connect teachable moments to the food they were eating. They expressed benefits related to children's ability to learn, to focus, and to behave better because of their participation in the meal programs. As one teacher stated:

I think that the students here have so many things on their minds about what is happening in their home life that taking away that hungry feeling in their tummies allows them to focus more on the task at hand. I think its like any of us, if we're hungry we have trouble concentrating, you know and so, its hard enough for these students to focus. So at least if we can feed them something, a little bit of their troubles are alleviated and they can fight, most of them like the academics. (T-C)

One teacher mentioned that when children, including special needs children, help with the meal preparation and delivery they learn nutrition concepts as well as positive social and behavioural values. Another expressed that food quality is an important part of the food program as well as the curriculum.

She also equated learning about good food with the food made on site as homemade:

I like the fact that our meals are homemade meals. I find it interesting, I just watched that movie [SuperSize Me] with my Grade 12's and one section there shows the mistakes the schools [make] and the way the meals are cooked. It's really never a home cooked meal of any sort. It's always something that came out of a box, that's it's just add water or just add this to it so one thing that I like is it is often a home cooked kind of meal. I think that's really good [T-C].

Teachers that were interviewed indicated that they were very aware of the hunger children experienced. "I know from the students that I teach that a large number of them come without breakfasts so there are growling tummies and hungry kids that [need] breakfast" (T-A). They also noted that teachers and community who do not see the need or the complexity of the socio-economic situations affecting some families were generally not as supportive of the role nutrition programs play in the daily lives of children.

All the teachers interviewed expressed the need for nutrition programs to be consistently linked to the classroom nutrition lessons. They expressed that the nutrition coordinator has a role in helping to make the food service-classroom link. As one teacher pointed out, ". . . the nutrition coordinator is not some one who just does [bakes and serves] the muffins.... that person can assist in providing nutrition information to the [children] so children can integrate nutrition lessons learned " (T-D).

Table 2.5: Perceived Benefits By Nutrition Coordinators

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “We get that trust for each other ... it’s a friendship and it’s like feeding your own children after awhile.” ✓ “The most basic part is that the kids are being fed and there has been studies done, like children think better when they have something in their stomach – I see this happening.” ✓ “I make sure child goes to class fed and feel good.”
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “The best thing about the program is there is no stigma here. Kids feel free to walk in.” ✓ “They call me Auntie because they all know me.” ✓ “Whatever food we have, we share – we try to respect on another in sharing so everybody gets something.”
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “We buying our food from the grocery store in town. It’s cheaper and supports local businesses.” ✓ “It’s gratifying to have a relationship with the kids – they have a sense of belonging.” ✓ “The community pride that they feel they are giving so... it’s going to establish new volunteers for the future.”
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “I like that I get to meet the parents.” ✓ “I’m starting to develop a liking for baking homemade food. . . they look forward to my cooking/baking.” ✓ “I find kids are not as grouchy at recess.”

Summary of Perceived Benefits by Nutrition Coordinators

The benefits derived by nutrition coordinators from participating in the breakfast/snack programs are listed in Table 2.5. Both Sample Sets 1 and II are combined as they expressed similar views. Most significant for the nutrition coordinators is the opportunity not only to help the children access nutritious food but also develop healthy and valued relationships with them. Such relationships they claim are often long lasting. One nutrition coordinator mentioned how high school students often “come back to say hi to her”, after graduating (NC-D). Nutrition coordinators expressed also that they saw the food service as a way to build a warm, inviting, comfortable atmosphere for children, noting that children are more willing to talk and share about troubled home lives in such an accepting environment. They also indicated that the program was a great help to the community and the local economy, providing jobs in some cases, a steady supermarket clientele etc. They believed this helped to in sustainable capacity building.

The majority of volunteers are students from the school, ranging from Grade 4 to Grade 8 or high school in one case. The opportunity to teach the skills of food service and nutrition through demonstration and experience was identified as an important benefit.

But we let students come in... the ones that show an interest.. can help... I try to explain why we do everything, you know cleanliness a lot of the kids will ask you know, how come you buy this and why don't you get this? Then I will try and explain that so

we try and teach them about food safety, food handling, safety, about the nutrition, the Canada Food Guide, why I use brown bread rather than white. (NC-B)

In fact, all respondents exhibited enthusiasm when they spoke about students gaining knowledge and experience of food and food skills and that they are training good volunteers for the future.

When asked about the food served most nutrition coordinators indicated that their top priority was to feed fresh, nutritious food to all children regardless of need, “the most important thing I think is making sure that the needs of the kids are being met first before anything else; never turn a child away [NC-C]. If they are hungry you have to feed them and you can’t turn them away for that.” [NC-A] Feeding kids good food at school is important “because some families don’t have the good nutritious food in their homes”[NC-C]. I mean they might have a pop tart or you know that cold bowl of frosted flakes in the morning and sure that is something to put into their stomach but its not good for them and they need to have that proper nutrition in their bodies.”[NC-B]

Some interviewees valued that food that was prepared on site noting that they would be able to control the quality of recipe items used; “we need to be able to make what we need homemade so that we’re making sure that everything is low-fat and high nutrient” (NC-J). Other nutrition coordinators, however, felt they could not offer homemade selections due to time and energy restraints, “Don’t have the time, like there’s just 3 of us down here, and when you don’t have any volunteers it, yeah it doesn’t give you much time to try and get things done” (NC-M). Community Coordinators ranged from supportive to unsupportive expressing their concern about the increased cost of serving homemade meals.

Table 2.6: Perceived Benefits By Community School Coordinators

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “I’m really proud of the hot meals with more funding.” ✓ “This year was the first time I got a grant from somewhere else so we can focus on some nutrition education.” ✓ “The most important thing is the dignity and that they can get themselves here and even if it’s late, go to the kitchen for food.”
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “The really awesome thing about having a universal kind of program where everyone can eat no matter what their situation.” ✓ “I think a lot of these kids want to come where they sort of feel safe and welcome and they can sit and nicely eat and not have any problems going on around them. It’s calm, generally and we try and do the odd different breakfast.” ✓ “If a little six year old asks me for a second bowl I know that child hasn’t eaten since the day before so I feed them until they’re full.”
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Charging a minimal cost for meal is fine – it helps the budget and where would you get that sausage and that bun for \$2.” ✓ “I go out and walk the hallways and see if there’s any waste or fruit thrown around and no the kids are very respectful. They enjoy the food.”

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
		✓ "Kids do respect things a lot more when they do put out a little bit of money. It's created some ownership by paying a little bit."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We don't just feed kids and that takes care of the problem. We need to teach people that this [program] is important and that it's brain food." ✓ "Seeing the kids try different things and even the staff . . . I always suggest the staff need to model eating new snacks." ✓ "Kids need to eat and eat well in order to learn or it becomes a problem down the line."

Summary of Perceived Benefits BY Community School Coordinators

Table 2.6 depicts comments from community school coordinators about perceived benefits of the breakfast/snack programs. Community school coordinators interviewed felt that nutrition programs were beneficial but were more concerned about stable funding support to assist with program provision. They valued and appreciated the new provincial policy initiatives where additional funding was allocated to the nutrition programs. This funding not only provided better access and quality food it also provided opportunities to teach nutrition education and social values. The additional funds received from community organization and other funding agencies was seen as crucial to helping to ensure that the programs are able to meet the variety of needs presented by students. For example, in the case of schools A, C & D, two meals (B/L, S/L, S/L) are provided. Monies such as those received from Breakfast For Learning and CHEP Good Food Inc, provided valuable support in the purchase of supplies, food, and equipment.

Table 2.7: Perceived Benefits BY Principals

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sense of belonging ✓ Meet basic need for food ✓ Welcoming environment of nutrition room ✓ Caring relationship with NC-parent in community
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We're a community school and with that recognition and honesty the kids come and talking about food. We have students who approach different ones of us at different times when things are difficult at home." Encourage everyone to access servery – less stigma ✓ "In general, the staff recognize that a simple healthy breakfast is going to assist learning and I see in general quite good support for both breakfast and lunch. Recognition that there are kids who need that healthy start and food at some point in the day." ✓ "Our goal is not one hungry child in the building as well as positive food experiences to increase their understanding of good, healthy nutritious food."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Kids can access lunch too if needed ✓ Proper nutrition

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organized not to take away from teaching time ✓ Teach social skills – courtesy, respect
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try to rebuild independence and responsibility with children ✓ Nobody picks or chooses students – everyone eats ✓ Breakfast was communal, interactive, bonding ✓ Better attendance ✓ Open kitchen – less stigma
E	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Meal coupons –incentive to access hot lunches ✓ Universal in-class snacks ✓ Pride in growth of new program

Summary of the Perceived Benefits by Principals

Sample comments from principals about the perceived benefits of providing a nutrition program for children are listed in Table 2. 7. Some principals indicated that the nutrition program provided children with better access to food, a nurturing eating environment, and a caring attitude on the part of staff. Staff attitude allowed them to speak more freely about their food needs. For example, children willingly talked about stressful home situations or the lack of food at home. Often this information would be shared with staff members such as the principals, teachers, community or nutrition coordinator who would prepare a food package for the child to take home at the end of the school day. Principal B shared this anecdote:

Like the little boy that (name withheld) just shared the example of saying that there isn't food at home. There's never been a protection concern there; [he has] a single [parent] dad. He actually lives on the edges of our boundary. He should be attending another (name) school but we have open boundaries so he walks a considerable distance and he has always found a staff member who will support him around food. And he doesn't like entering conflict with his father (muffled) so it's always done you know, he just doesn't want us to say anything to dad and we think out of dignity we shouldn't so it's kind of self-identified (P-B).

All the principals expressed a commitment to the children's nutrition program in their schools. They also identified problem areas such as the need for better integration of classroom nutrition education lessons with food served in the existing nutrition programs. They spoke about the need to increase staff support needed as the program requirements increased. For example, Principal B felt that foods that meet nutrition standards in themselves provided opportunities for children to learn basic menu planning skills and these skills were transferable to foods at home or from other cultures. The role of the school as professional parents was also evident in the following statement.

We should be supportive because it's the child who's indicating that they are hungry. Yes, we may have families who could afford to purchase a lunch who aren't but our goal is not one hungry child in the building should go hungry; as well, positive food

experiences [are needed] to increase their understanding of good, healthy nutritious food.

Overall Summary of the Benefits of Children's Nutrition Programs

All interviews supported that access to good nutritious food was critical to children's development, health and academic well-being. Food helps the teacher with classroom management, and in teaching values such as cleanliness, responsibility and a sense of community.

Findings from this study suggest that hunger relief was the primary reason why nutrition programs are initiated. However, once initiated the programs provide several other benefits to the children, parents, school staff and nutrition coordinators. These benefits of building community, nutrition education, and personal empowerment become the drivers of nutrition programming in schools. Children, staff, and community members attested to the certainty that hunger is visible, acknowledged, and should be dealt with in the school-community setting. Most interviewees felt that children, especially those from low-income households, would go hungry without the support of school nutrition programs. As principal points out it is good to "See a little guy or a little girl with a full stomach and a smiley face knowing that they've had a good nutritious breakfast". So the sustainability of the nutrition programs is based on many factors other than hunger alone.

Children in all the focus groups commented on the quality of the food. Most children were very enthusiastic about the "good food" they received. Only a few students in one school expressed any concern about the food served.

The ability to meet the need of hungry children without embarrassing, stressing, or dehumanizing them was identified as essential. Schools serving universal snacks were most clear about their ability to succeed at minimizing stigmatization. For example, in school A the snack program was available to all students. As well, unique to School C, was the implementation of free meal coupons to especially include older students in the meal programs. All schools struggled with how to make sure hungry children participate without feeling bad about eating at school.

Staff, parents, and community members indicated that the provision of breakfasts/snacks offered an opportunity for children to learn in a safe, caring, and welcoming environment. "Just to make sure that the children are fed and fed nutritiously and just so they have a comfort zone to come to, which is really important to children" (NC-P).

It is important to couple learning with nutrition, whether the learning is for the student, or taken home to be experienced within the family. The majority of participants indicated that having an opportunity to teach children nutrition education principles was an important benefit of offering the breakfast/snack program. This was carried out through demonstrating, modeling, or instructing about food quality, preparation and safe food handling. School staff are highly aware that they teach social as well as life skills when they include children in the preparation and delivery of meals, "not only teach the importance of nutrition and so on, but you also teach some social skills around how do you receive things . . . with a please and thank you" (P-B).

Barriers Associated with the Provision of Programs

Although participants were passionate about the benefits they were equally, if not more so, passionate about what gets in the way of successfully meeting their goals in the children's nutrition programs. Some of these barriers were expressed as desires for improvements or changes in the program. Tables 3.1 to Table 3.7 present the comments of each stakeholder group for each of the Sample Set I schools. Summaries with some additional quotes are presented following each table. An overall summary will explore significant themes.

Table 3.1: Perceived Barriers by Children

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "There is some wasting of food." ✓ "Some kids don't like the food." ✓ "Some kids I know are shy to come to the lunchroom."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Other kids are shy or scared at first to go to breakfast." ✓ "More strawberries." ✓ "I have to make my food at home but not here though."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "There's something that I'd like more and that's pineapple, more/less chocolate chips." ✓ "More changes probably more often instead of every second day."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We could have seconds." ✓ "I wish they'd bring back the wraps that they made." ✓ "I want more cheese and tomato tacos, you could get little tacos that were on a bun."

Summary of the Perceived Barriers by Children

As enthusiastic as the children were about the benefits of the meal programs they also called for specific improvements. These improvements were more variety, more food, and better quality. Another barrier to successful programs noted by Schools A & B was the apparent fears to participate in the meal programs. This barrier is well known to staff; many of these children are from transient families and are new to the school. There was a high turnover of children registering throughout the school year reported at all community schools. The principal who took us on a tour of individual classrooms in school B took the time to ask students whether they had had breakfast that morning. A few students indicated that they had not. When asked they expressed that though they were aware of the breakfast provisions in the "servery" they had no desire to go to the servery for breakfast. It is likely that stigmatization does exist even in schools where universal programs are available.

Table 3.2: Perceived Barriers by Parents

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "They could serve more traditional foods like moose meat, wild rice, geese, duck, or partridge." ✓ "There needs to be more community input." ✓ "People need to become more personally responsible for their kids. I am concerned that there might be some abuse of the food program." ✓ "The most challenging part is to get the ones that don't want to be in there yet."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "If parents became more involved they'd understand the school better." ✓ "I wouldn't mind paying a little for meal that would be ok – if it meant a better lunch at school." ✓ "Hard to get through the month sometimes – so to make sure that they have the best that they need, that they have a good snack."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "It would be great if they would offer lunches every day." ✓ "I am on the school board and I do hear that some families really need help." ✓ "Sometimes our nutrition coordinator now she's just, she's gone to half time now. You know and she's really trying to get the kids pumped up and trying different things – but it's hard."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "The new lunch lady has changed snacks and time served." ✓ "I would like to see an afternoon snack." ✓ "I could see where a full-time nutritionist in the school division could really help our kids. They could learn more about eating better."

Summary of the Perceived Barriers BY Parents

Overall, parents had few concerns about the breakfast/snack programs served in their children's school. Few indicated that funding, staff turnover, the need for more meals (e.g. lunch daily), and more parental involvement and responsibility were problematic to the availability of nutrition programs. One parent suggested more openness to including cultural foods in the food programs. Table 3.2 presents comments from parents about barriers.

Table 3.3: Perceived Barriers by Volunteers

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "I don't like to see kids wasting food." ✓ "Some kids don't know how to share food." ✓ "Breakfast could be earlier for children coming early." ✓ "Somehow we have to get stragglers to come earlier."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "It's important to make sure food is the best possible – and that's a challenge for them." ✓ "We as a community need to meet the need of hungry children."

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
		✓ "I think that the quality OK, but it is just a snack" – volunteer school D
C	S / L	✓ "I don't drive, so it's a little hard to get to the school – my husband drives me in from the farm." ✓ "I think we could use more volunteers."
D	S / L	✓ "I think they could offer more food." ✓ "Maybe have some kind of hot meal for lunches." ✓ "I think we could look at a lunch paid for by parents, say an X amount per month and your child gets a hot lunch, a nutritious hot lunch."

Summary of the Perceived Barriers by Volunteers

For volunteers, most were satisfied with the program administration and their involvement in the program. A few suggested that funding support, and access to resources (e.g. training about food preparation) were limited their involvement in the delivery of breakfast/snack programs. They also suggested the need for greater community involvement to sustain the programs.

Table 3.4: Perceived Barriers by Teachers

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	✓ "I notice that the variety of food is limited to funding." ✓ "I would like to invite parents to come in and learn cooking – even the parents of the kids in my class." ✓ "I think that paid meals would be very difficult here. Many parents just couldn't afford it."
B	B / S	✓ "Our [Food Coordinator] puts in way more hours than she is paid for." ✓ "It takes extra time and energy to offer variety and nutritious food with limited funds." ✓ We try to make the best with what we have... not enough funds to offer variety."
C	S / L	✓ "I'd like to see a lunch program available everyday." ✓ "We all have a big job to do to change community member's attitudes especially about how kids need for good food." ✓ "I see that programs like this are beginning to create differences between towns – the haves and the have nots."
D	S / L	✓ "Some days snack takes more time that others – I know they need the nutrition in order to learn but it also cuts out part of the learning time." ✓ "Paid lunches would not work"
E	S / L	✓ "We try to deal with food issues at staff meetings, but it's hard with limited funds." ✓ "We would like better meat and fresher produce." ✓ "A lot of our children don't like processed meat. With better storage facilities they could cook a good roast, cut it up, and then freeze some."

Summary of the Perceived Barriers by Teachers

Scheduling and logistics seemed to be the most common concerns for teachers. Although they valued the nutrition programs, some expressed that delivery interfered with regular teaching time. Funding, appropriate facilities, serving good quality food at all times, and getting “buy-in” from other teachers were also identified as barriers to program delivery.

Table 3.5: Perceived Barriers by Nutrition Coordinators

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “Sometime I find it hard to prepare for the different numbers of kids that come here.” ✓ “We find it hard to follow Canadian Food Guide when there are financial cutbacks, poor food, or no control over budget or shopping.” ✓ “Sometimes I find that delivered produce and donated food is often bad quality.”
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “Sometimes difficult when we’ve had funding limits for everyone to respect one another in sharing.” ✓ “We are really lacking the foods we need because of the money - We would like to serve eggs in the morning sometimes.”
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “I’d want a real lunch program where we could offer five lunches per week for K-12.” ✓ “If I had a wish list it would be for a real cafeteria.” ✓ “Extra funding would be wonderful. Not only for buying but to make homemade food so that were making sure that everything is low-fat and high nutrient – we read labels like crazy.”
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “I want to get more parents in here.” ✓ “I want to work more with individual classes and have more classrooms come in here. Bringing kids in to learn something as kind of a side by side with the teachers.” ✓ “The most difficult part of this jobs is figuring out the quantity and the budgeting.”

Summary of the Perceived Barriers by Nutrition Coordinators

Nutrition coordinators are very clear about connecting the nutrition programs with nutrition education and literacy:

There is a literacy program called *Stone Soup*. Stone soup is the story about...There's different versions all over the world but it basically boils down to some stranger coming into down, wanting something to eat, people won't feed him so he tricks them into making him stone soup saying I have stones and I can make this wonderful soup with it. He tricks the townspeople into bringing vegetables and meat and that kind of thing to make enough soup for everybody and give himself some as well. When I volunteered here before I got hired a particular teacher that I volunteered with in her classroom she

did that with her class. They read the story, they did different literacy exercises built around the story and a conclusion to it was to make stone soup in the classroom (NC-G).

As well, a few coordinators mentioned funding to student ratio problems. For example, funds received from the community school initiatives is not applied by a set standard, but rather, individual schools make their own decisions about how the amounts allotted to nutrition programs are disbursed. Consequently, we observed that meal provision varied with each school; some provided snacks, others breakfast, some were even able to provide lunch with support from other sources. Meals served also varied in terms of variety and food quality (fresh produce and other food vs. convenience or donated food often high sugar & fat).

Interview participants suggested that having appropriate financial support would help school staff respond to emergency food needs such as students who are hungry but missed the allotted meal times, students in homes with no food; that for some students, food provided at school was the only meal they received for the day. Participants indicated, "the *Share & Care Program* (where children would put excess or unwanted lunch items on a table rather than throwing it in the garbage) that was run by the lunch supervisors was just not enough" (NC-K).

School staff expressed that they are often faced with the perception of schools as "babysitters". School personnel saw themselves as community members trying to change their image to be more inclusive, and to invite other members of the community into the schools (parents and others). "I don't see [the school] as a parent I just see [the nutrition program] as something safe where the kids know that they can get something if they are hungry" (NC-D). In one school (E), community members are invited to participate in the mealtime. This helps also to remove the stigmatization from the program.

An important barrier to improving nutrition programming was the lack of adequately paid personnel, "I'd like to see nutrition coordinators get paid what they're worth" (P-A). Several nutrition coordinators that were volunteers stated that they would at least like to receive mileage and out-of-pocket expenses. Many participants advocated for their nutrition coordinators to be full-time paid positions, "Probably the biggest one is the funding, the funding and personally, I could do a lot more if I was paid more and if it was a regular position, if it wasn't just sort of a volunteer position with an honorary" (NC-I). CHEP director Karen Archibald commented that some of the volunteer nutrition coordinators who received social assistance have had some of their honourarium clawed back, thus making their personal financial situation more challenging. Other nutrition coordinators expressed wanting more control or support over menu planning and budget. For example, one nutrition coordinator stated, "A lot of our kids that's all they get is sandwiches. . . So I try to do different meals and I try to do hot meals especially in the winter when it's cold" (NC-J).

Table 3.6: Perceived Barriers by Community School Coordinators

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We are such a high need school, we've never had funding for more nutrition education." ✓ "We really lack kitchen supplies." ✓ "We've had our biggest staff turnover that I've seen and just the knowledge and the learning of working with our kids from our families and just understanding that those basic need aren't being met – it's a challenge for us."
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We'd increase the budget, and incredibly." ✓ "It's challenging to get people to volunteer." ✓ "Buying nutritious food is expensive."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "At first, the community didn't understand child hunger, child nutrition. So we implemented this two-dollar lunch and it satisfied everyone." ✓ "We want to try new menu items." ✓ "It will be important as our program grows to increase the hours for the [Nutrition Coordinator's] position."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We need to do better by encouraging parents to come in and that's a really tough area." ✓ "We would like to do more parenting cooking and life skills classes." ✓ "We used to have a full-time EAN (Educational Associate of Nutrition - not a current designation) and we had to relieve part of our staff that that's one of the cuts. It would be so nice to have a full-time person there and we could do more of a breakfast and more with the nutrition." ✓ "Just trying to get a nutritious snacks at the cost of what we have, we're struggling."

Summary of the Perceived Barriers by Community School Coordinators

Funding support, access to available resources and being able to meet the food needs of children in need while they are in school appear to be the priority concerns of community school coordinators. Within each school, the need for a breakfast/snack program has varied. While some schools had strong participation, others had few students participating in the breakfast/snack programs. Community school coordinators suggested the need for a pricing formula that would recognize need instead of the current enrollment numbers so that financial support could be distributed more equitably:

Funds are a big thing. We get the money from Sask Learning for our groceries and our supplies and that and it was always dispersed between the community school according to the school numbers rather than the need. So even though our numbers are low our need is very high and so we would be scraping by, being we didn't have very much to give to the kids you know. And you go to the next school and they'd be having this really nice meal and so finally this is our first year, what we decided to do is each community school was allotted X amount of dollars. The same amount but then what was left over from that was thrown into a big pot and then who needs money to carry

through the year can dip into that pot. So even though we're still strapped financially cause we couldn't survive without our donations and that this year it's been a big positive change [CSC-D].

Table 3.7: Perceived Barriers by Principals

School	Type of meal programs	Comments
A	B / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "The ongoing uncertainty about future funding. Once this becomes an expectation of the community and our school it would be extremely difficult if the funding was ever pulled to explain it to our families that we no longer had the money to provide the breakfast program." ✓ "I would like to see them run breakfast program longer in the morning." ✓ "How to set up the kind of program where it actually benefits everybody in a good way?"
B	B / S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Our nutrition coordinator stretches budget to the limit." ✓ "I am very specific about kind of donated food I accept in here." ✓ "I would like a full-time nutrition worker – and I would advocate strongly that it be the current nutrition coordinator because of her volunteering experience."
C	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We have a lot of ideas about how we could make improvements inside of our broad communities, inside of homes, but we're limited, we can only do so much, so how do we time leverage?" ✓ "Now there's the added administrative and support staff capacity in order to coordinate and manage new programs." ✓ "Sometimes the community doesn't get what community school is about."
D	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We are juggling meeting the food needs of the children and their learning time." ✓ "It takes so much of the EAN's time to plan and shop for groceries weekly." ✓ "I would advocate for more training for the nutrition person."
E	S / L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "We need a larger food prep area." ✓ "We need more nutritional food and better access to it for less cost." ✓ "We need better storage facilities."

Summary of the Perceived Barriers by Principals

School administrators expressed the concern that nutrition programs, although very necessary, are yet another program to manage that requires extra support staff time and energy although this did not diminish their support of the current program. In School E, breakfast provision was only provided during the period when they were able to receive specific funds targeted to that program. No further contact was made to or by the organization that initiated the program even though children were "coming to school hungry". There may be a need for further research to identify those programs that for various reasons have discontinued the program because of lack of financial support.

Overall Summary of the Barriers and Challenges of Children's Nutrition Program

Children, parents, school staff, and volunteers receive many benefits from the nutrition programs provided by schools. However, the programs still face many challenges, including the need for adequate resources to address the growing nutritional needs of students. Although schools admit that they benefit from funds provided from government agencies, and local agencies such as sponsoring school divisions, charity or special interest groups, such funding is normally limited to operational costs, and rarely is stable. An exception are the community schools that receive funding from the Community School Initiative, Saskatchewan Learning, however, even with this program there are calls for a reevaluation of funding formula to apportion funds by need and not necessarily enrollment.

Stigmatization was cited as a challenge by all respondent groups. By definition universality means the all have access to the nutrition program. In this study respondents indicated that the breakfast/snack programs were open to all students. However, it was observed that in some programs an "identification of need" was required, in others; students were required to go to a specific location such as the schools servery to access the program, while in others students automatically received the daily snack or breakfast within their home classroom. In the first two models students expressed that they were less likely to access the program if they were new to the school, shy or scared. In the third model all students ate together in their own classroom as part of the daily routine. Models that may reduce student participation may also reduce the possible benefits of the nutrition program to the students' learning and developmental needs.

The value of nutrition program for learning was identified by school staff as important. The challenge for teachers was to justify the time taken from the other required subjects for nutrition program delivery. One possible solution is to integrate the nutrition program into the curriculum whereby the nutrition program becomes a teaching resource in decision making around lifestyle choices and health promotion.

Essential Skills and Training Needs of Nutrition Coordinators

In this section we will discuss findings from the study pertaining to the skills needed by nutrition coordinators to deliver the nutrition programs. The goal as discussed previously is to identify those *Essential Skills* that may be needed by nutrition coordinators to make purchase, preparation and service decisions related to the delivery of nutrition programs. Findings for this section seeks to address reach question six: What are the *Essential Skills* needed by nutrition coordinators? Nutrition coordinators were asked to describe their education and experience, their ratings of themselves, ratings by others, food safety, job expectations and training requirements. As indicated in the introduction, nutrition coordinators are not currently catalogued in the National Occupation Classification (NOC) system nor do they have an *Essential Skills* Profile. Several stakeholders are viewing classification in this system as a mechanism to solidify the position, provide job description, more permanency, security, and appropriate recompense. However, rather than making it harder for vulnerable people to enter positions such as nutrition coordinators the purpose is to validate their work, their experience, and their value to the community. The lack of attention on the "human" skill set needed in every job has been a criticism of *Essential Skills* profiling.

Education and Experience

The education and experiences of the nutrition coordinators varied. Seventeen out of twenty nutrition coordinators (more than one in a few schools) have Grade 12 education (see Table 4). One nutrition coordinator completed a technical program but did not have a grade 12 certificate. Most had worked in a service position and expressed a desire to work with children. In a few cases the nutrition coordinator had retired from many years of restaurant and food industry experience. These coordinators call this their "retirement career". Several indicated that they were dependent on the food safety course taken as a part of the job requirement and their own natural talent to cook for large numbers. As well, the Teacher Associates expressed that they were not given specific training to undertake various aspects of the food program; they were basically learning on the job. The notable exceptions were the volunteer nutrition coordinators who were associated with CHEP Good Food Inc. These coordinators indicated that they received some training and support from CHEP. Their training included areas of nutritious food choices, menu planning, and specific diet requirements (for example diabetes), and networking opportunities through regularly scheduled meetings.

Job Ratings of Nutrition Coordinator by Themselves and Others

Their work environment, facilities, as well as relationships with staff and community play significant role in how well nutrition coordinators think they are accomplishing their job. Overall, nutrition coordinators rated themselves quite high (7 –10). The ratings of the job of the nutrition coordinators from other interviewees were quite similar, although many participants spoke of the need to find more supports and resources for their nutrition coordinators. As well, all participants spoke positively about their nutrition coordinator's passionate commitment to children and the delivery of as good a food program that is possible under the circumstances. The characteristics of the Nutrition Coordinators are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4: Characteristics of the Nutrition Coordinators

School	Education	Years Involved
A1	Gr. 12	4
A2	Gr. 12	1
B1	Gr. 12	15
B2	Post-Secondary	1
C	Post-Secondary	3
D1	Post-Secondary	6
D2	Teacher Assistant Diploma	New
E	n/a	n/a
F	Gr. 12	16
G	Gr. 12	1
H	Post-Secondary	1
I	Post-Secondary	n/a
J	Post-Secondary	1
K	Gr. 12	4
L	Post-Secondary	9
M	Partial Gr. 12	16
N	Gr. 11+ Post-Secondary	10
O	Teacher Associate Certificate (1yr)	6 months
P	Gr. 12	4
Q	Post-Secondary	2

Skills and Training Needs

Nutrition coordinators identified several areas of training needs to assist them in adequately delivering the breakfast/snack programs. These included networking skills, food preparation skills, and general nutrition education.

Networking Skills

There was a strong desire among all nutrition coordinators to be able to share their successes and challenges with others in the field through regular forums. They expressed that networking and professional development opportunities are important ways to improve their skills as well as their growth professionally:

Getting the proper information out is very important. And then next I would say is getting information together, even if we did networking with all the coordinators; let's get together on a Friday afternoon, everybody bake and then you'd take all this to your school or something and how can we help each other out. Even if it was just simple this is how I make a dip out of scratch or this is how I'm changing recipes. Some kind of

network that you're there to help each other out because a lot of times coordinators, I have never been to a meeting that all of us have been able to attend a meeting at the same time. So a lot of brainstorming there has to do with networking together because we're all trying to accomplish the same thing. We're all doing basically the same thing just in different ways. (NC-L)

In cases like the CHEP volunteer coordinators, periodic meetings (monthly or otherwise) are held for networking and professional development purposes. Although coordinators see this as an essential part of their work and learning, they also mention that a more intensive workshop or conference opportunities would be helpful:

I do often wish maybe there was a two day, three day thing you know in the city that I could attend just to pick up more ideas and more information on you know health wise" (NC-C).

Some nutrition coordinators stated that most of the information provided though the education and community school conferences though providing important information for school operation, was not specific to the operation of food and nutrition services; or incases where offered it was done in small doses;

"But when we go to conferences so much of it is just education related here they'll offer maybe a mini session on food nutrition but it could be a whole two-day event" (NC-C).

Food Preparation Skills

Although there was strong evidence that nutrition coordinators had innate talent for menu planning and food preparation, many respondents indicated such talent was not enough. Several respondents commented that although the nutrition coordinators were great cooks, training in areas as nutritional content of foods and food preparation methods (e.g. low fat cooking, utilizing left over) were needed.

Integrating Nutrition Education

This is a key area that is constantly mentioned in many responses, the need for more nutrition education for the nutrition coordinators so they can fully participate in the children's educational processes. The expectations are that the role of nutrition coordinator would be broadened to include a greater focus on teaching children how to eat healthily and not just feeding children. One principal mentioned the need for more intensive training opportunities, "what kind of summer programs are available, so if (NC name) wanted to go and upgrade her skills this summer, would they [school boards] support that because if we get organizations doing that then that comes back to [benefit] the school" (P-C).

Summary

Presently some nutrition coordinators have paid positions within the community and non-community school systems. The skills and training needs, identified although not directly related to the nine essential skills identified by HRDC Canada discussed earlier, may have further implication for developing community-based Essential skill profiles. This study recommends that nutrition coordinators undergo a certification process with a strong emphasis on experience and community building capacity awareness. Community-based organizations, or

people working directly with community programs, might be best situated to deliver a more comprehensive and recognized training program.

Community-Based Capacity Building

School-based nutrition interventions offer the most systematic approach to improving the health and well being of children. They do so by promoting a positive lifestyle and assisting children develop effective decision-making skills (Kolbe 1993). Greenfield and Kreuter (1991) explains that health personnel and school personnel have different mandate and priorities. For health professionals the primary focus is about health maintenance and disease prevention for children given the acknowledged link between diet and chronic diseases. However, for school officials the strongest justification for nutrition intervention and services in schools is its effect on students' cognitive performances and their educational achievements. Knowledge gained about school nutrition interventions over the past decade has provided further justification for the implementation of a comprehensive nutrition intervention and services. This comprehensive environment includes not only the foods and beverages sold or served on school premises but the involvement of community players such as parents, government agencies and community organizations interested in the health, and academic well being of students. School nutrition policies and practices that support healthy food choice are considered components of the comprehensive nutrition food environment.

Communities are becoming increasingly involved in the school decision-making process. Since 1986, one third of all schools have reported some version of site-based management, and at least 5 US states have passed legislation encouraging or mandating site-based management in schools. A recent ADA (2003) report suggest that schools and communities have a shared responsibility to provide children access to high quality foods and positive nutrition experiences that will have a lifelong impact on their health and education. This challenges schools to involve parents and others in their organizational structures and processes. School^{PLUS}, a program and policy strategy of the K-12 education system in Saskatchewan may provide impetus in this province.

School^{PLUS}: A Vision for Children and Youth: The Final Report of the Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School to the Minister of Education, Government of Saskatchewan (Tymchak, 2001) is a recent policy statement that addresses the role of the school in society today. Among other directives aimed at off-loading excess work and non-schooling expectations from teachers and administration, this document states the need for inclusive approaches to education and schooling by exploring the relationships between educational systems, human-service agencies, and community-based organizations. In particular, the document calls for "*a public policy initiative that encompasses all of the human services, and third party and community agencies as well*" (italics in text)" (Tymchak, 2001, p. 52). School^{PLUS} embraces community education principles and actively seeks to involve agencies and community members in helping ALL schools in Saskatchewan to become centres of learning, support and community for the children and families they serve (Government of Saskatchewan, 2003). However, there is some criticism regarding the implementation of this policy. Community may be invited into the realm of the school but only at the discretion of administration. The community-school partnership is not yet equal and in some respects nutrition coordinators are caught in the struggle to define new relationships. This is perhaps the most significant barrier to sustainable capacity building in communities underlying all those previously mentioned.

While *School PLUS* is based in community school principles, the community schools, at this time, have access to increased programming, funding, and resources for children's nutrition programs. The base funding of \$10,000 per community school helps to deliver children's nutrition programs. With the increase to 98 community schools in the province I. diverse approaches to nutrition intervention in elementary schools have evolved. As described earlier the different approaches reflect the local neighborhoods and communities. In some schools the use of food related events, such as First Nations feasts, work to establish stronger community ties and provide opportunities for growth. This growth is about building a strong community with established school-community partnerships moving towards meeting school-community goals.

In Saskatoon schools an informal partnership exists with organizations such as the CHEP Good Food Inc. The CHEP model, unique to Saskatoon, involves community members in the delivery of nutrition interventions in schools. Interventions such as school meals programs (breakfast, snack & lunch), and nutrition education (Nutrition Positive program) have been part of CHEP's mandate for years. Volunteer nutrition coordinators are contracted from the community/ neighbourhood through this initiative. The BFL model of nutrition delivery provides funds and other support to selected schools in Saskatchewan. Support is generally awarded upon request and to those schools meeting the BFL criteria for funding. Initiatives require parental involvement in order to receive funding. This helps to encourage community ownership and program sustainability. Community linkages supported through the CHEP and BFL initiatives help to ensure the long-term viability of breakfast/snack programs as well as the continued participation of the volunteer sector.

Increased activities over the past 5 years suggest that the problem of feeding needy children is much deeper and more complex than previously generally known. Despite commitments from government agencies to reduce child poverty, one in four children in Saskatoon live in economically unstable and unacceptable situations, and there is growing concern about widening gaps along social, economic and cultural divides. The majority of children participating in the breakfast/snack programs (targeted and universal) were from Aboriginal homes, generally in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods. The social and environmental forces are likely to lead to dire future consequences for children, and their families. Concern is growing that the increasing availability of competing and profit-making foods and beverages of minimal nutritional value in schools is compromising students' nutritional intake and undermining their health and nutrition education. A major challenge is to maintain the nutrition integrity of school food and nutrition programs. To provide all students with the opportunity to develop and practice healthy eating behaviors, schools must adopt and enforce policies that support the availability of nutritious foods and beverages wherever and whenever they are offered at school.

We have a window of opportunity to address the growing nutritional needs of students. Schools have access to the majority of children and youth and, correspondingly, to their families and community members. The school system provides one of the primary locations for responding to the overall nutritional needs of students. However, it will take a redefinition of the role of schools and their relationships with community stakeholders to break the patterns of food insecurity and poverty seen in schools. The traditional approach to feeding children where

food delivery is left to individual community organizations or school staff will not be able to address these challenges.

We are here to teach each other's children...I think it could start in a community school... We could be part of that change. We [need to] become a community that cares about one another, that we want our community to succeed. (CC-D)

Community partnerships have long been supporting nutrition initiatives for children in schools in Saskatchewan. Many participants in the study discussed the importance of parental involvement in school initiatives. They saw school nutrition programs as a way to include parents and families in the life of the school. By including parents in the life of the school, community involvement would become stronger; stronger communities mean schools that are more attune to the issues and are better able to address the growing complexities of students and local communities. As one nutrition coordinator suggests, the nutrition program provides "a nutritious snack for students each day, and also [serves as] an outreach program for the parents that are in our community to teach them, how to cook and bake and just participating in school life [with emphasis] (NC-D).

In many cases nutrition coordinators became involved with the school nutrition program for personal reasons, that is, to assist their children attending the individual school. However, as they gained confidence they started volunteering within the larger community. Even those nutrition coordinators who are Teacher associates had a desire beyond meeting the immediate need of feeding hungry children to involving the community, largely the parents, in the learning, experience, and accessing good food.

The role of community-based organizations in helping to ensure that children receive safe and appropriate nutrition intervention in school remains very important. In those locations, it is the community nutritionist, often with the district health region, who helps to provide support to schools for the nutrition programs and services. However these positions are not permanent.

There was a clear link made between the life of the school and the life of the community. A strong nutrition program in schools is a significant part of building a strong community.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The Shifting Landscape of Food Service Delivery in Saskatchewan Elementary Schools

Overall, participants indicated that they had gained important benefits from participating in the breakfast/snack programs. Meeting the nutritional needs of students is by no means the only identified purpose of breakfast/snack programs. Breakfast/snack programs may also help to advance educational purposes by encouraging attendance, facilitating classroom management and enhanced learning. Access to good nutritious food is critical to children's development, health and academic well being, and helps the teacher also in teaching values such as cleanliness, responsibility and a sense of community. Various economic benefits were also identified, including impact on local agriculture and other commodities. Broad social purposes were also identified such as increased social support to families as well as enhanced self-esteem through participation in activities related to foodservice. Children liked the "good food" they received as breakfast or snack. School staff perceived the ability to meet the need of hungry children without embarrassing, stressing, or dehumanizing them as a key benefit. Staff, parents, and community appreciate the opportunity for children to learn in a safe, caring, and welcoming environment.

Lack of adequate resources (financial and human) has been identified as critical to the long-term sustainability of programs. These barriers also may have policy implications. There may be a need to address how resources are allocated to individual breakfast/snack programs, particularly for schools in areas of high socioeconomic need. The study found disparities in compensation and training and development of the nutrition coordinator. This indicates that funds directed at these nutrition programs may also need to address compensation as well as training and development needs. One outcome of training could be certification for nutrition coordinators, since certification reduced perceptions of barriers. Given the important role that the volunteer nutrition coordinator plays in the delivery of nutrition, intervention efforts should be directed to ensuring that they receive compensation on par with local nutrition coordinators. The skills and training needs identified although not directly related to the nine *Essential skills* identified by HRDC Canada may have implication for developing community-based *Essential Skills* profiles

This paper paints a picture of a shifting landscape in the way breakfast/snack programs are delivered in Saskatchewan elementary schools. This shift is particularly evident in Saskatoon where CHEP Good Food Inc. was at the forefront of nutrition program delivery in Saskatoon schools. The introduction of other funding agencies such as Breakfast For Learning, and the increased numbers of designated community schools, and the implementation of the School Plus approach may have implications for the way nutrition programs are delivered in the future. The School PLUS model is intended to create "a new kind of institution dedicated to the needs of children and youth" (Tymchak, 2001, p.44), one that promotes collaboration among all service providers. The model recognizes "powerful change forces" such as poverty, food insecurity, shifting demographics, and pupil mobility as impacting schools and the lives of children. It calls for a re-imagining of the function, purpose, and power of school for children, their families, and their community. Community organizations such as CHEP Good Food Inc have an important role to play in developing a blue print for the delivery of nutrition programs in Saskatchewan as the pressure to include nutrition programs in the school grows in the

province, either by clearly identified need due to hunger and food insecurity, or as a strategy of the province-wide implementation of School ^{PLUS}. The history and national involvement of Breakfast For Learning in providing resources for child nutrition programs may add a critical perspective. As Levenger (1984) points out the costs of providing nourishment to student is insignificant compared to the future cost that are likely to be incurred should children fail to become productive members of society.

Recommendations: As a result of the findings, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. That more stable funding for nutrition programs be provided thus allowing schools to work towards healthier choices that will further promote health and contribute to the well being of children. For community schools, basic recommendations are currently included in the framework document, Building Communities of Hope (Saskatchewan Learning, 2004). Those nutrition programs receiving funding from CHEP Good Food Inc. or BFL have similar criteria intended to guarantee food and program quality.
2. To acknowledge and fully support that the integration of the nutrition program into the curriculum provides children, and subsequently their families, with a stronger nutrition knowledge base from which to make informed decisions around food. Long-term secure funding will support this integration.
3. To increase awareness of the vulnerability within the school and community about stigmatization, remembering that universal programming in and of itself does not necessarily eradicate stigmatization issues. Within this research three models of universality were observed , exploring the definition and practice of universality may enhanced program delivery.
4. To emphasize the inclusion of all stakeholders in setting priorities, raising issues and taking action. To provide opportunities and funding for training and support that builds the capacity of students, parents, school staff and community members to participate. This positive and proactive approach increases the possibility of sustainable community growth.
5. To use nutrition programs as a change agent for communities to become a vital component of the local school life. As seen in this study the benefits of nutrition programs far outweigh the barriers. Schools should tap into the commitment of many nutrition coordinators, school staff, parents, community members, and organizations to ensure the sustainability of the nutrition programs.
6. To invest in the nutrition coordinator's position. This study shows that students, parents, volunteers, teachers, and principals agree that the role of the nutrition coordinator is critical to the continued success of breakfast/snack program delivery. Consequently, there is a need to provide opportunities for training and for growth. Perhaps a certification process whereby the nutrition coordinators could strengthen their base knowledge of nutrition and the nutrition-related health issues of children in addition to community development and capacity building models. Most importantly, the work of all nutrition coordinators needs to be recognized and fully compensated.

Students learn best when they are well nourished, have safety and stability in their families and communities, are respected for who they are, and when their needs are being met (Saskatchewan Learning, 2005).

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APPENDIX A: CROSS-REFERENCING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Number	Interview Question	Stakeholders
	Characteristics of the Program:	
1.	When did the breakfast/snack program first start?	NC, S
2.	What reasons did the community/school have for starting a breakfast program?	NC, S
3.	Can you tell me a bit about the program—a) What are its aims? b) What are its goals?	NC, S, P
4.	What time does your school serve breakfast in the morning? How long do you serve breakfast?	NC, S
5.	How many children do you have who participate in the school breakfast/snack program? What are the ages of your children? Boys/girls?	P
6.	How did you learn about the program? [PROMPTS: School newsletter? Letter addressed to parents? Other parents? Your/other kids? School staff? Someone else?]	P
7.	Pretend my kids come here. They are news student at the school. They know nothing about the program—and they asked you about it. What would you tell them about it? What would you say about: a) the food there; b) the size or amount of food you get c) the way the food tastes d) about the place program is (location/room) e) what you learn there about food f) what other things would be important to tell new kids so they could decide if they wanted to go? g) What do you think about the breakfast/lunch lady?	C
8.	I am going to go around the room, and I want each person to tell me how they found out about the program? (Who first told you about the program, and what did they say?)	C
	Student Participation:	
1.	Have you noticed any changes in your child/children since they started participating in the program? [Changes in grades? Attendance? Attitudes towards school? Eating habits at home?]	P
2.	What made you decide to have your child in the program? Does the fact that your school offers a breakfast program influence you to send your children to the school?	P
3.	I want to ask you some questions now about the children who participate in the program. Outside of the breakfast program, what do you know about what the children are eating? What role(s) do you think the program plays in children's eating habits/ nutrition for learning and growing?	NC
4.	To the best of your knowledge, what is the main reason that students participate in the breakfast program?	S

5.	Are some students who should be here not here? Why do you think they don't come?	NC, S
6.	Do you come with your younger or older brothers or sisters? Do you help anyone at the breakfast or lunch program who is younger than you? Does anyone help you to come to the school or the program?	C
7.	Are there some days when you can't attend? How do you feel on those days?	C
8.	Do you have friends who would like to attend but don't? Why do you think they don't?	C
9.	Is there stigmatization (i.e. embarrassment or shame felt by students participating in the program) associated with participating in the program? If yes, please comment on possible reasons why this is happening.	P
10.	What do you think people in general say about parents who sign up their children for the program?	P
Operational:		
1.	I am sure you have thoughts about what the program does well or could do better. Can you tell me what you like about the program? What things would you like to see changed about the program? [PROMPTS: serving portions? Food quality? Food variety? The time? Location of meal service? How the program is administered? Etc.]	NC, S, P
2.	Of all the things you just spoke about, what would you rank as the 3 most important benefits of the program? What are the 3 things most in need of change? [PROMPTS: serving portions? Food quality? Food variety? The time? Location of meal service? How the program is administered? etc]	NC, S
3.	Do you order/buy the food, assist in meal planning or have any other duties in relation to the food program?	S
4.	Tell me 3 things you like about the program? Are there other things you like that you want to tell me about?	C
5.	Tell me 3 things you don't like about the program? Are there other things you don't like about the program that you want to tell me about?	C
6.		
7.	In other parts of Canada, some parents contribute to a portion of the cost of the meal. Do you think some parents can afford to contribute to the cost of the program? Do you think it would be a good idea to ask these parents to contribute to the cost of the program? Has anyone ever talked about this issue within your school before?	NC, S, P
Nutrition coordinator Roles:		
1.	How long have you have you been involved in the breakfast program?	NC
2.	Other than wanting to provide nutritious food for children, do you see any benefits for <u>you</u> to participate in the program? [Skills, friendship, links to other jobs etc.]	NC
3.	Please describe the most difficult part of being involved with the breakfast program in your school.	NC, S
4.	Please describe the most rewarding part of being involved in the breakfast program in your school.	NC, S
5.	Do your own children participate in the program? Why did you decide to become a volunteer for the program? What is your role in the breakfast program?	NC

6.	Do you know the names of the people who work at the program? What are they?	C
7.	Is it a fun thing to do? Would you rather have/breakfast/lunch at home?	C
8.	Kids sometimes talk about different things in the school, like the library or music program or other things---what kinds of things have you heard other kids who go the breakfast/snack program say about it? [PROMPT: good things or bad things? What did you think about what the kids said?]	C
9.	Sometimes kids who don't even go to the program will say things about it. What kinds of things (if any) do other kids who do not eat at the program say about the program? [PROMPT: Positive and Negative things? What did you think about what the kids said?]	C
10.	Based on your interaction with parents in your community, what do you feel is their perception of the breakfast program?	S
	Community Involvement:	
1.	What other food programs or community programs have you been involved in?	NC
2.	How are parents involved in the program? How are you as a parent involved in the program?	P
3.	Have your children taken part in other good food activities in the school? If yes explain.	P
4.	As a family in the neighborhood, are you involved in any other good food program in the community? Explain	P
5.	Have you ever heard of CHEP? What does CHEP do?	P
6.	Community organizations typically contribute to food programs in one or two ways. Donations can either be financial (i.e. monetary contributions), or "in-kind" (i.e. volunteer time, food, utensils or supplies). Which community organizations contribute financially to your school's breakfast program and how much do they contribute? Which community organizations make in-kind donations to your school's breakfast program and what have they donated? [PROMPT: CHEP?]	S
7.	What, if any contributions are made by the school? [in-kind, or monetary]	S
8.	Do funds allocated for "nutrition" get used specifically for the nutrition program, or are they also used for special school events that include food? [hot dog sales, pizza days, community BBQs, etc.]	S
9.	What, if any contributions are made by government agencies? [education, health, etc.]	S
10.	Knowing that community partnerships are limited, what can be done to strengthen existing community linkages with you school?	S
	Volunteer Participation:	
1.	Do students participate in providing the breakfast program? If so, what is their contribution? [food preparation, clean-up, other]	S
2.	Please describe the level of volunteer participation in your school's breakfast program [plenty, just enough, a need for more]	S
	Nutrition coordinator Knowledge, Training & Support:	
1.	On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate the nutrition coordinators' (or your own) knowledge and skill level for providing the breakfast program? Why? How would you rate the volunteers' knowledge and skill level for providing breakfast programs? Why? How would you rate that of school staff? Why?	NC, S, P
2.	In your opinion, what do you perceive as current or future knowledge/ skills that	S

	are needed by the people who work directly with the breakfast and morning snack program?	
3.	What kinds of training have you taken for your work with the breakfast program? [PROMPTS: Food Safe, Healthy Eating/Active Learning, etc]	NC
4.	What other sorts of information or skills do you think would help you / your nutrition coordinator with your / their work in the breakfast program?	NC, S
5.	Are there other kinds of training have you taken that are related to this program? If so, what?	NC
6.	What might make it difficult for nutrition coordinators/volunteers to learn the things they need to know?	NC
7.	How would you describe the role of the community school coordinator in the breakfast program? How would you rate their involvement/understanding/support for the program?	NC
8.	What is your educational background? [school grade finished, 2 yr college, 4 yr college, 4 + yr college, other college/tech program]	NC
9.	In your opinion, what do you perceive as the knowledge/ skills that are still needed by people who work directly with the breakfast and morning snack program?	P

Key:

- NC Nutrition Coordinators and other volunteers
- S Staff (including Principals, Community coordinators, and teachers)
- P Parents
- C Children

APPENDIX B: ETHICS FORMS