

# Deputy Minister's Bulletin

Ministry of Education and Child Care



Feeding Futures & National School Food Program Funding – Instructions to School Districts

April 4, 2025

Through Feeding Futures, the Ministry allocates \$71.5 million per year in dedicated, multi-year funding to school districts to create and expand school food programs. For the 2025/26 school year, Feeding Futures spending criteria will remain flexible so districts can allocate funds to best meet local needs.

In addition, the B.C. Government entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada through the National School Food Program (NSFP), providing approximately \$39 million over three years in additional school food program funding to complement Feeding Futures. Guided by the [National School Food Policy](#), NSFP spending criteria will be flexible to enable districts to spend funding where it is needed most. NSFP funding for the 2024/25 school year will be allocated to districts in April 2025.

District by district allocations and a description of the funding allocation methodology for federal funds are available on the Summary of Grants to Date table for [2025/26 Feeding Futures funding](#) and [2024/25 NSFP funding](#). This funding is being disbursed under section 115(1)(a) of the *School Act* and should be treated as separate Special Purpose Funds on school district financial statements. All 2024/25 NSFP funds should be spent by March 31, 2026, and 2025/26 Feeding Futures funding should be fully spent by June 30, 2026.

## **Feeding Futures 2025/26 Spending Criteria**

### **1. Food:**

- Must be towards the delivery of food programs to feed students who need it most (e.g., maintain current programs, increase number of students served, increase nutrition of food).
- Spending may support food for Culinary Arts programs if the food produced by the program is provided to students in need.
- Program delivery may include the procurement of third-party food service providers and/or expansion of existing contracts.
- Districts are encouraged to make best efforts to align school food programs with the [Feeding Futures Guiding Principles](#).

### **2. Staffing:**

- Within reason, districts have the flexibility to hire up to one School Food Coordinator FTE if needed or offset existing costs to a School Food Coordinator. School Food Coordinator responsibilities may include coordination and/or delivery of programs (e.g., prepare food, build community connections, seek local partnerships and procurement opportunities, work with local First Nations and Indigenous partners).
- Within reason, districts may use a portion of Feeding Futures funding to offset staffing costs for staff directly involved in the delivery of school food programs. For example, this could include offsetting staffing costs for support workers or school administrators when they are directly involved in the delivery of food programs.

### 3. Infrastructure and Equipment:

- Small appliances or equipment to prepare, store, cook, and transport food from a school with a kitchen to another school (e.g., kitchen utensils, insulated containers, microwaves).
- To inquire about the use of Feeding Futures funding on infrastructure projects not specified above, please contact [ECC.schoolfood@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ECC.schoolfood@gov.bc.ca).

### 4. Other:

- Within reason, districts may use discretion to allocate a small portion of Feeding Futures funding towards home food security supports (e.g., grocery store gift cards, food hampers).
- Within reason, districts may use discretion to allocate some Feeding Futures funding towards supporting the provision of snacks for children in StrongStart BC programs, if necessary.

### **National School Food Program 2024/25 Spending Criteria**

- Spending criteria for NSFP funding is the same as the above Feeding Futures spending criteria, apart from the following:
  - Districts may use funds towards major and minor food infrastructure, appliances, or equipment needed to prepare, store, cook, or transport food for programs. Food infrastructure improvements made with NSFP funding must not add square footage to an existing school facility or convert educational classroom space to a kitchen.
  - Districts are encouraged to consider that, when using third parties to deliver school food programs and services, NSFP funding supports programs and services that are delivered predominantly by not-for-profit entities.
  - Federal funding cannot be used to provide school food programs during school holidays, however funding may be spent in advance of the school year if it supports the delivery of school food programs during the school year. For example, districts may use NSFP funding for infrastructure or equipment upgrades during the summer, if the upgrades support the delivery of a food program during the school year. However, districts may not use NSFP funding to provide meals or snacks to students during school holidays such as summer, spring break, or winter holidays.

### **Reporting**

- Year-end financial reporting for 2024/25 Feeding Futures and 2024/25 NSFP funding will be required by July 31, 2025. Unused 2024/25 NSFP funding can be spent in the 2025/26 school year but should be fully spent by March 31, 2026.
- School districts will also be required to return a completed report outlining how 2025/26 Feeding Futures and 2025/26 NSFP funds were spent to the ministry by July 31, 2026.
- A reporting template will be distributed and will ask for information related to spending of Feeding Futures and NSFP funding, including:
  - Number of schools offering school food programs (breakfast, lunch, snacks) and the percentage of students served.
  - A list of schools that received NSFP funding.
  - Utilization of third-party food service providers.
  - Food purchased and provided using district staff.
  - Other goods, services and/or programs to feed students that are within the policy direction.
  - Spending on infrastructure, equipment, or supplies for programs.
  - Spending to provide home food security supports.

- Staffing costs to directly support the provision of food programs.
- Engagement and decision-making processes regarding Feeding Futures funding, including engagement with Indigenous Education Councils (IEC or local equivalent) and how Indigenous students are supported.
- Reporting will be required at the end of the school year, in addition to the reporting in the Annual Budget and audited Financial Statements.

**Summary of Key Dates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Mid-April, 2025</b>	Feeding Futures 2024/25 District Payments (2 of 2) National School Food Program 2024/25 District Payments (1 of 1)
<b>July 31, 2025</b>	Year-end financial reporting for 2024/25 Feeding Futures and National School Food Program funding
<b>Mid-September 2025</b>	Feeding Futures 2025/26 District Payments (1 of 2)
<b>Late November 2025</b>	National School Food Program 2025/26 District Payments (1 of 1)
<b>Mid-April 2026</b>	Feeding Futures 2025/26 District Payments (2 of 2)
<b>July 31, 2026</b>	Year-end financial reporting for spending of 2025/26 Feeding Futures and National School Food Program funding
<b>Mid-September 2026</b>	Feeding Futures 2026/27 District Payments (1 of 2)
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