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For Immediate Release



Niagara school boards sign nutrition program agreement

DSBN and NCDSB recognize value of nutrition in student education

The holiday season became just a little merrier this week with the signing of a very important partnership agreement between the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN), Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) and the Niagara Nutrition Partners (NNP). The agreement formalizes the well-established working relationship between the school boards and NNP. The key goals and objectives present in the agreement include:

- The *DSBN* and *NCDSB* recognize that nutrition programs support healthy child and youth development, can reduce short-term hunger and are valuable assets that can contribute to improved learning.
- Niagara Nutrition Partners is committed to supporting sustainable nutrition programs for all school age children and youth in the Niagara Region through involvement and participation of all community partners, in order to maximize healthy child and youth development.

The important signing took place on Wednesday, December 12th at the shared Kate S. Durdan Public School and Loretto Catholic Elementary School in Niagara Falls. District School Board of Niagara Director of Education, Mr. Warren Hoshizaki and NCDSB Director of Education, Mr. John Crocco, together with Betty-Lou Souter from Community Care St. Catharines (the administrators of NNP) took part in signing this agreement designed to demonstrate each partner's commitment to the ongoing development and sustainability of school nutrition programs.

Only one other region in Ontario (Ottawa) has a similar agreement in place. This agreement strengthens the value and importance placed by all parties involved in student nutrition programs and the agreement further showcases the importance good nutrition can have on student success.

The Niagara Nutrition Partners employs two full-time Community Development Workers (CDWs) who support school programs across the Niagara Region and ensure all government tracking requirements for funding are timely and accurate. The CDWs educate and disseminate Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) guidelines for ideal meals and snacks, as well as support the variety of volunteers required to keep nutrition programs running each week. Niagara Nutrition Partners is led by an Advisory

Committee made up of key players in Niagara student education and wellness as well as the business community.

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Niagara Nutrition Partners (NNP) is a not-for-profit program administered by Community Care St. Catharines-Thorold. The Niagara Nutrition Partners provides Student Nutrition Program support to school-age children across the Niagara Region. Student Nutrition Programs are often referred to as breakfast clubs, however in many schools across Niagara these Programs give children access to breakfast, snacks and even lunch throughout the day. There are currently 205 programs at 135 sites funded in part by the NNP. "Up to 15%" of the total cost of a program is funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, however NNP and each local school program are required to fundraise the remaining 85% of funds required to run these essential programs.

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