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Date: 11/4/2020 4:20:02 PM
Subject: Memo: School Food Program Funding Update
Attachments: ACCS - GM - Memo (Mayor & Council) - School Food Program Funding Update (2020-11-04).pdf

Good Afternoon Mayor and Council,

Attached is a memo from the General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services, Sandra Singh regarding School Food Program Funding Update. Highlights include:

- Background: Since 2015, the City has provided \$320,000 per year to the Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) and ~\$80,000 per year to Strathcona Community Centre Association (CCA) for their school meal programming;
- VBE expenses have increased and meals are estimated to cost \$10.69-15.63 in 2021. Given cost increases, there is a \$60,000 shortfall to provide meals to the same number of students. VBE has committed to addressing that funding shortfall to maintain meal provision. Accordingly, and given budgetary constraints, in the proposed 2021 budget staff have maintained the school food funding allocation and added only the standard 2% inflationary increase;
- VBE staff planned to do public consultation in Q1 and Q2 of 2020 on their food services review. Consultation was not possible due to pandemic response priorities and public gathering restrictions. VBE staff will confirm with trustees whether the process will resume in 2020-21;
- Staff will return to Council with school food grant renewal recommendations in 2021 pending budget approval.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to email Sandra at Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca

Best,
Sadhu

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Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

November 4, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Mary Clare Zak, Managing Director, Social Policy & Projects Division
Sarah Carten, Social Planner, Social Policy & Projects Division
Shannen Zaturecky, Senior Associate, Business Planning & Project Support

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: School Meal Program budget for 2021

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to respond to Council's March 12, 2020 request that staff report back to Council, prior to the 2021 City of Vancouver Budget deliberations, regarding the status and funding requirements of the Vancouver School District's existing food program(s) for the 2021/22 school year (RTS 13801).

BACKGROUND

Since 2015, the City has provided \$320,000 per year to the Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) and ~\$80,000 per year to Strathcona Community Centre Association (CCA) for their school meal programming. Since September 2018, the City has also provided a total of \$116,600 to Fresh Roots Urban Farm Society to pilot a universal lunch and education program. All of the 2020 school food funds, totalling \$459,000, have been allocated.

DISCUSSION

VBE funding: Recommendations for 2021

VBE expenses have increased and meals are estimated to cost \$10.69-15.63 in 2021. Given cost increases, there is a \$60,000 shortfall to provide meals to the same number of students. VBE has committed to addressing that funding shortfall to maintain meal provision. Accordingly,

and given budgetary constraints, in the proposed 2021 budget staff have maintained the school food funding allocation and added a 2% inflationary increase. The inflationary increase will address some of the increase in program expenses and VBE will bridge the rest.

VBE Meal Program Review and School Food Vision

As outlined in the November 2019 memo to Council, VBE commissioned a food services review in 2017 and 2018, which documented key challenges and recommendations for food service. Based on concerns from the Student Learning and Well-being Committee, VBE staff planned to do public consultation in Q1 and Q2 of 2020. Consultation was not possible due to pandemic response priorities and public gathering restrictions. VBE staff will confirm with trustees whether the process will resume in 2020-21.

Previous school food advocacy

The City of Vancouver, along with the Vancouver Board of Education, the BC School Trustees Association, and the Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council, have endorsed the Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF)'s advocacy calling for the development of a universal, cost-shared School Food Program for Canada. This year, the City of Vancouver wrote letters to federal ministers, provincial ministers, and UBCM. School food resolutions were endorsed at UBCM in 2017 and 2019.

The federal budget in 2019 announced the intention to work with provinces and territories towards the creation of a national school food program, though no budget was allocated. In 2019, the province responded to UBCM's school food resolution that they provide \$52.4M to 51 school districts for school food funding, are working to understand the landscape of meal initiatives, and are in conversations with the federal government on their budget announcement. The NDP election platform proposes working with school districts to help create local school meal programs.

FINAL REMARKS

Staff will return to Council with school food grant renewal recommendations in 2021. If there are any further questions or Councillors need additional information, please feel free to contact me directly at sandra.singh@vancouver.ca.



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