

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New School Meal Program Launches in Squamish

Inclusive, Climate-Friendly Meals Coming to 7 Local Schools Through New Partnership

Squamish, BC — Starting September 2025, all students in seven Squamish-area schools will have the opportunity to access nourishing and climate-conscious meals through a school food program led by Squamish CAN (Climate Action Network) in partnership with Sea to Sky School District (SD48). This collaborative program is bolstered by the District of Squamish through a partnership agreement that provides a five year lease to use the 55 Activity Centre Commercial Kitchen and additional support.

The program will reduce barriers to healthy eating by offering universally available meals, regardless of family income or background. The menus will be developed in consultation with students and families, and strive to reflect the community's cultural diversity. Students can enjoy appetizing meals prepared with fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Plant-forward menus, a strong focus on reducing food waste, and supporting regional farmers and producers advance climate action while supporting student health. Sharing food together will continue to foster community and connection at each school.

"Inclusive, universal school meals are about more than just food — they're about dignity, equity, and community," said Krystle tenBrink, Executive Director of Squamish CAN. "We are so happy to see the Provincial Feeding Futures and National School Food Program catalyze these partnerships, strengthening communities' ability to provide healthy meals and strengthen local food systems."

"We are thrilled to partner with Squamish CAN to ensure students in our Squamish schools have access to delicious, nutritious food," said Chris Nicholson, Superintendent of School District No. 48. "This program is a major step forward in supporting student well-being and achievement. We remain committed to providing food programs in all communities served by the district and are excited to grow and enhance these services in the years ahead."

A Call to the Community

To ensure the long-term success of the program, Squamish CAN is inviting community members, local businesses, and farmers to get involved — whether through food donations, volunteer time, or financial support.

We are looking to raise \$50,000 to support purchasing a vehicle for the daily delivery of meals.

"This is a community-powered program," added tenBrink. "If you believe in feeding kids and caring for the planet, we invite you to be part of this movement."

To learn more or contribute, visit www.squamishcan.net

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Additional Statements from Stakeholders:

Lori Pyne, Executive Director of Squamish Helping Hands

"Since 2017, the school meals program has been a very important part of our community-led solutions to create a safe and healthy community for everyone in Squamish," said Lori Pyne, Executive Director of Squamish Helping Hands. "It is with great confidence that we transition operations to Squamish CAN as we know they are committed to an integrated approach founded on environmental integrity and shared responsibility to feed vulnerable children and youth."

District of Squamish Mayor Armand Hurford

"We are proud to be able to assist Squamish CAN in helping to provide nourishing meals to our children across the District. On behalf of Council and District Staff, we send our gratitude to all the staff at Squamish Helping Hands for the work they have done to make the school meals program possible these last eight years, and to Squamish CAN for taking on this important role. It is heartwarming to live in a town where so many community-driven organizations help make Squamish the wonderful place that it is. When community partners come together, anything is possible."

Krystle tenBrink, Executive Director of Squamish CAN

"We're incredibly proud to launch this school meal program in Squamish, which marks a major step toward nourishing both our children and our community. At Squamish CAN, we believe every student deserves access to fresh, healthy food that supports learning, wellness, and equity. This initiative reflects our deep commitment to climate action, local food systems, and the well-being of future generations."