



**Office of the Auditor General  
Prince Edward Island**

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Independent Assurance Report

**Healthiness of Food in Schools**

August 2024



Prince Edward Island

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Auditor General

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Honourable Speaker and  
Members of the Legislative Assembly  
Province of Prince Edward Island

I have the honour of presenting this Report – Healthiness of Food in Schools to the Legislative Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

Darren Noonan, CPA, CA  
Auditor General

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island  
August 30, 2024

# Healthiness of Food in Schools Highlights

## Why we did this audit

- Not having access to enough food, or enough quality foods, to meet a person’s basic needs is considered food insecurity.
- In 2022, approximately 29 percent of all Islanders and 41 percent of Island children under the age of 18 experienced food insecurity, according to Statistics Canada.
- Nutritious foods and beverages can benefit children’s lifelong eating habits and reduce the risk of developing long-term health problems.
- Healthy school food programs can help reduce hunger and increase access to foods for Island students which can improve academic outcomes and achievement, while providing students with the energy they need to thrive.

## Objectives

To determine whether the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française:

- have school nutrition policies that are based on current best practice;
- are adequately monitoring and reporting on healthy eating in schools; and
- schools are complying with school nutrition policies.

## Conclusions

- The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française both have school nutrition policies from 2016 and 2011, respectively, but neither are based on current best practice.
- The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française were not monitoring and reporting on healthy eating in schools.
- Not all schools in the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française were complying with the school nutrition policy of their education authority.

## What we found

School Nutrition Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The Public Schools Branch (PSB) and la Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF) school nutrition policies from 2016 and 2011 are based on outdated versions of Canada’s Food Guide.</li></ul> <hr/> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION (paragraph 25)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Neither the education authorities, nor the schools, have a process to regularly monitor compliance with the school nutrition policies.</li></ul>
Monitoring and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ No action has been taken by the education authorities to address barriers identified in implementing school food programs and policies.</li><li>○ Neither of the education authorities have developed goals and objectives specific to healthy eating in schools. Therefore, they are not able to publicly report on outcomes specific to healthy eating in schools.</li></ul> <hr/> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS (paragraphs 35, 41, 47 &amp; 48)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 95% of the PSB schools and 50% of the CSLF schools in our sample were not compliant with the school nutrition policy of their respective education authority.</li></ul>
Compliance with Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ One school tested in the PSB and both schools tested in the CSLF did not have contracts in place with third-party vendors who operated their cafeterias.</li><li>○ For the PSB, where contracts were in place for cafeteria services offered by third-party vendors, they did not include a requirement to follow the PSB’s school nutrition policy.</li></ul> <hr/> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS (paragraphs 79 &amp; 89)</b></p>

# Points saillants sur la salubrité des aliments dans les écoles

## Pourquoi nous avons effectué cet audit

- Le fait de ne pas avoir accès à suffisamment de nourriture, ou à suffisamment d'aliments de qualité, pour répondre aux besoins fondamentaux d'une personne est considéré comme de l'insécurité alimentaire.
- En 2022, environ 29 % de tous les Insulaires et 41 % des enfants de l'Île âgés de moins de 18 ans ont connu l'insécurité alimentaire, selon Statistique Canada.
- Des aliments et des boissons nutritifs peuvent être bénéfiques pour les habitudes alimentaires des enfants tout au long de leur vie et réduire le risque de développer des problèmes de santé à long terme.
- Les programmes d'alimentation scolaire saine peuvent contribuer à réduire la faim et à améliorer l'accès aux aliments pour les élèves de l'Île, ce qui peut améliorer les résultats scolaires et la réussite, tout en fournissant aux élèves l'énergie dont ils ont besoin pour s'épanouir.

## Objectifs

Déterminer si la Direction des écoles publiques de langue anglaise et la Commission scolaire de langue française :

- ont des politiques scolaires de nutrition fondées sur les meilleures pratiques actuelles;
- surveillent l'alimentation saine dans les écoles et en rendent compte de manière adéquate; et
- ont des écoles qui se conforment aux politiques scolaires de nutrition.

## Conclusions

- La Direction des écoles publiques de langue anglaise et la Commission scolaire de langue française ont toutes deux des politiques de nutrition scolaire datant respectivement de 2016 et de 2011, mais aucune n'est basée sur les meilleures pratiques actuelles.
- La Direction des écoles publiques de langue anglaise et la Commission scolaire de langue française ne surveillaient pas l'alimentation saine dans les écoles et n'en rendaient pas compte.
- Ce ne sont pas toutes les écoles de la Direction des écoles publiques de langue anglaise et de la Commission scolaire de langue française qui respectaient la politique scolaire de nutrition de leur autorité scolaire.

## Nos constats

Politiques scolaires de nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Les politiques scolaires de nutrition de la Direction des écoles publiques de langue anglaise (DEPLA) et de la Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF) de 2016 et 2011 sont basées sur des versions obsolètes du Guide alimentaire canadien.</li></ul> <b>RECOMMANDATION (paragraphe 25)</b>
Surveillance et rapports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ni les autorités scolaires ni les écoles ne disposent d'un processus permettant de surveiller régulièrement le respect des politiques scolaires de nutrition.</li><li>○ Aucune mesure n'a été prise par les autorités scolaires pour lever les obstacles identifiés dans la mise en œuvre des programmes et politiques alimentaires scolaires.</li><li>○ Aucune des autorités scolaires n'a défini de buts et d'objectifs spécifiques en matière d'alimentation saine dans les écoles. Elles ne sont donc pas en mesure de rendre compte publiquement des résultats spécifiques à l'alimentation saine dans les écoles.</li></ul> <b>RECOMMANDATIONS (paragraphe 35, 41, 47 et 48)</b>
Conformité à la politique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 95 % des écoles de la DEPLA et 50 % des écoles de la CSLF de notre échantillon ne respectaient pas la politique scolaire de nutrition de leur autorité scolaire respective.</li><li>○ Une école testée à la DEPLA et les deux écoles testées à la CSLF n'avaient pas de contrats en place avec les fournisseurs tiers qui géraient leurs cafétérias.</li><li>○ Pour la DEPLA, lorsque des contrats étaient en place pour des services de cafétéria offerts par des fournisseurs tiers, ils n'incluaient pas l'obligation de suivre la politique scolaire de nutrition de la DEPLA.</li></ul> <b>RECOMMANDATIONS (paragraphe 79 et 89)</b>

# Healthiness of Food In Schools

## Why it's important

According to Statistics Canada, in 2022 Prince Edward Island had the second highest rate of food insecurity in the country. At that time, approximately 29 percent of all Islanders and 41 percent of Island children under the age of 18 experienced food insecurity.

Statistics Canada data also shows that in 2021, 26.1 percent of Island youth aged 12 to 17 years old were overweight or obese. Insufficient access to affordable, nutritious foods increases the risks of both food insecurity and childhood obesity.

The Public Health Agency of Canada identified that child and youth obesity rates have almost tripled in the last 30 years, putting children and youth at a higher risk of developing many health problems, such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. These issues can persist into adulthood making prevention increasingly important.

Schools play an important role in providing and promoting healthy food choices and behaviors. Students spend a significant part of their day in school, and therefore a significant portion of their daily food and beverage intake is consumed at school. Providing access to free or affordable healthy food and beverage choices can help improve access to nutritious foods and enhance dietary behaviors, health outcomes, lifelong eating habits, and academics.

## BACKGROUND

1. Canada is one of the few industrialized countries which does not currently have a national school food program. School food programs are important to provide students with access to nutritious foods they may not receive at home. In 2022, the Government of Canada held a series of discussion groups to hear perspectives and experiences from Canadians and stakeholders, such as school communities and health organizations, to help inform design options for a national school food program. An article released by Employment and Social Development Canada in 2022, noted that school food programs exist in some form in all provinces and territories; however, they are only reaching approximately 21 percent of children.
2. In the April 2024 Federal budget the Prime Minister announced a new National School Food Program. The announcement states that, “with an investment of \$1 billion over five years, the Program, included in Budget 2024, will launch with a target of providing meals to 400,000 more kids every year, beyond those served by existing school food programs.”
3. In June 2024, the Federal Government released a National School Food Policy which outlines the vision, principles and objectives in implementing the National School Food Program. The program is intended to grow upon existing school food programs in the various provinces, communities and schools, and provide additional resources to expand

the reach of the programs, with support beginning as early as the 2024-25 school year.

4. The Department of Education and Early Years (the Department) develops and delivers programs and curriculum in English and French to Island children from birth to Grade 12. The Department is responsible for the development and administration of various acts, including the *Education Act* and regulations.
5. The *Education Act* (the Act) states that the Minister of Education and Early Years is responsible for providing education services through the Department and the education authorities. The Act identifies two education

authorities in the province, the French Language School Board, also known as la Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF), and the Public Schools Branch (PSB). The education authorities oversee 62 public schools in Prince Edward Island, providing education to over 21,000 students.

6. The Act states that the education authorities are responsible for establishing and maintaining governance and organizational structures that promote student well-being and success. **Exhibit 1** outlines the responsibilities of organizations and individuals relating to the administration of policies such as the policy on nutrition in schools.

**EXHIBIT 1**  
**POLICY ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

Individual or Organization	Area of Responsibility
Minister of Education and Early Years	Ensures the provision of education services through the Department and education authorities.
Education Authorities The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française	Administer the French and English school systems for the Province.
Board of Trustees of each education authority	Conduct the affairs of each education authority including the approval of policies such as the policy on nutrition in schools.
Director of each education authority	Operate the schools in each education authority and communicate policies such as the policy on nutrition in schools.
Principals	Day-to-day operations of each individual school complying with policies such as the policy on nutrition in schools.

Source: Adapted from the *Education Act* and the policies of each education authority.

7. Schools in Prince Edward Island offer a variety of food programs including

- cafeteria services offered by PEI School Food Program Inc. (PEISFP);
- cafeteria services offered by other third-party vendors;
- lunches ordered from other food service providers;
- breakfast programs; and
- snack programs.

8. The number and type of food programs offered varies from school to school. We

issued a survey to school administrators<sup>1</sup> of the PSB and inquired with school administrators of the CSLF to identify what food programs were offered in each school. A summary of the responses can be found in **Appendix E** and **Appendix F**.

9. **Exhibit 2** provides a breakdown of the total number of schools offering the various food programs. The number of days each week these programs were offered varied from school to school. There are currently 56 schools in the PSB and 6 schools in the CSLF.

**EXHIBIT 2  
FOOD PROGRAMS OFFERED**

	Public Schools Branch	Commission scolaire de langue française	Total	% of Schools <sup>1</sup>
Lunch option offered/funded by PEISFP ( <i>pay-what-you-can</i> )	56	6	62	100%
Cafeteria services offered by PEISFP <sup>2</sup> ( <i>pay-what-you-can</i> )	5	0	5	8%
Cafeteria services offered by other third-party vendors ( <i>at a cost</i> )	15	5	20	32%
Lunches ordered from other food service providers (pizza, subs, etc.) ( <i>at a cost</i> )	23	0	23	37%
Breakfast programs ( <i>free of charge</i> ) <sup>3</sup>	55	5	60	97%
Snack programs ( <i>free of charge</i> ) <sup>3</sup>	32	3	35	56%

1 Percentage of schools offering the program out of a total of 62 schools (56 in the PSB and 6 in the CSLF).

2 The schools with cafeteria services offered by PEISFP are also included in the total schools with a lunch option offered/funded by PEISFP.

3 These programs are funded by the Department of Education and Early Years with any shortfalls covered by donations or grants from other organizations.

Source: Data compiled from Government of Prince Edward Island website and school surveys

<sup>1</sup> During our school visits, school administrators included principals, vice principals, administrative assistants and individuals responsible for facilitating breakfast and snack programs.

10. The PEISFP is a not-for-profit organization that delivers a “pay-what-you-can” lunch program to all Island students, grades Kindergarten to grade 12. This program allows families and students to choose the amount they can pay for these meals, with any shortfall funded by the PEISFP.
11. Students in the 56 PSB schools, and two schools in the CSLF can order their meals through PEISFP’s website. The cafeteria’s run by PEISFP at five PSB schools offer students the same menu options available online, as well as various Grab N’ Go options. The remaining four schools in the CSLF provide their own pay-what-you-can lunch option, which is approved and funded by PEISFP.
12. The mission of the PEISFP is to cultivate a healthy and inclusive food culture in Island schools with goals to grow student participation in healthy school food programs in schools across the Island; and become the primary food service model in public schools.
13. The concept for PEISFP, a provincial lunch program, was initiated at the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the PEI Home and School Federation (PEIHSF), an umbrella organization of local home and school and parent council organizations across the Island. Members adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a provincial school lunch program for all Island children, that adheres to the school nutrition policies and regulations. See **Appendix D** for a timeline of events leading up to the establishment of a provincial school lunch program, after the resolution was adopted.

## AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

14. The objectives of this audit were to determine whether:
  - the Public Schools Branch has school nutrition policies that are based on current best practice;
  - la Commission scolaire de langue française has school nutrition policies that are based on current best practice;
  - the Public Schools Branch is adequately monitoring and reporting on healthy eating in schools;
  - la Commission scolaire de langue française is adequately monitoring and reporting on healthy eating in schools;
  - schools in the Public Schools Branch are complying with school nutrition policies; and
  - schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française are complying with school nutrition policies.
15. This report summarizes the results of our audit work for the scope period of the 2023-24 school year.
16. This report includes **7 recommendations** for both the PSB and the CSLF which are listed in **Appendix A**. Details on the audit standards, objective and scope are included in **Appendix B**, and the audit criteria are included in **Appendix C**. The following sections of our report provide information on the observations, related recommendations and conclusions from our audit.



## SCHOOL NUTRITION POLICIES

### *Summary of Findings*

17. The PSB and the CSLF have school nutrition policies dated 2016 and 2011, respectively. These policies are not based on the most recent version of *Canada's Food Guide* published in 2019.

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### Policies on nutrition in schools

18. Both the PSB and the CSLF have developed their own policy to help establish healthy school food environments. The PSB *Nutrition in Schools* policy and operational procedures were approved in 2016, with no revisions as of the end of the 2023-24 school year. The CSLF's *School Food and Nutrition* policy became effective in 2006 and was last revised in 2011.

19. The PSB's policy states its purpose is to guide personnel in creating healthy school environments which encourage students, staff, and parents/guardians to make healthy food and beverage choices in order to support learning and success. The policy indicates that the PSB will mandate schools to encourage and maintain supportive environments, which promote healthy food choices, both in the foods available at school and through educational programs.

20. The CSLF policy states its purpose is to raise awareness of the importance of nutrition for

student health and well-being, and healthy eating habits. The policy indicates that the school board recognizes the role schools play in healthy eating habits, and states that management and staff must improve access to healthy foods, and encourage schools to provide a healthy food environment.

### *Policies not in accordance with best practice*

21. In 2019, Health Canada released an updated version of *Canada's Food Guide* (the food guide). This was the first update since the 2007 *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (See **Exhibit 3**). The most recent version of the food guide includes updates such as:

- combining the meat and alternatives food group with milk and milk products into a "new" category called protein foods;
- encouraging fruits and vegetables to compose half of an individual's diet; and
- emphasizing the consumption of whole grains and plant-based protein foods.

**EXHIBIT 3**  
**SNAPSHOT OF CANADA’S FOOD GUIDES FROM 2019 (ABOVE) AND 2007 (BELOW)**



Recommended Number of Food Guide Servings per Day								What is One Food Guide Serving? Look at the examples below.							
Age in Years	Children			Teens		Adults									
	2-3	4-8	9-13	14-18	19-50	51+									
Sex	Girls and Boys		Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males							
<b>Vegetables and Fruit</b>	4	5	6	7	8	7-8	8-10	7	7						
<b>Grain Products</b>	3	4	6	6	7	6-7	8	6	7						
<b>Milk and Alternatives</b>	2	2	3-4	3-4	3-4	2	2	3	3						
<b>Meat and Alternatives</b>	1	1	1-2	2	3	2	3	2	3						

The chart above shows how many Food Guide Servings you need from each of the four food groups every day.

Source: Canada’s Food Guide 2019 and 2007

22. We expected the nutrition policy for both the PSB and the CSLF to be based on the 2019 version of *Canada’s Food Guide*, as this was the most up-to-date guidance provided by Health Canada at the time of our audit.

2007 version of *Canada’s Food Guide*, while the CSLF’s policy references the 1992 version of *Canada’s Food Guide*. Therefore, the policies for both education authorities do not reflect the most up-to-date standards in what is considered healthy foods.

23. We found that both the PSB’s and the CSLF’s nutrition policies were outdated and not based on the most recent version of *Canada’s Food Guide*. The PSB’s policy referenced the

24. In 2019, new school food environment guidelines were drafted; however, the Department informed us that due to the

COVID-19 pandemic and a shift in priorities, these draft guidelines have not been finalized or implemented.

PSB and the CSLF both require food and beverages offered in schools to adhere to these guides.

### Recommendation

**25. The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should update their school nutrition policy to reflect current best practice.**

## MONITORING AND REPORTING

### *Summary of Findings*

26. Neither the education authorities, nor the individual schools, have processes to regularly monitor whether the food and beverages offered to students comply with school nutrition policies.

27. Although many barriers to implementing the school nutrition policies and school food programs were identified, no action had been taken by the education authorities to address the issues.

28. The education authorities do not have goals or objectives specific to their school nutrition policy or school food programs. Therefore, they are unable to publicly report on the outcomes of healthy eating in schools.

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### Monitoring

29. As noted, the PSB and the CSLF each have their own school nutrition policy for schools to follow. Food choices guides have been developed by each education authority and include listings of what food and beverages can be offered in schools. The policies of the

### *Lack of monitoring by education authorities*

30. We expected each education authority to have a process to monitor whether schools were complying with school nutrition policies. We found that neither the PSB nor the CSLF had a process to monitor individual schools' compliance with their school nutrition policies.

31. It is important for education authorities to be aware of issues with compliance, to ensure that their policies are meeting the intended purpose, and that students are being offered healthy food and beverage choices.

### *Lack of monitoring by schools*

32. We expected principals to have a process to monitor whether food and beverages offered in their schools were complying with the school nutrition policy of their education authority. For the PSB, we selected a sample of 21 schools from the total of 56 schools. For the CSLF, we selected a sample of two schools from the total of six schools. We visited all schools in our sample and spoke with school administrators regarding policy awareness and monitoring.

33. For the schools in our sample, we inquired with school administrators on whether a monitoring process existed and if there was any documentation to support a formal monitoring process. None of the schools in our sample had formal monitoring processes to assess compliance with their applicable school nutrition policy.

34. Without formal monitoring processes, it is difficult for schools to assess whether the food and beverage options being offered to students comply with the school nutrition policy.

#### **Recommendation**

**35. The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française, in conjunction with schools within their education authority, should regularly monitor whether food and beverages offered comply with their respective school nutrition policy.**

#### **Identifying and Addressing Barriers**

36. We were advised by the management of both education authorities, and administrators of the schools in our sample, that they faced many barriers when trying to implement and monitor the school nutrition policies. These barriers included:

- the lack of expertise and/or access to a nutritionist with the knowledge to implement and enforce the policy;
- rising food costs and limited funding making it difficult to offer healthy food choices;
- the lack of staff, or volunteer support, to operate school food programs, such as breakfast and snack programs; and
- the competing priorities of school administrators limits the resources available to monitor compliance with the nutrition policy.

37. Another concern noted was with the lack of funding to purchase and repair equipment such as refrigerators, freezers, and dishwashers. School budgets are not always

sufficient to cover repair or replacement costs for equipment, leaving school administrators having to fundraise or use funds budgeted for other things when these expenses arise. Managing these situations also takes time away from completing their other duties.

#### *Barriers identified not addressed*

38. School administrators of the PSB and the CSLF noted various steps they take to try to address the barriers, specifically related to the cost of foods, such as purchasing items on sale, applying for funding through various programs and seeking community donations. Even when these steps are taken, they indicated it is still difficult to completely mitigate the barriers and offer only food and beverages to students that comply with the school nutrition policy of their education authority.

39. We expected that through monitoring processes and discussions with schools, the education authorities would be aware of the barriers schools face in implementing school food programs that comply with their school nutrition policies. We also expected that they would provide support to help schools overcome these barriers.

40. We found that although the PSB and the CSLF were aware of the barriers faced by individual schools, no action had been taken by the education authorities to address the issues. The authorities informed us that they also face the issue of having limited resources to help fund school food programs or staff positions to help administer the programs.

## Recommendation

**41. The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française, in conjunction with the Department, should work with schools to address the barriers faced by schools in implementing school food programs that comply with school nutrition policies.**

## Reporting

42. We expected the education authorities to identify goals and objectives specific to healthy eating in schools. Using those goals and objectives, we expected the education authorities to assess the impact of school food programs and their school nutrition policies, and to report on the outcomes relating to healthy eating in schools.

### *Goals and objectives not identified*

43. We reviewed the strategic plans for each education authority available at the time of our audit, and interviewed senior personnel for each education authority, to determine if there are any goals and objectives relating to healthy eating in schools. We found the PSB and the CSLF have not created goals and objectives specific to healthy eating in schools.

44. Goals and objectives would help education authorities set expectations for school food programs and their policies. When goals and objectives are made and appropriate measures are set, education authorities could monitor results, identify strengths and weaknesses, and determine where improvements need to be made to help provide healthier food to children.

45. We expected the education authorities to report publicly on whether school food programs and their school nutrition policies were achieving expected results. The lack of goals and objectives make it difficult to assess the impact of school food programs and policies, and to report on the outcomes relating to healthy eating in schools. Additionally, there was no requirement for schools to report to the PSB or the CSLF on compliance with school nutrition policies, making it difficult for the education authorities to assess the outcomes relating to their policy.

### *No reporting on healthy eating initiatives*

46. We reviewed the 2022-23 annual reports, the most recent reports available at the time of our audit fieldwork, and the websites of each education authority, for evidence of public reporting of healthy eating in schools. Neither education authority reported on the outcomes of whether school food programs offered complied with school nutrition policies. Publicly reporting on outcomes relating to health eating ensures accountability to the public, and transparency on whether programs and policies are achieving expected results.

## Recommendations

**47. The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should develop goals and objectives specific to healthy eating in schools.**

**48. The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should publicly report on the outcomes of healthy eating in schools.**

## COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

### *Summary of Findings*

49. Most of the schools in our sample were not compliant with the school nutrition policy of their respective education authority, based on food and beverage choices being offered more often than allowed by policy.

50. For the PSB, non-compliance was found in:

- four of six schools offering cafeteria services;
- five of eight schools offering foods ordered from other food service providers;
- twelve of 20 breakfast programs;
- nine of ten snack programs; and
- eight of ten vending machines and canteens.

51. Food and beverages offered through PEISFP were compliant with school nutrition policies.

52. For the CSLF, one of two schools in our sample was not compliant with school nutrition policies based on foods offered through cafeteria services, breakfast and snack programs.

53. For the PSB, of the six schools in our sample offering cafeteria services, five were operated by third-party vendors and one was operated

by the school. For the cafeterias operated by third-party vendors, we found:

- one of the schools did not have a contract with their current food service provider;
- for two of the schools with contracts, the contract did not indicate the requirement to comply with the PSB's school nutrition policy; and
- the contract for the remaining two schools for the 2023-24 school year was not signed until June 2024. This contract included a requirement to follow PEISFP's guidelines rather than the PSB's school nutrition policy.

54. There were no contracts with food service providers for the two CSLF schools in our sample with cafeterias.

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### Assessing compliance

55. The PSB's and the CSLF's school nutrition guide to food choices separates common foods into four categories. See **Exhibit 4** for a summary of the categories in each education authority's guide to food choices.



**EXHIBIT 4**  
**SUMMARY OF CATEGORIES IN GUIDE TO FOOD CHOICES**

<b>Public Schools Branch – Guide to Food Choices<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Commission scolaire de langue française – Food Choices Guide<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Foods to Serve Most Often</b> Serve these foods daily	<b>Foods to Serve Often</b> Serve these foods often or even daily
<b>Examples of foods to serve daily: whole grain or whole wheat products, fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, milk (2% milk fat or less)</b>	
<b>Foods to Serve Sometimes</b> Serve these foods no more than 2x per week	<b>Foods to Serve from Time to Time</b> Serve these foods 2-3x per week
<b>Examples of foods to serve sometimes/from time to time: white bread products, cereal bars, canned fruits and vegetables, milk based puddings</b>	
<b>Foods to Serve Least Often</b> Serve these foods no more than 2x per month	<b>Foods to Serve Rarely</b> Serve these foods 1-2x per month, or less
<b>Examples of foods to serve least often/rarely: commercially prepared muffins and cookies, fried vegetables, ice cream, pepperoni pizza, chips, chocolate bars</b>	
<b>Healthier Vending Machine and Canteen Foods</b> These foods can be offered through vending machines and school canteens	<b>Healthy Foods for Vending Machine and Canteen Foods</b> These foods can be offered through vending machines and school canteens
<b>Examples of foods to offer in vending machines and canteens: milk (2% milk fat or less), water, applesauce, rice cakes, pretzels</b>	

1 PSB's Guide to Food can be found at [https://psb.edu.pe.ca/sites/test-psb.edu.pe.ca/files/2022-05/Guide\\_to\\_Food\\_Choices.pdf](https://psb.edu.pe.ca/sites/test-psb.edu.pe.ca/files/2022-05/Guide_to_Food_Choices.pdf).

2 CSLF's Food Choices Guide can be found at <https://cslf.edu.pe.ca/sites/cslf.edu.pe.ca/files/Les%20politiques/gc389n-310.pdf>.

Source: Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française school nutrition policies

56. To assess whether schools complied with the school nutrition policy of their respective education authority, we selected a sample of schools and reviewed the food and beverages offered in these schools. Although not based on current best practice, we used the current policy within each education authority to perform our audit work.

57. We reviewed the food and beverages offered at the schools in our sample and compared them to the applicable food choices guides to determine whether the items offered, and the frequency of which they were offered, was in

accordance with the guides. We assessed compliance with the school nutrition policies for the food and beverages offered through:

- school cafeterias;
- PEI School Food Program Inc. lunch program;
- lunches ordered from other food service providers;
- breakfast and snack programs; and
- vending machines and canteens.

58. We did not assess the nutrition information (i.e. serving size, grams of fat, sugar, fibre, etc.) of food and beverages offered.

### Public Schools Branch – Compliance

59. The following sections outline areas of non-compliance found during our testing for the food and beverage options available at the Public Schools Branch schools in our sample.

60. Overall, we found that 20 of 21 schools in our sample were not compliant with the PSB’s school nutrition policy. Nineteen schools were non-compliant in one or more of the food programs offered, and one school was non-compliant when considering the frequency of foods offered from all programs combined. See **Appendix G** for the summary of compliance for the schools in our sample.

*Not all cafeterias in compliance with policy*

61. Six of the 21 schools in our sample provided cafeteria services. Five of the six cafeterias were operated by third-party vendors, two of which were PEISFP. The other cafeteria was operated by the school.

62. None of the schools with cafeteria services, other than those operated by PEISFP, were compliant with the PSB’s *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices*. These schools offered a daily lunch special, as well as a standard daily menu which included items that should not be served daily according to the guide. See **Exhibit 5** for an example of a menu from a school visited, where students were offered a lunch special, with other alternatives offered daily.

### EXHIBIT 5 EXAMPLE OF A SCHOOL CAFETERIA MENU



\*At this school there were daily specials offered (shown on left) as well as other items offered daily (shown on right)  
Source: Photo taken during a school visit on November 22, 2023.



63. We reviewed the PEISFP’s fall menu (September through December 2023) taken from PEISFP’s website, as well as the Grab N’ Go options offered daily by PEISFP and the schools in our sample during our school visits. We noted that all PEISFP options were compliant with the PSB’s *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices*. As shown in **Exhibit 6**, some of the Grab N’ Go options available at one of the schools visited during our audit included salads, sandwiches and yogurt parfaits.

**EXHIBIT 6**  
**EXAMPLE OF GRAB N’ GO OPTIONS**



Source: Photo taken during school visit on November 27, 2023.

*Not all lunches ordered from other food service providers were in compliance with policy*

64. Eight of the 21 schools in our sample offered lunch options ordered from other food service providers. Of these eight schools, five offered options which were not compliant with the PSB’s *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices* because students had the option to order food items more frequently than allowed by policy.

*Many breakfast and snack programs not in compliance with policy*

65. For the breakfast and snack programs, we reviewed lists of food items offered and looked at the inventory of items available to students through these programs during our school visits.

66. All 21 schools in our sample offered a breakfast program. One breakfast program did not have breakfast items available during our visit. We were informed the items offered by this school varied daily depending on the availability of volunteers to run the programs. Therefore, compliance could not be evaluated.

67. Twelve of the remaining 20 breakfast programs we examined were not in compliance with the PSB’s *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices* because they offered some food items more frequently than allowed.

68. Eleven of the 21 schools in our sample offered a snack program. One school in our sample offered a snack program three times a week and the items offered varied daily. This school did not have items on hand during our visit, so compliance could not be evaluated.

69. Nine of the remaining 10 snack programs we examined were not in compliance with the PSB’s *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices* because they offered some food items more frequently than allowed. As shown in **Exhibit 7**, some of the snacks available for students at one of the schools visited during our audit included cereal bars, pudding, bearpaws and fruit cups.

**EXHIBIT 7**  
**EXAMPLE OF SNACKS AVAILABLE**



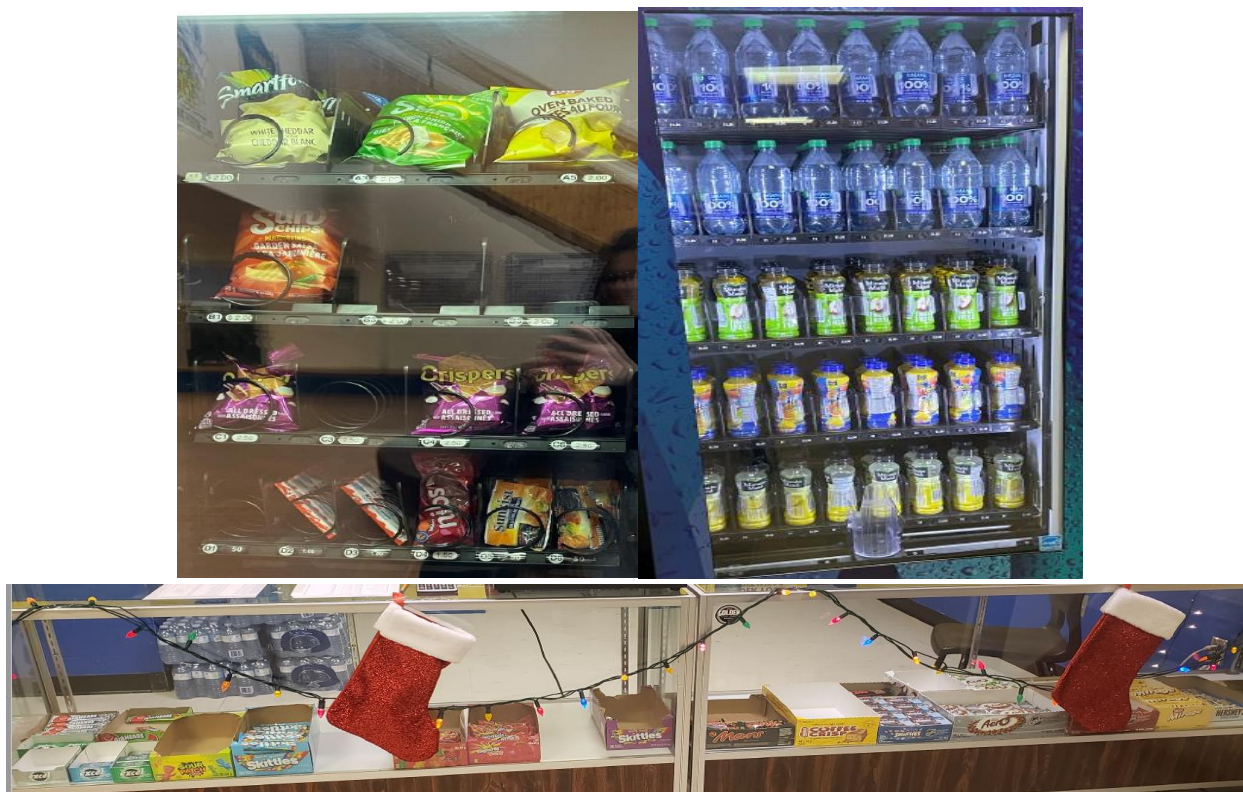
Source: Photo taken during school visit on November 22, 2023.

*Many vending machine and canteen options not in compliance with policy*

70. Ten of the 21 schools in our sample had vending machines or canteens. The food and beverages available were assessed against the PSB's *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices* Healthier Vending Machine and Canteen Foods listing.

71. Eight of the ten schools with vending machines or canteens were not in compliance with the PSB's *Nutrition in Schools Guide to Food Choices* because they offered food and beverages which were not permitted based on the vending machine and canteens listings. As shown in **Exhibit 8**, some of the vending machine and canteen options available to students during our school visits included sunchips, crispers, lemonade, candy and chocolate bars.

**EXHIBIT 8**  
**EXAMPLES OF VENDING MACHINE AND CANTEEN OPTIONS**



Source: Photos taken during school visits November 7, 2023 (top left photo) and November 27, 2023 (top right). Photo submitted November 27, 2023 (bottom).

***La Commission scolaire de langue française – compliance***

72. The following sections outline areas of non-compliance found during our testing for the food and beverage options available at la Commission scolaire de langue française schools in our sample.

73. Overall, we found that one of the two CSLF schools sampled was not compliant with the school nutrition policy based on the assessment of cafeteria services, breakfast and snack programs. See **Appendix H** for the summary of compliance for schools in our sample.

*Not all cafeteria foods in compliance with policy*

74. Both schools in our sample provided cafeteria services that were operated by a third-party vendor. The schools offered a pay-what-you-can daily lunch option; these lunch options were funded and approved by PEISFP. One of the schools in our sample also offered other menu items, that did not get reviewed by the PEISFP. This school was not in compliance with the CSLF's *School Food and Nutrition* policy because desserts were offered more frequently than allowed by policy.

*Breakfast and snack program in one school not in compliance with policy*

75. Both schools in our sample offered a breakfast program and one of the two schools also offered a snack program. We reviewed food items offered through the breakfast and snack programs. One of the two breakfast programs was not compliant with the CSLF's *School Food and Nutrition* policy based on some food items being offered more frequently than allowed. The snack program, at this school was also not compliant with policy as items were offered more frequently than allowed.

*Vending machine options were compliant with policy*

76. One of the CSLF schools in our sample had a vending machine which offered beverages only. The beverages offered in the vending machine were compliant with the CSLF's *School Food and Nutrition* policy.
77. The schools in our sample for the CSLF did not offer canteen services or food or beverages ordered from other food service providers.
78. Policies around nutrition in schools are important to set clear expectations and hold schools accountable to those expectations. Complying with policy helps to ensure schools are offering healthy food and beverages to students, which can influence the academic performance of students and influence their future eating habits.

#### **Recommendation**

**79. Schools in the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should ensure food and beverages offered in schools comply with the school nutrition policy and food choices guide.**

#### ***Public Schools Branch – Contracts***

##### *Issues identified with contracts*

80. Five of the 21 PSB schools in our sample had cafeterias operated by a third-party vendor and one cafeteria that was run by the school. We expected there to be contracts with the third-party vendors that included terms and conditions requiring compliance with the PSB's school nutrition policy.
81. We found that one of the five schools in our sample did not have a contract with their food service provider. The food services provided at this school were based on a verbal agreement.
82. PEISFP operated two of the cafeterias in our sample. There was a joint contract with the PEISFP, the Department of Social Development and Seniors, and the two education authorities for the 2022-23 school year which expired June 2023. The contract for the 2023-24 school year was not finalized until June 2024, at the end of the school year.
83. The contract indicates that all meals provided by PEISFP must meet the nutrition criteria in PEISFP's guidelines, but it does not indicate the requirement to follow the PSB's school nutrition policy. The PEISFP's guidelines are based on the most recent *Canada's Food Guide*, making them more up to date than the the PSB's current policy. Based on our testing,



no issues were found with the foods offered to students by the PEISFP.

84. For the remaining two schools in our sample, the PSB held the contract with a third-party vendor who operated the cafeterias. The contract indicated that the vendor had the responsibility to plan menus combining “high standards of nutrition and appetizing goodness”, but it does not indicate the requirement to comply with the PSB’s school nutrition policy.
85. It is especially important for the contracts with these third-party vendors to include the requirement to comply with school nutrition policies given they are profit driven entities and most likely offer foods to students that will sell, not necessarily providing the healthiest options.

*No contracts in place with other food service providers*

86. For the schools in our sample which ordered lunches from other food service providers, there were no contracts with these vendors. Contracts with food service providers would formalize an agreement on pricing and availability, and set expectations for food quality.

***La Commission scolaire de langue française – contracts***

87. Two schools in our CSLF sample offered cafeteria services. Neither of the schools in our sample had contracts with their food service provider for cafeteria services. The schools in our sample did not order foods from other food service providers.

88. Up-to-date contracts, which include terms and conditions requiring compliance with school nutrition policy, help to ensure that parties understand and agree to their responsibilities. It is important to make food service providers aware of the policy and formalize the requirement to follow the policy to ensure students are offered nutritious food and beverage options.

**Recommendation**

**89. Schools in the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should have up-to-date contracts with food service providers, which include appropriate terms and conditions requiring compliance with their school nutrition policy.**

CONCLUSIONS

90. The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française have school nutrition policies from 2016 and 2011 respectively; however, those policies are not based on current best practice.
91. We found that neither the education authorities, nor the schools, were adequately monitoring whether food and beverages offered comply with school nutrition policies. With the lack of monitoring and no clear goals and objectives specific to healthy eating, the education authorities were not reporting on outcomes relating to healthy eating in schools.
92. Many barriers were noted by both education authorities relating to the implementation and monitoring of school food programs and policies; however, steps had not been taken to address those barriers.

93. For the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française schools included in our sample, we found that not all schools complied with the school nutrition policy of their education authority as some food and beverage choices were offered more frequently than allowed by policy.
94. For the Public Schools Branch, up-to-date contracts were not in place with third-party food service providers that included appropriate terms and conditions requiring compliance with school nutrition policy.
95. For la Commission scolaire de langue française, contracts were not in place with third-party food service providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS*	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p><b>Recommendation 25</b> The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should update their school nutrition policy to reflect current best practice.</p>	<p><b>Public Schools Branch</b> The Public Schools Branch will commit to continue working with the Department of Education on this policy. <b>Timeline: The PSB will engage the Department of Education and continue collaboration of this work – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Commission scolaire de langue française</b> La CSLF reconnaît que sa politique GÉN-310 intitulée <i>Alimentation et nutrition en milieu scolaire</i> ne reflète pas la plus récente itération du Guide alimentaire canadien. Dans un souci d’assurer la cohérence d’une autorité éducative à l’autre et en l’absence d’une ressource compétente en nutrition, la CSLF s’engage à consulter avec ses partenaires en éducation afin de remplacer la politique désuète. <b>Timeline: 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</b> The CSLF acknowledges that its GÉN-310 policy, titled <i>Alimentation et nutrition en milieu scolaire</i>, does not reflect the latest version of <i>Canada’s Food Guide</i>. In order to ensure consistency from one education authority to another, and in the absence of a nutrition expert, the CSLF agrees to consulting with its education partners to replace the outdated policy.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 35</b> The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française, in conjunction with schools within their education authority, should regularly monitor whether food and beverages offered comply with their respective school nutrition policy.</p>	<p><b>Public Schools Branch</b> Following recommendation 25, the Public Schools Branch will commit to working with the Department of Education and Schools to begin consultation on their food and beverage offerings. <b>Timeline: The PSB will engage the Department of Education and schools to begin collaboration of this work – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Commission scolaire de langue française</b> La CSLF accepte que les ressources actuelles n’ont pas le temps ou les compétences nécessaires pour assurer la conformité des aliments et des boissons avec la politique en vigueur sur une base régulière. Tout en réitérant que ses écoles font partie de centres scolaires-communautaires don’t le fonctionnement déborde de celui d’une école autonome, la CSLF s’engage à collaborer avec ses partenaires en éducation pour développer des outils qui assureront un meilleur suivi des aliments et des boissons disponibles aux élèves. <b>Timeline: 2025</b></p> <p><b>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</b> The CSLF agrees that the current personnel resources do not have the time nor the necessary skills to ensure that food and beverages offered comply with the current policy on a regular basis. While reiterating that its schools are housed in school-community centres, whose operations go beyond those of stand-alone schools, the CSLF agrees to collaborate with its partners in education to develop tools that will ensure better monitoring of food and beverages available to students.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS*	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p><b>Recommendation 41</b> The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française, in conjunction with the Department, should work with schools to address the barriers faced by schools in implementing school food programs that comply with school nutrition policies.</p>	<p><b>Public Schools Branch</b> The Public Schools Branch commits to consulting with schools and collaboratively working with/advocate to the Department of Education and Government for funding/resources to address barriers. <b>Timeline: The PSB will engage the Department of Education and schools to begin collaboration of this work – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Commission scolaire de langue française</b> La CSLF, s’engage à collaborer avec ses partenaires en éducation pour déterminer les barrières à chacun des programmes et de revendiquer pour les ressources nécessaires auprès des parties prenantes appropriées. <b>Timeline: 2025-2026</b></p> <p><b>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</b> The CSLF agrees to collaborate with its partners in education to identify the barriers associated with each program, and to advocate for the necessary resources with the appropriate stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 47</b> The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should develop goals and objectives specific to healthy eating in schools.</p>	<p><b>Public Schools Branch</b> The Public Schools Branch acknowledges this recommendation and commits to engaging in consultation with the Department of Education and schools around goals and objectives specific to healthy eating. <b>Timeline: The PSB will engage the Department of Education and schools to begin collaboration of this work – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Commission scolaire de langue française</b> Reconnaissant que les services d’alimentation disponibles à l’école constituent un choix pour les élèves, la CSLF s’engage à collaborer avec ses partenaires en éducation pour développer des buts et des objectifs réalistes en matière d’alimentation saine. <b>Timeline: 2025-2026</b></p> <p><b>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</b> Recognizing that food services available at school represent an option for students, the CSLF agrees to collaborating with its partners in education to develop realistic healthy eating goals and objectives.</p>



RECOMMENDATIONS*	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p><b>Recommendation 48</b> The Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should publicly report on the outcomes of healthy eating in schools.</p>	<p><b>Public Schools Branch</b> The Public Schools Branch acknowledges this recommendation and will take measures to address Public Reporting. <b>Timeline: The PSB will engage the Board of Trustees in consultation with Public Reporting – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Commission scolaire de langue française</b> Reconnaissant que les services d’alimentation disponibles à l’école constituent un choix pour les élèves, la CSLF s’engage à discuter des enjeux de cette recommandation avec ses partenaires en éducation pour déterminer les résultats sur lesquels la CSLF pourrait rapporter, sans déborder de son mandat et sans reprendre des études qui existent déjà. <b>Timeline: 2025-2026</b></p> <p><b>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</b> Recognizing that food services available at school represent an option for students, the CSLF agrees to discuss the issues raised by this recommendation with its partners in education to determine the outcomes on which it could report, without going beyond its mandate or duplicating studies.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 79</b> Schools in the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should ensure food and beverages offered in schools comply with the school nutrition policy and food choices guide.</p>	<p><b>Public Schools Branch</b> The Public Schools Branch will commit to working with the Department of Education and Schools to begin consultation on their food and beverage offerings. <b>Timeline: The PSB will engage the Department of Education and schools to begin collaboration of this work – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><b>Commission scolaire de langue française</b> La CSLF est d’avis que ses engagements à la recommandation 35 assureront également la mise en oeuvre de cette recommandation. <b>Timeline: 2025-2026</b></p> <p><b>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</b> The CSLF believes that commitments made under recommendation 35 will also ensure the implementation of this recommendation.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS*	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p><b>Recommendation 89</b> Schools in the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française should have up-to-date contracts with food service providers, which include appropriate terms and conditions requiring compliance with their school nutrition policy.</p>	<p><u>Public Schools Branch</u> The Public Schools Branch commits to working with schools to have up to date contracts in place for third party cafeteria providers. <b>Timeline: Up to date contracts with Third Party Cafeteria Providers – 2024-2025</b></p> <p><u>Commission scolaire de langue française</u> Le service d'alimentation disponible dans les écoles de la CSLF est offert par l'un ou l'autre des partenaires du centre scolaire communautaire. Ces partenaires ont une entente en place avec le PEISFP et les repas servis sont approuvés par les diététiciennes de l'organisme. La CSLF a une entente avec les volets communautaires et préscolaires et elle s'engage à y intégrer une clause relative au respect de ses politiques relatives à la nutrition. <b>Timeline: 2024-2025</b></p> <p><u>Translated - Commission scolaire de langue française</u> The food services available in CSLF schools are offered by one of the school-community centre's partners. These partners have an agreement in place with the PEISFP, and the meals served are approved by the organization's dieticians. The CSLF has an agreement with the community and preschool components and agrees to include a clause on compliance with its nutrition policies.</p>

\*Recommendation numbers refer to the paragraph numbers

## **AUDIT STANDARDS, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

### **STANDARDS**

This independent assurance report was prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Prince Edward Island. Our responsibility was to provide objective information and independently conclude on whether the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française complies in all significant respects with the applicable criteria.

Work conducted for this audit was performed to a reasonable level of assurance in accordance with the Canadian Standards on Assurance Engagements (CSAE) 3001 - Direct Engagements set out by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA Canada) in the CPA Canada Handbook - Assurance.

The Office of the Auditor General of Prince Edward Island applies the Canadian Standard on Quality Management which requires our office to design, implement and operate a system of quality management, including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards, and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

In conducting the audit work, we have complied with independence and other ethical requirements of the Rules of Professional Conduct of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Prince Edward Island and the Code of Conduct of the Office of the Auditor General of Prince Edward Island. Both the Rules of Professional Conduct and our Office's Code of Conduct are founded on fundamental principles of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the audit were to determine whether:

- the Public Schools Branch has school nutrition policies that are based on current best practice;
- la Commission scolaire de langue française has school nutrition policies that are based on current best practice;
- the Public Schools Branch is adequately monitoring and reporting on healthy eating in schools;
- la Commission scolaire de langue française is adequately monitoring and reporting on healthy eating in schools;
- schools in the Public Schools Branch are complying with school nutrition policies; and
- schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française are complying with school nutrition policies.

We developed criteria, from policy and best practice, to assess whether the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française met the objective. These criteria are listed in **Appendix C**.

In accordance with our regular audit process, we obtained the following from management of both the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française:

- confirmations of management's responsibility for the subject matter;
- acknowledgment of the suitability of the criteria used in the audit;

- confirmation that all known information that has been requested, or that could affect the findings or audit conclusion, has been provided; and
- confirmation that the audit report is factually accurate.

#### SCOPE AND APPROACH

The scope of our audit was for the 2023-24 school year and included analysis and testing of records for both the Public Schools Branch (PSB) and la Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF). The results of our sample testing were based on school visits in October/November 2023. We examined documentation outside of that period as necessary. Our scope included all food and beverages offered in schools within the PSB and CSLF, with the exception of food and beverages identified during our school visits as being donated to the school (ie. from local churches, local farmers, etc.).

Our approach included:

- interviews and correspondence with management and staff of the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française, including administration and staff of schools;
- review of school nutrition policies in both the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française;
- review of best practice documents; and
- sampling of 21 schools in the Public Schools Branch and two schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française to review foods offered.

There was no review of the request for proposal process for cafeteria services in schools or for foods ordered from other food service providers. Although we reviewed the menu of the PEI School Food Program Inc. as part of our audit testing, we did not assess its operations.

It is important to note that our observations and conclusions relate only to the management practices of the Public Schools Branch and la Commission scolaire de langue française and consequently, our comments and conclusions do not pertain to the practices or performance of any third parties.

#### DATE OF REPORT

We obtained sufficient and appropriate audit evidence on which to base our conclusions on August 27, 2024, in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

#### AUDIT TEAM

Auditor General:	Darren Noonan	
Assistant Auditors General:	Jennifer Bowness	Sheri Griffin
Director:	Julianna Chiu	
Managers:	Jenna Dominey	Tim Cook
Auditors:	Katie Widdifield	Kaitlyn Lord

<b>Audit Criteria – Objective #1</b>
1. The Public Schools Branch has developed a school nutrition policy.
2. The school nutrition policy is based on current best practice.
<b>Audit Criteria – Objective #2</b>
1. La Commission scolaire de langue française has developed a school nutrition policy.
2. The school nutrition policy is based on current best practice.
<b>Audit Criteria – Objective #3</b>
1. The Public Schools Branch has a process to monitor whether foods offered in school comply with school nutrition policies.
2. The Public Schools Branch identifies and addresses barriers to implementing school food programs and policies.
3. The Public Schools Branch is publicly reporting on the outcomes related to healthy eating in schools.
<b>Audit Criteria – Objective #4</b>
1. La Commission scolaire de langue française has a process to monitor whether foods offered in school comply with school nutrition policies.
2. La Commission scolaire de langue française identifies and addresses barriers to implementing school food programs and policies.
3. La Commission scolaire de langue française is publicly reporting on the outcomes related to healthy eating in schools.
<b>Audit Criteria – Objective #5</b>
1. Food and beverages offered in schools in the Public Schools Branch comply with school nutrition policies.
2. Schools in the Public Schools Branch have contracts with third-party food service providers which include appropriate terms and conditions requiring compliance with school nutrition policies.
3. Schools in the Public Schools Branch have a process to monitor whether foods offered by food service providers comply with school nutrition policies.
<b>Audit Criteria – Objective #6</b>
1. Food and beverages offered in schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française comply with school nutrition policies.
2. Schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française have contracts with third-party food service providers which include appropriate terms and conditions requiring compliance with school nutrition policies.
3. Schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française have a process to monitor whether foods offered by food service providers comply with school nutrition policies.

**Establishment of Provincial School Food Program****June 2016**

PEIHSF hired a consultant to review the current school food environment of the Public Schools Branch, looking at foods served in schools and the nutritional quality of foods in comparison to school nutrition policy.

**January 2017**

Report released by consultant showed none of the schools assessed adhered to the school nutrition policy.

**Late 2018**

PSB initiated School Food Think Tank projects to discuss ideas to improve foods in Island schools and aid in the development of a new school food program.

**October 2019**

The development and implementation of a provincial school food program was included as a priority in the Ministerial mandate letter from the Premier to the Minister of Education and Early Years (formerly Department of Education and Lifelong Learning).

**Throughout 2019 & 2020**

Pilot projects launched to determine what the new school lunch program would look like.

**September 2020**

The PEI School Food Program became available for students Island-wide, delivered through the Department.

**July 2021**

The PEI School Food Program became a non-profit organization, operated by PEI School Food Program Inc.

Source: Adapted from timelines of the PEI Home and School Federation and PEI School Food Program Inc.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS BRANCH  
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS\*  
FOOD PROGRAMS OFFERED BY SCHOOL (YES – Y OR NO – N)

School	Cafeteria Services	PEI School Food Program Inc.	Breakfast Program	Snack Program	Vending Machine/ Canteens	Other Food Service Providers
Alberton Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Amherst Cove Consolidated	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Athena Consolidated	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Belfast Consolidated	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Birchwood Intermediate <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Bloomfield Elementary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Bluefield High	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Cardigan Consolidated <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Central Queens Elementary	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Charlottetown Rural High	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Colonel Gray High	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Donagh Regional	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
East Wiltshire Intermediate	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Eliot River Elementary	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Ellerslie Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Elm Street Elementary	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Englewood <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Georgetown Elementary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Glen Stewart Primary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Greenfield Elementary	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Gulf Shore Consolidated <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y

\*This appendix compiles the responses received from schools in the Public Schools Branch.

<sup>1</sup> School included in our sample – summary of compliance at **Appendix G**.

School	Cafeteria Services	PEI School Food Program Inc.	Breakfast Program	Snack Program	Vending Machine/ Canteens	Other Food Service Providers
Hernewood Intermediate	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Kensington Intermediate Senior High <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Kinkora Regional High	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
L.M. Montgomery Elementary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
M.E. Callaghan Intermediate	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Miscouche Consolidated <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Montague Consolidated	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Montague Intermediate <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Montague Regional High	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Morell Consolidated	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Morell Regional High <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Mount Stewart Consolidated	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
O'Leary Elementary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Parkdale Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Parkside Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Prince Street Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Queen Charlotte Intermediate	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Queen Elizabeth Elementary	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Sherwood Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Somerset Consolidated	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Souris Regional <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Southern Kings Consolidated <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Spring Park Elementary	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
St. Jean Elementary	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
St. Louis Elementary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Stonepark Intermediate <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N

<sup>1</sup> School included in our sample – summary of compliance at Appendix G.



School	Cafeteria Services	PEI School Food Program Inc.	Breakfast Program	Snack Program	Vending Machine/ Canteens	Other Food Service Providers
Stratford Elementary	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Summerside Intermediate	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Three Oaks Senior High	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Tignish Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Vernon River Consolidated	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
West Kent Elementary	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
West Royalty Elementary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Westisle Composite High <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Westwood Primary <sup>1</sup>	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y

<sup>1</sup> School included in our sample – summary of compliance at Appendix G.

**LA COMMISSION SCOLAIRE DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE**  
**SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS\***  
**FOOD PROGRAMS OFFERED BY SCHOOL (YES - Y OR NO - N)**

School	Cafeteria Services	PEI School Food Program Inc.	Breakfast Program	Snack Program	Vending Machine/ Canteens	Other Food Service Providers
École Évangéline	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
École François-Buote <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y <sup>2</sup>	Y	N	Y	N
École La-Belle-Cloche	Y	Y <sup>2</sup>	Y	Y	N	N
École Pierre-Chiasson <sup>1</sup>	Y	Y <sup>2</sup>	Y	N	N	N
École Saint-Augustin	N	Y	N	N	N	N
École-sur-Mer	Y	Y <sup>2</sup>	Y	Y	N	N

\*This appendix compiles the responses received from schools in la Commission scolaire de langue française.

1 School included in our sample – summary of compliance at **Appendix H**.

2 PEI School Food Program Inc. funded and approved a pay-what-you-can menu option offered at these schools.

**RESULTS OF SAMPLE TESTING - PUBLIC SCHOOLS BRANCH  
SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE BY SCHOOL**

School	Cafeteria Services	PEI School Food Program Inc.	Breakfast Program	Snack Program	Vending Machine/Canteens	Other Food Service Providers	Overall Compliance
Parkdale Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Cardigan Consolidated	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Miscouche Consolidated	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Montague Intermediate	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Southern Kings Consolidated	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Sherwood Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗
West Royalty Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗	✗
Tignish Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗	✓	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Englewood School	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Parkside Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Prince Street Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Alberton Elementary <sup>3</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Gulf Shore Consolidated	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✗
Ellerslie Elementary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓
Westwood Primary	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗	✗
Kensington Intermediate Senior High	✗	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Stonepark Intermediate	✗	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Westisle Composite High	✓	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Souris Regional	✓	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Birchwood Intermediate	✗	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✓	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗
Morell Regional High School	✗	✓	✗	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	✗

1 N/A – Not applicable as program not offered at school.

2 N/A – Not applicable as program does have a set menu offered, and standard items offered were not available during our site visit. Therefore, compliance could not be evaluated.

3 Although applicable programs were compliant on their own, when food options offered were combined, they no longer complied with the policy, as items were available too frequently.

**RESULTS OF SAMPLE TESTING – LA COMMISSION SCOLAIRE DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE  
SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE BY SCHOOL**

School	Cafeteria Services	PEI School Food Program Inc. <sup>1</sup>	Breakfast Program	Snack Program	Vending Machine/ Canteens	Other Food Service Providers	Overall Compliance
École Pierre-Chiasson	✓	✓	✓	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>	✓
École François-Buote	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	N/A <sup>2</sup>	✗

<sup>1</sup> PEI School Food Program Inc. funded and approved a pay-what-you-can menu option offered at these schools.

<sup>2</sup> N/A-not applicable as program not offered at school.

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