Integrating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Resource Manual for Nunavut School Food Program

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A portfolio submitted in partial requirement for the degree of Master of Education in Education for Change, Faculty of Education, Lakehead University

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Acknowledgement

I extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Kristin Burnett, for continually challenging and strengthening my writing and research. Her guidance, patience, and commitment to excellence have pushed me to think more critically and grow as both a researcher and educator. I am also deeply thankful to Dr. Paul Berger for serving as a member of my committee and for his timely and thoughtful feedback throughout this process. His deep knowledge of Inuit culture and education has been an invaluable addition to this work, strengthening its relevance and grounding it in meaningful context.

I would like to acknowledge my parents, Rodrigo, and Lani, for always encouraging me to dream big. Because of their love and sacrifices, I have been privileged to experience opportunities that no one else in our bloodline has had, including being the first to teach in Nunavut. They sacrificed so much, leaving the Philippines, and starting over again in Canada, so that my brother, Aieen, and I could have a brighter future. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities their courage has given me. Opportunities that would not have been possible in Sitio Cabicalan.

I also wish to acknowledge the Elders and Inuit educators at our school, Susie, Matt, Pits, Connie, Lucy, Tuqqaasi and Micheala, who have guided, mentored, and shared their knowledge of Inuit culture with me. From the bottom of my heart, Qujannamiik, Mat'na, Nakurmiik, Quana, Salamat po. Agyamanak! Your wisdom has been invaluable, especially as I navigated my role as a new Food Program Coordinator and completed this portfolio. Nakurmiik as well to Maxine, your decades of experience doing breakfast program is extraordinary and your leadership and support has helped me so much. And to Lindsay, Quana for sharing your lived experiences with the school food program in Baker Lake and for your ideas, feedback, and friendship. Finally, to my students, Qujannamiik for making my teaching experience in Nunavut truly unforgettable. I am so lucky!

This master's journey, and everything I do, is for my bloodline and my ancestors: Agdeppa, Fusilero, Flores, Felipe, and Villanueva. Para sa inyo ito. I hope to honour your legacy by showing that Ilocanos can achieve greatness.

To my support system in Winnipeg, maraming salamat for your constant encouragement. Agyamanak kadagiti amin a suporta. To my Tatang and Inang, thank you for nurturing my curiosity and love for learning. To my manang Yana, thank you for giving me the strength and extra push to move up North. To my best friend, Joleen, who is always just one text away, Merci! I am deeply appreciative of Mina and Truffle for their constant companionship, and to my nephew, Aizen Gale, you are my inspiration.

Most importantly, thank you to Ryan for all that you do to make life easier. Mahal kita.

Abstract

This portfolio examines school food programs at Inuksuk High School in Iqaluit as a case study for addressing food insecurity and advancing Inuit food sovereignty through culturally grounded education. Drawing on experience as a school food coordinator, it analyzes breakfast, lunch, Grab and Go, and in-school food bank programs to identify best practices, barriers, and scalable solutions rooted in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ). The guiding question asks how Nunavut schools can address food insecurity while supporting food sovereignty through student-centered programs. This question frames a 120-page resource that includes a literature review, program mapping across Nunavut communities, and a Nunavut School Food Program Resource Manual. The manual outlines standards and expectations, policies, the Inuit Calendar Year, health protocols, implementation challenges, recipe ideas, and funding strategies.

Situated within Nunavut's 46.6 percent household food insecurity rate, the portfolio contextualizes current challenges within the ongoing impacts of colonial disruption to Inuit food systems. It contrasts Canada's Food Guide with the culturally grounded Nunavut Food Guide, emphasizing country foods such as caribou and seal. The integration of IQ is highlighted through Elders' knowledge, harvesting practices, and intergenerational learning, alongside persistent barriers including climate-related constraints and infrastructure gaps.

School food programs are positioned as critical sites for improving nutrition, strengthening attendance, and supporting cultural continuity, aligning with national policy directions such as the National School Food Program. The resource manual offers practical, adaptable tools for educators while prioritizing community self-determination, nutritional equity, and resilience.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This portfolio explores the role school food programs at Inuksuk High School play in addressing food insecurity, including supporting food sovereignty through culturally relevant food programs, infrastructure development, and community self-determination. By looking at Inuksuk High School's food programs, which include a breakfast program, a lunch program, a Grab & Go fridge, and an in-school food bank, this portfolio aims to highlight effective strategies and persistent barriers and insights into scalable and sustainable solutions grounded in Inuit knowledge. The portfolio includes a literature review, a mapping of existing school food programs in Nunavut communities, and finally a resource manual based on my experiences as the school food coordinator and food and nutrition teacher from January 2025 to May, 2026. The resource manual illuminates best practices, policies, expectations, health and safety protocols, challenges, and potential funding sources. The guiding question of the portfolio is: how can schools in Nunavut address food insecurity and support food sovereignty through student-centred food programs?

The Government of Nunavut's Department of Education expects educators to deliver programming that reflects Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) values (Government of Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). Schools in Nunavut are increasingly integrating IQ values, or Inuit traditional knowledge, into their food education efforts. These efforts include involving Elders in meal planning, teaching traditional food preparation methods, and hosting/supporting community-based harvesting activities (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2021). Such programs not only build food literacy but also build community and strengthen students' connections to their culture. Mallon (2016) reveals that intergenerational learning through food is essential for passing on survival skills and stories tied to the land. Despite these strengths, the implementation of culturally relevant food programs is limited by barriers such as climate-

induced scarcity of traditional foods, school infrastructure gaps, geography, funding, and wildlife management regulations (Ford et al., 2012a).

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2021) supports the belief that breakfast, and lunch programs are essential for ensuring student well-being in Inuit communities. Providing school meals reduces food and income stress for Indigenous households with children by increasing the daily meals available to families. Findings from a systematic review suggest a positive correlation between school food program participation and improvements in academic achievement, school attendance, and behavioral outcomes (Wall et al., 2022). Ultimately, food programs are important mechanisms for ensuring adequate nutrient intake among Inuit children and improving health and well-being more broadly.

To understand the context of school food programs in Nunavut, I briefly outline the histories of food in the Arctic, including the deep cultural significance of inuksiuit (country food). I start with the impact of colonialism on Inuit food systems, including the introduction of market-based foods, and how institutions such as the state, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and later the North West Company (NWC) contributed to food insecurity. Government policies, Inuit-led strategies, and education frameworks are then explored to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities for Nunavut school food programs. Specifically, I explore how current national, territorial, and local school food policies and practices align (or fail to align) with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles, local food sovereignty goals, and broader efforts toward self-determination in education. My analysis considers themes such as cultural relevance in school meals, community participation in program design, and the challenges of implementing sustainable food programs in remote Arctic contexts. Ultimately, the portfolio explores the role those educational institutions can play in advancing nutritional equity and Inuit self-determination through locally controlled food-centered learning and governance.

I use the school food program I am currently running at Inuksuk High School in Iqaluit as a case study to explore the broader challenges of food insecurity in the region by documenting best practices, amplifying community voices, and identifying opportunities for policy change and infrastructure development. Central to the project was the creation of a practitioner's resource manual grounded in IQ principles and food sovereignty. This practical resource can be used by Nunavut educators and communities to help initiate school food programs that may support local food systems, celebrate Inuit traditions, and promote the long-term health and well-being of students.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Food Insecurity and Food Sovereignty

The United Nations World Food Programme (2025) defines food insecurity as "lack of regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life." It includes inadequate quantity, quality, or diversity of food and identifies moderate to severe food insecurity levels. Food insecurity remains a critical and ongoing challenge in Canada's North, including Nunavut, where the prevalence of food-insecure households, predominantly those with children, far exceeds the national average. Food insecurity remains a major issue in Nunavut and directly shapes the need for school food programming. Recent analyses based on Statistics Canada data estimate that about 58% of people in Nunavut live in food-insecure households, the highest rate in Canada and well above the national average of roughly 20–25% (Leblanc-Laurendeau, 2025)

Martin (2014) highlights that food insecurity in northern Indigenous communities is complex and interconnected with social, economic, cultural and environmental factors. Food insecurity in Nunavut is rooted in historical and structural inequities, including the colonial disruption of Inuit foodways, climate change, limited infrastructure, and high food costs due to geographic remoteness. These factors have made food insecurity a significant public health issue, linked to higher rates of acute myocardial infarction mortality, obesity, and other risk factors for heart disease (Martin, 2014). Additionally, Nunavut faces elevated rates of mental health problems including suicide, depression, and substance abuse, all of which have become barriers to educational success (Martin, 2014).

While food security emphasizes access to sufficient and nutritious food at the household level, food sovereignty prioritizes the right of communities to determine their own food systems, including what foods are grown, harvested, prepared, and consumed, particularly in culturally

meaningful ways (Morrison, 2011). Martin (2014) illustrates the relationship between food security and food sovereignty in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Food Sovereignty and Food Security in Northern Indigenous Communities (Martin, 2024)

The wheel represents the complex interplay between factors that affect northern Indigenous communities, and how food security and food sovereignty emerge from their relationships (Martin, 2014). Indigenous food sovereignty in Canada is best understood as a living, relational practice that exceeds narrow definitions of food access or policy reform alone. Daigle (2017) argues it is rooted in Indigenous law, authority, and everyday acts of governance

and stewardship, arising from relationships among land, people, and food rather than a universal formula. Robin et al. (2023) show that Indigenous food sovereignty confronts ongoing colonial exclusion in state policy, while Indigenous leaders assert self-determination by prioritizing land access, community-driven food systems, and the revitalization of traditional knowledge. Ray et al. (2019) frame food sovereignty as a holistic health and justice framework, highlighting its power to connect cultural identity, health equity, and collective resilience for Indigenous peoples. Settee and Shukla (2020) emphasize that food systems are inseparable from Indigenous autonomy, spirituality, and social responsibility, and that food sovereignty is a pathway for cultural resurgence, healing, and the renewal of ethical relationships to land and each other. Collectively, these works argue that Indigenous food sovereignty is a dynamic process of reclaiming decision-making, restoring land-based practices, and building futures rooted in Indigenous values and worldviews.

Food security focuses on ensuring that people at the household level have enough to eat, whereas food sovereignty goes further by asserting the right of communities or territories to control how food is produced, distributed, and consumed (Food Secure Canada, n.d; Nyeleni, 2007). Food sovereignty includes food security but also addresses issues of power, sustainability, governance, and culture. It is the right of people to nutritious and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. Food sovereignty emphasizes Indigenous peoples' rights to define their own food systems, including production, distribution, and consumption in ways that respect cultural traditions and ecological balance (Wittman et al., 2010). For Inuit communities, food sovereignty entails revitalizing land-based food systems and incorporating traditional knowledge into contemporary food practices (Ruetz et al., 2023).

Harvesting, sharing, and preparing food are vital ways for communities to teach governance, responsibility, and interdependence as everyone has roles in decision-making, distribution, and stewardship (Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2019). Youth learn to respect the land and contribute to group well-being and uphold obligations to Elders and the community. These roles are tied directly to Inuit laws and IQ, where everyday acts of sharing teach leadership and reciprocity. Using food systems is crucial for collective identity, transmitting knowledge, and maintaining governance structures grounded in IQ.

Differing Nutritional Guidelines

Nutrition guidance functions as a critical public health instrument, shaping dietary behaviours that promote health, environmental sustainability, and social well-being. Yet, the values, priorities, and knowledge systems underpinning national food guides vary widely across cultural and geographic contexts. The Canada Food Guide (CFG) (Figure 2) offers a standardized, science-based framework for healthy eating at the national level, whereas the Nunavut Food Guide (NFG) (Figure 3) and Nunavik Food Guide (Figure 4) integrate Inuit cultural knowledge, local ecological realities, and principles of self-determination.

The CFG is based on a biomedical paradigm that supposedly emphasizes nutrient adequacy, variety, and moderation. The CFG's visual plate model (Figure 2) encourages the consumption of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and plant-based proteins while discouraging processed and high-sodium foods (Health Canada, 2019). The primary goal of the CFG is to reduce chronic disease risk through evidence-based dietary recommendations. However, the CFG's universal framework has been criticized for overlooking cultural and regional differences, particularly within northern and Indigenous communities (Power, 2021). Contrast it with the NFG (Figure 3) that reflects Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit values such as respect,

interdependence, and environmental stewardship (Government of Nunavut [GN], 2011). The NFG prioritizes country foods, including caribou, seal, Arctic char, and berries, which are nutrient-dense and central to Inuit identity (Egeland et al., 2015). The guide emphasizes not only nutrition but also cultural continuity and the relationship between people, food, and land.

Figure 2

Canada Food Guide (Canada, 2025)

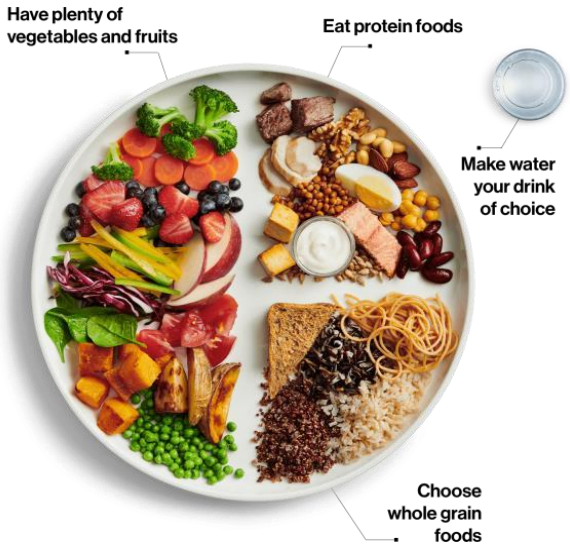
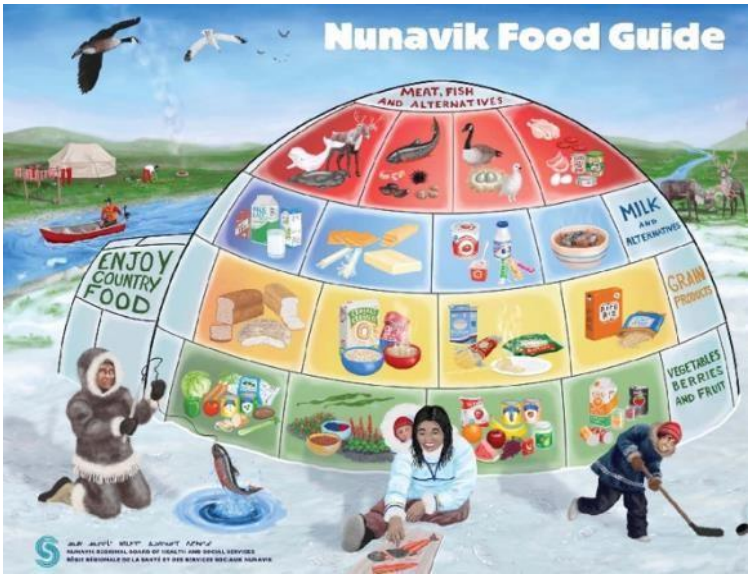


Figure 3

Nunavut Food Guide (GN, 2011)

Figure 4

Nunavik Food Guide (Nunavik Regional Services, n.d.)



The NFG framework is reinforced by the Nunavut Food Security Coalition (NFSC), a multi-partner initiative advocating for food systems that ensure community wellness, sustainability, and sovereignty (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2023). The NFSC defines food security as "physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and culturally preferred food," linking nutrition with social justice and ecological resilience. This is akin to the framework of Ray et al. (2019) and Settee and Shukla (2020) as food sovereignty linked to cultural identity, and holistic health. Importantly, the NFG aligns with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), which guarantees Inuit rights to manage land, wildlife, and resources (Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, 1993). Through its emphasis on harvesting, sharing, and environmental stewardship, the NFG operationalizes the NLCA's principles, translating treaty rights into public health practice. While the CFG's universality suggests that it is more accessible, it risks cultural disconnect and erasure. Earlier versions of the CFG were influenced by agricultural and industry lobbying, shaping what was presented as nutritional "truth" (Power, 2021). These political influences highlight how "evidence-based" standards are often mediated by economic and institutional interests. In contrast, the NFG represents local interests and demonstrates that community-driven, culturally specific frameworks can integrate scientific and traditional evidence to support health and food sovereignty in northern contexts.

Globally, food guides differ dramatically in philosophy, structure, and purpose. The Brazilian Dietary Guidelines (2014) is a good example of culturally embedded nutrition policy. Rather than organizing foods by portions and nutrients, it emphasizes food processing levels and the social context of eating, encouraging minimally processed foods and communal meal practice while discouraging ultra-processed products (Ministry of Health of Brazil, 2014). It also connects diet to environmental sustainability and social justice, recognizing that food choices are shaped by social, cultural, and political systems (Monteiro et al., 2015). Similarly, Japan's

Spinning Top Food Guide (2005) integrates traditional dietary habits with physical activity and social well-being. It promotes balance, moderation, and enjoyment, presenting food not only as sustenance but as an essential component of cultural identity and social harmony (Ministry of Health, Labour & Welfare, 2005). In contrast, the United States' MyPlate and Canada's CFG represent standardized, nutrient-focused models that emphasize universality, homogeneity and visual simplicity. The CFG is a cultural reflection of European-Canadian culture; such frameworks risk oversimplifying complex food environments and erasing cultural diversity. For example, CFG's plant-based emphasis does not suit northern populations whose traditional food system relies on foods harvested from the land, with limited access to fresh produce.

Although national food guides often claim to be "evidence-based," the concept of evidence in nutrition policy is not neutral. It typically favours Western biomedical models while marginalizing ecological, cultural, and traditional knowledge systems (Jaffe & Gertler, 2019). Earlier versions of Canada's guide were shaped by industry lobbying (particularly from meat and dairy producers), while the U.S. Dietary Guidelines have long reflected agricultural interests (Nestle, 2013). These influences reveal how nutrition policy is shaped by political economy as much as by science. Moreover, standardized guides often ignore structural determinants of health including poverty, colonial histories, food insecurity, and geographic isolation that shape actual dietary behavior (Loring & Gerlach, 2015). As a result, guidance presented as "universal" may have limited applicability for marginalized or Indigenous populations. Contextualized models, such as the NFG challenge this universalism by grounding health in local evidence and lived experience.

There is a growing global shift towards sustainability-centered nutrition policy. Brazil's guide explicitly connects dietary choices to planetary health and the social consequences of industrial food systems (Monteiro et al., 2015). The Nordic countries' frameworks similarly link

healthy diets to environmental responsibility and resource efficiency (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2023). In Nunavut, sustainability is expressed through respect for land, responsible harvesting, and intergenerational transmission of knowledge and values embedded in the NFG and NFSC initiatives (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2023). These examples illustrate how effective dietary guidance must integrate health promotion, environmental stewardship, and cultural relevance. A healthy, equitable nutrition framework must balance scientific evidence with cultural and ecological realities, ensuring that food guidance supports both human and planetary health.

The comparative analysis of national and global food guides reveals an ongoing tension between standardization and cultural specificity. While the CFG provides a sound, science-based framework, it risks marginalizing regional and Indigenous knowledge systems. The *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis* (Health Canada, 2007) was the first national effort to create culturally relevant dietary guidance for Indigenous peoples. However, its release came more than sixty years after Canada's first food guide in 1942, reflecting a long delay in acknowledging Indigenous food traditions. Now nearly twenty years old, the guide has not been updated to align with current Indigenous food realities or the 2019 revision of Canada's Food Guide. The NFG embodies a model of culturally grounded food sovereignty, integrating sustainability, culture, and equity that transforms nutrition guidance into a more holistic and just public health instrument. The evolution of food guides worldwide thus suggests a critical paradigm shift: from universal, nutrient-based prescriptions toward context-sensitive, sustainability-oriented nutrition policy.

School Food Programs to Fight Food Insecurity

Studies show that schools are uniquely positioned to address food insecurity while supporting food sovereignty through educational programs, local food procurement, and infrastructure investments (Ruetz et al., 2023). In the Arctic, Inuit communities have long practiced land-based harvesting and food sharing (Bennett, 2004), and school programs that integrate traditional knowledge, inuksiuit (country food), and community involvement, particularly Elders and hunters in program design and implementation, contribute to more sovereign food systems. Currently, there are some Nunavut-made breakfast program guides developed by the Government of Nunavut Department of Health; however, there are no resource guides on school lunch programs that school food coordinators can use to support lunch programming. This project is unique as it is completed during the implementation of Canada's National School Food Program, which the Federal government has pledged to make permanent starting with $1 billion in funding until 2029 — $7.6 million of which is allocated for Nunavut (Government of Canada, 2024a).

School and community food programs in Nunavut function within a complex food ecosystem, where traditional harvesting practices intersect with contemporary nutrition interventions. These programs reflect both the challenges of northern food insecurity and the potential for culturally grounded, community-driven solutions. At the federal policy level, StGermain et al. (2019) provide a thorough analysis of Nutrition North Canada (NNC), a subsidy program intended to reduce retail food prices in remote communities. Their analysis found that "food insecurity rates in the territories remain among the highest in Canada" with no significant decline following the program's implementation (p. 3). The study attributes this failure to structural barriers such as high-income inequality, dependence on market foods, and insufficient integration of local food systems. Based on data from the 18-item Household Food

Security Survey Module, the prevalence of food insecurity in Nunavut was 33.1% in 2010, the year preceding the launch of Nutrition North Canada (NNC). This rate increased to 39.4% in 2011, the year of the program's introduction, and further rose to 46.6% by 2014, following its full implementation. The subsidy program, despite its aim, did not coincide with a decline in food insecurity, in fact the opposite happened. Chan et. al (2006) similarly identify systemic barriers, including geographic isolation, high transportation costs, and the disconnection between federal policy and Inuit food sovereignty. Their study argues that "food security cannot be achieved without protecting the social and cultural practices that underpin traditional food systems" (p. 14). Their findings advocate for Indigenous-led food governance and policies that incorporate country food harvesting and sharing networks.

Community-level research by Ford et. al (2012 a) provides detailed insights into food insecurity and the operation of community food programs in Iqaluit. The study examined several key programs that provide emergency and supplemental food support to residents: the Niqinik Nuatsivik Nunavut Food Bank, which distributes non-perishable food items to households in need; the Iqaluit Soup Kitchen, which offers free hot meals several times a week; and the community freezers, which store and share locally harvested "country food" such as caribou, seal, and fish. Through interviews and surveys with program users and staff, the authors found that these initiatives play an essential role in addressing food insecurity but are constrained by high transportation costs, irregular food supplies, dependence on volunteer labor, and chronic underfunding.

This is similar to the situation at Inuksuk High School. The authors emphasize that "community food programs act as an essential buffer, but they are not a substitute for a functional local food system" (p. 160). Complementing this, Lardeau et al. (2011) used Photovoice to document the lived experience of food insecurity in Iqaluit. Participants described

food insecurity not only as material scarcity but as a disruption of cultural identity, autonomy, and connection to land. As they write, “food insecurity in the Arctic is multidimensional, rooted as much in cultural loss as in physical access” (p. 166). These participatory research methods underscore the importance of qualitative, community-based approaches in understanding and addressing food insecurity.

Another perspective on food systems is illustrated by Carducci et al. (2025) and Badyal and Moffat (2025), who reviewed evidence on Indigenous nutrition interventions across Canada and the Arctic. Both highlight the efficacy of co-designed, culturally grounded approaches in improving child nutrition and food literacy. Carducci et al. (2025) conclude that “programs grounded in Indigenous knowledge and co-developed with communities yield the most sustainable and equitable outcomes” (p. 215). Similarly, Badyal and Moffat (2025) identify cultural relevance, intersectoral governance, and rigorous evaluation as hallmarks of successful initiatives.

In Indigenous and Inuit communities, food security and nutrition cannot be separated from food sovereignty—the right to define and sustain one’s own food systems. Food sovereignty emphasizes self-determination, traditional knowledge, and community control over food production, distribution, and consumption (Wittman et al., 2010; Martin, 2014). Within Inuit contexts, this involves the revitalization of traditional harvesting practices, language, and governance structures that sustain cultural identity and intergenerational learning. Culturally relevant food initiatives that integrate land-based harvesting, traditional knowledge, and local participation address nutritional needs while strengthening social bonds and community resilience (Gillies et al., 2020: Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2019). Recognizing food as a vehicle

for teaching governance, responsibility, and cultural values is therefore essential for fostering well-being, cultural continuity, and self-determination (Doran, 2024).

From an educational perspective, Ruetz and McKenna (2021) provide a comparative analysis of school food programs across Canada, situating Nunavut within a national framework of fragmented policies and uneven funding. They identify that Nunavut's programs operate "in the most logistically challenging and under-resourced environment," with climate, infrastructure, and staffing constraints limiting program consistency (p. 24). Fournier et al. (2019) examine Arctic school food policies, emphasizing policy continuity, stakeholder engagement, and logistical adaptation as key success factors. They found that "programs that integrate local leadership, culturally relevant foods, and partnerships with hunters and elders are the most sustainable" (p. 442).

More recently, Ruetz et al. (2024) profiled 15 promising school food programs nationwide, emphasizing innovation, cultural responsiveness, and equity. One of the schools examined is Inuksuk High School in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The study highlights that the school's lunch program operates on an annual budget of approximately $80,000, funded by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and administered through Community Wellness funds. This funding model does not reflect the realities of other communities in the territory, some of which receive smaller budgets—or none at all—because they do not have an established lunch program. This finding underscores the fiscal vulnerability of such programs and their dependence on federal transfers rather than territorial or local autonomy, and annual budget cycles that are subject to the whims of federal politics.

School lunch programs in Canada are crucial for improving children's nutrition, attendance, and academic success, particularly in vulnerable communities. Federal initiatives

such as the National School Food Program and complementary provincial efforts aim to reduce food insecurity and promote healthy eating behaviours among school-aged children across the country, including within Indigenous communities where culturally appropriate food programming is increasingly emphasized (Government of Canada, 2024a). Evidence indicates that providing nutritious meals during school hours supports learning, concentration, and overall well-being while also addressing socio-economic disparities. In Indigenous and Inuit contexts, school food programs extend beyond nutrition—they have the potential to serve as mechanisms for cultural preservation, community engagement, and self-determination. By centering culturally relevant foods, local leadership, and traditional knowledge, these programs strengthen cultural identity, connect students to land-based practices, and support intergenerational learning (Gillies et al., 2020; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2019). They also foster social connection, empower youth, reduce economic barriers for families, and integrate important land-based skills and relationships into daily school life, building resilience and equity for future generations (Gillies et al., 2020; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2019).

Across this literature, a clear pattern emerges: addressing food insecurity in Nunavut requires transdisciplinary, Indigenous-led, and culturally responsive approaches. Federal interventions such as Nutrition North Canada (NNC) have shown limited effectiveness, while community-based programs emphasizing Inuit knowledge, local control, and intergenerational learning yield stronger outcomes. Schools, as daily points of contact for children and youth, are increasingly seen as strategic sites for advancing not only food security but also food sovereignty. The intersection of school programming and community engagement — supported by the Northern Food Security Coalition (NFSC) and grounded in the principles of the Nunavut Food Guide (NFG) offers a hybrid model of cultural continuity and nutritional health. Yet

persistent barriers remain: inconsistent funding, logistical constraints, and policy fragmentation undermine long-term sustainability. Scholars agree that advancing food security in Nunavut demands not only improved access to healthy foods but also the revitalization of traditional practices and governance structures that define Inuit food sovereignty.

The intersection of school programming and community engagement supported by the NFSC and grounded in the principles of the NFG offers a hybrid model of cultural continuity and nutritional health. Yet persistent barriers remain; inconsistent funding, logistical constraints, and policy fragmentation undermine long-term sustainability. Scholars agree that advancing food security in Nunavut demands not only improved access to healthy foods but also the revitalization of traditional harvesting practices, language, and governance structures that define Inuit food sovereignty.

Inuit communities have long practiced food sovereignty through food sharing and land and water-based harvesting (Bennett, 2004; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2019). The integration of inuksiuit, such as whale, clams, caribou, seal, and arctic char, not only supports nutrition but sustains Inuit knowledge systems and cultural identity (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2021; Ruetz, 2023). Inuksiuit carries significant meaning, both nutritionally and spiritually, contributing to interconnectedness with the land and resiliency (Little et al., 2021). However, climate change, restrictive wildlife policies, and socio-economic challenges threaten these traditional foodways. Both Ruetz (2023) and ITK (2021) suggest that for efforts to improve food security in Nunavut, they must prioritize culturally grounded and community-led approaches.

Ontario's Student Nutrition Program (SNP) Guidelines (Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, 2021), *Canada's Food Guide — Healthy Eating at School* (Health Canada, 2020), the Alberta School Nutrition Program (Alberta Education, 2025), and Manitoba's *Healthy Food in Schools* framework (Government of Manitoba, 2015) provide

structured guidance for developing nutritious school-food programming. In the territories, similar direction is offered through Nunavut's *Healthy Foods for Learning Guidelines* (Nunavut Department of Health, n.d.), the Northwest Territories' *Healthy Food for Learning Program* (Education, Culture and Employment, Government of the Northwest Territories, n.d.), and Yukon's *School Nutrition Policy* (Government of Yukon, 2019). Notably, Nunavut's document does not include a detailed resource manual (e.g., menu-planning tools or procurement strategies), so Ontario's SNP Guidelines serve as the primary model upon which the resource manual is based.

Chapter 3: Creating the Tasks

This portfolio draws on qualitative, mixed-methods approach that brings together systems mapping and autoethnography to explore policies and practices related to school food programming in Nunavut. The mixed-methods design was chosen to visually represent dynamic relationships and influences within school lunch programs, offering both structural analysis through systems mapping and deep contextual insights from autoethnographic reflection. This approach aimed to ensure that the resource manual thoughtfully addresses both the systemic and cultural dimensions of food programming across the territory; however, it is important to acknowledge that when the autoethnographic perspective is not Inuit, this understanding may be inherently limited. To enhance authenticity and relevance, the manual prioritizes Inuit voices and expertise wherever possible through publicly available sources.

The first objective was to undertake a system mapping of the most updated policies and practices related to school food programming in Nunavut communities using publicly available materials. Mapping these policies and practices was essential for developing a comprehensive resource manual that supports effective implementation and enhancement of school lunch programs across the territory and for identifying key facilitators and barriers. Systems mapping is a qualitative method for visually representing the dynamic connections, relationships and influences within complex systems. Systems mapping is a visual approach to understanding systems by identifying and representing the components and their relationships in a structured way (Goode & MacGillivray, 2023). This process often includes creating diagrams that illustrate how different parts of a system interact, reveal feedback loops, and highlight key pathways or leverage points.

There are several types of systems mapping methods each with distinct analytical functions, research goals, and levels of complexity. These include Rich Pictures (Williams & Hummelbrunner, 2011), Actor and Stakeholder Maps (Rauscher et al., 2023), Causal Loop Diagrams (Kim, 1992), Fuzzy Cognitive Mapping (Özesmi & Özesmi, 2004), Stock and Flow Diagrams (Sterman, 2000), and Journey Maps (Giordano et al., 2020). According to Goode and MacGillivray (2023) in *Everything's Connected,* systems maps serve as dynamic tools that capture the complexity of life's interconnected systems, facilitating inquiry learning, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and holistic systems thinking by making relationships and patterns visible and open to iterative revision. Goode and MacGillivray (2023) further emphasize that systems mapping functions as collaborative and reflective tools that help educators and stakeholders reveal and understand the interconnected actors, processes, and systemic factors shaping educational outcomes.

In the context of the Nunavut school lunch program, systems mapping facilitated a holistic view of the multiple components and interactions from policy frameworks to community partnerships that impact school food program success. A visual system map of the Nunavut school food program helps to identify existing school food programs, such as breakfast programs, lunch programs, snacks in the classrooms, and food banks in the territory and identifies key barriers and facilitators in the hopes of leading to better and longer lasting programs. The research employs systems mapping to visualize and analyze the structure and function of the school lunch program in Nunavut to inform long-term improvement and innovation.

The systems mapping process began with defining the system boundaries and identifying the primary stakeholders. In this research, the boundary encompasses Nunavut schools, which serve as central hubs connecting key stakeholders, including hunters, Elders, and students. Data

sources included publicly available materials such as policy documents and program records. The mapping synthesizes information from public sources, including government reports, strategy documents from the Nunavut Food Security Strategy, the Education Act, grey literature, and school board documents. No data were collected from human participants; therefore, this project did not require research ethics board approval.

This work also employs autoethnography as a qualitative research approach that systematically analyzes personal experience ("auto") to understand cultural experience ("ethno") within a specific context (Ellis et al., 2011). Autoethnography involves using personal narratives to illustrate facets of cultural experience, making characteristics of culture more accessible to both insiders and outsiders (Ellis et al., 2011). This approach was selected because I bring both an insider and outsider perspective: as one of the few food program coordinators in Nunavut, I hold an insider understanding of local school food practices; as a qallunaaq teacher, I also bring an external viewpoint shaped by cultural difference. Autoethnographers not only draw upon methodological tools and existing research literature to analyze experience but also consider how others may encounter similar epiphanies (Ellis et al., 2011). Autoethnography values emotions and personal experience as meaningful sources of data. It recognizes that feeling and reflections are integral to understanding social and cultural phenomena. The purpose is to foster empathy and social awareness, contributing to positive change through reflexive storytelling. Consequently, this portfolio, and espcially the resource manual, aid incoming food program coordinators in the territory, who might be qallunaat like myself, in navigating their roles with cultural humility and a commitment to promoting IQ values within school food programs.

This portfolio employs autoethnography (Ellis et al., 2011) to connect my professional experiences as a food and nutrition teacher and school lunch program coordinator with the cultural dynamics present in Nunavut schools. As an autoethnographic researcher, I was both

participant and observer, using reflective storytelling to interpret my evolving role within food programming and educational contexts. Autoethnography is an appropriate methodology for this inquiry given my unique positionality as a food program coordinator in the territory. This approach was evocative, emphasizing narrative storytelling and reflexive engagement to explore the intersections of personal experience, policy, and culture. Data sources included personal journals, reflective writing, memory recall exercises, artifacts, documents, and photographs, as well as self-observations and field notes drawn from lived experience.

Data were generated through weekly reflective journaling over three seasons (winter, spring and fall), field notes from professional activities, and archival artifacts, including personal correspondence and project reports. The resource manual portion of the portfolio incorporates food program records, photographs, and various personal artifacts that document daily experiences and program development. Data analysis used thematic coding, including seasonal thematic analysis and IQ thematic analysis, for reflexivity and narrative construction. The analysis was guided by the eight IQ values outlined by the Government of Nunavut Department of Education (2007):

- Inuuqatigiitsiarniq – Respecting others, relationships, and caring for people
- Tunnganarniq – Fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming, and inclusive
- Pijitsirniq – Serving and providing for family and community
- Aajiiqatigiinniq – Decision-making through discussion and consensus
- Pilimmaksarniq – Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort
- Ikajuqtigiinniq – Working together for a common cause
- Qanuqtuurniq – Being innovative and resourceful

- Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq – Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment

The rationale for using the IQ framework lies in its role as a culturally grounded approach to research methodology that honours Inuit ways of knowing, relational accountability, and consensus decision-making (Department of Education, 2007). It provides foundational principles for research design, data collection, analysis, and community engagement in Inuit contexts. Applying the IQ framework to autoethnography thematic analysis enhances the rigour, relevance, and cultural grounding of self-reflective research. It also ensures research methodologies are authentic to the Nunavut school food program and deeply rooted in Inuit societal values, thereby supporting culturally relevant policy and program development in both Nunavut and the greater Inuit Nunangat region.

This approach increases the probability that deeply personal narratives and experiential inquiry mirror core Inuit values, ways of knowing, and community priorities. This is specially important given that the portfolio is written from the perspective of a *qallunaaq* (non-Inuit) teacher, where cultural humility and respect for Inuit knowledge systems are essential to the research process. Two guiding themes illustrate how the IQ framework shapes this methodology:

- Piliriqatigiinniq (Working together for the common good): Even in personal narrative, the writing and analysis are situated in service to community benefit, linking individual insight to broader well-being and collective advancement.
- Unikkaaqatigiinniq (Storytelling): Story is at the center of methodology, privileging oral history, lived experience, and narrative voice as sources of analysis and knowledge creation.

Journals and field notes were reviewed for recurring themes and insights relevant to food education and community engagement, while narrative storytelling linked personal experiences to broader educational and cultural contexts. The analytic process emphasized transparency, credibility, and cultural resonance, aligning with established standards for trustworthiness in autoethnographic educational research (Ellis et al., 2011; Poulos, 2021).

This project integrates systems mapping with autoethnographic methods to provide both structural insights and deep contextual understanding. Systems mapping offers a visual, holistic perspective on the relationships, processes, and feedback loops within the school lunch program, helping to identify leverage points and systemic patterns needed for effective program design. By combining these approaches, the research enables a comprehensive analysis of both macrolevel system dynamics and micro-level personal and cultural meanings that support the success and sustainability of the program.

As the School Food Program Coordinator at Inuksuk High School, I drew heavily on my own professional experience managing lunch programming at our high school. Inuksuk High School benefits from large kitchen facilities with three walk-in coolers and one walk in freezer — this is due to it initially being built as a residential school. Through federal funding grants, we are also able to hire three to five high school students each year as Lunch Program Assistants, providing both employment opportunities and practical learning experiences.

When summarizing kitchen infrastructure, staffing, and program organization across Nunavut's 24 other communities, I relied solely on publicly reported information. The recent federal investment of approximately $7.6 million over the next three years under the National School Food Program might offer opportunities to upgrade facilities, hire staff, and enhance nutritional quality, including access to traditional foods vital for cultural connection and food security (Government of Canada, 2024a). The ultimate goal of this project was to compile these

insights into a comprehensive resource manual to support future school food coordinators across Nunavut. This report is based solely on public program documentation and personal professional experience and does not involve original research with human participants.

Task One: Systems Mapping for Policy and Practices

Nunavut's current school food landscape is shaped by a complex interplay of federal, territorial, and community drivers, all of which map onto broader Inuit food sovereignty. At the federal level, the Nutrition North Canada (NNC) program provides retail subsidies and grants—such as the Harvesters Support Grant and the Community Food Programs Fund—that directly and indirectly support community food initiatives. These programs help supply schools and other institutions through local retailers, community food centres, and partnerships with hunters and Elders. Federal funding streams, including the new National School Food Program (2024–2027), are increasingly collaborative and food program specific aiming to supplement local programming, upgrade infrastructure, and increase access to both nutritious and culturally relevant country food thus benefiting around 11,000 students across 45 schools in the 25 Nunavut communities (Government of Nunavut, n.d.). Each school varies in size, some as small as 15 students in the French High School in Iqaluit, or 100 for the one school in the whole community in Kimmirut. The largest high school is Inuksuk High School with 445 students in Iqaluit. Territorially, the Nunavut Education Act requires District Education Authorities (DEAs) to ensure that all school programs are grounded in Inuit societal values and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles such as Pijitsirniq (serving and providing for family and community) and Qanuqtuurniq (being innovative and resourceful) which inform local food programming and foster Elder engagement in schools (Government of Nunavut, Department of Education, 2007)

The Act enables local modifications to curriculum and supports direct involvement of DEAs in shaping programs that reflect community priorities, including food and culture (Government of Nunavut Department of Education, 2007; Légaré, 2008). This aligns with the Nunavut Food Security Strategy, which frames food initiatives through six interrelated themes: inuksiuit, Store-Bought Food, Local Production, Life Skills, Programs and Community Initiatives, and Policy & Legislation (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2021; Nunavut Food Security Coalition, n.d.). These themes serve as lenses to analyze how school and community partners including DEAs/CSFN, hamlets/municipalities, retailers, food centres/freezers, hunter/trapper organizations, Elders, educators, and students collaborate and account for the flow of food, knowledge, and resources in daily school life (Ruetz et al., 2023; Ford et al., 2012b). Such system mapping reveals how national and territorial policies—like Nutrition North, Nunavut Food Security Strategy, Education Act, and others—translate into school practices, ultimately influencing not only what food is served, but how knowledge, culture, and community connections are woven into daily school routines (Ford & Beaumier, 2011; Ruetz et al., 2023). The process also reminds stakeholders, as Tammarniit underscores (Tester & Kulchyski, 1994), that school food is deeply tied to Inuit history, sovereignty, and justice, with current programming representing meaningful steps in restoring Inuit control over food, cultural expression, and the collective well-being of Nunavut's children (Bennett, 2004; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2021; Légaré, 2008).

Task One – Actioned Steps:

1. Connected with the available schools to identify which have existing school lunch programs.
2. Gathered detailed information about each program's policies, funding sources, kitchen infrastructure, and staffing models.

3. Assessed challenges faced by communities without programs regarding starting and sustaining lunch programming.
4. Documented any unique community adaptations, partnerships with hunters, or standard operating procedures in place.
5. Compiled and analyzed all findings into a clear, visual systems map that reflects the policy landscape and program practices.

Outcomes:

- A comprehensive list categorizing communities by presence or absence of school lunch programs.
- A detailed understanding of funding mechanisms supporting each program and associated challenges.
- Identification of varying policies and standard operating procedures across communities.
- Clear documentation of barriers to program initiation and sustainability.
- Systems map that highlights connections between policies, practices, infrastructure, and funding, serving as a foundation to create a useful, culturally appropriate resource manual that supports the ongoing improvement of school food programs in Nunavut.

Table 1

Nunavut Teacher's Association Regional Boundaries of Nunavut

Community	**Schools**
Kitikmeot	Cambridge Bay
Kitikmeot	Gjoa Haven
Kitikmeot	Kugaaruk
Kitikmeot	Kugluktuk
Kitikmeot	Taloyoak
North Kivalliq	Baker Lake
North Kivalliq	Chesterfield Inlet

North Kivalliq	Coral Harbour
North Kivalliq	Naujaat
South Kivalliq	Arviat
South Kivalliq	Rankin Inlet
South Kivalliq	Whale Cove
North Qikiqtani	Arctic Bay
North Qikiqtani	Grise Fiord
North Qikiqtani	Sanirajak
North Qikiqtani	Igloolik
North Qikiqtani	Pond Inlet
North Qikiqtani	Resolute Bay
Central Qikiqtani	Apex
Central Qikiqtani	Iqaluit
South Qikiqtani	Clyde River
South Qikiqtani	Kimmirut
South Qikiqtani	Kinngait
South Qikiqtani	Pangnirtung
South Qikiqtani	Qikiqtarjuaq
South Qikiqtani	Sanikiluaq

Task Two: Autoethnographic Research on School Lunch Program Resource Manual in the Nunavut

The purpose of the resource manual is to consolidate and share insights gained through my professional experience managing a school lunch program in Nunavut. It serves as both a reflective learning tool and a means of contributing practical knowledge to educators and coordinators across the territory.

This manual is intended to support teachers and incoming school food coordinators by providing a comprehensive overview of food programming in the Nunavut. It includes contextual information on Nunavut School Food Program (NUSFP), sample menus, planning templates, funding opportunities, and a directory of microgrant programs. In addition, it offers a

detailed account of program operations, illustrating what a typical week looks like within a high school setting in the Arctic context.

The broader objective of this resource is to inspire and equip educators, schools, and communities in Nunavut to initiate or strengthen school lunch programs that reflect local realities. Ultimately, the goal is to create inclusive spaces where food not only nourishes students but also fosters community connection, celebrates Inuit culture, and empowers youth.

Context of Food System in Iqaluit, Nunavut

Due to the geographic isolation of Iqaluit, Nunavut, there are only two main types of food that are consumed: imported foods (through air or sealift) or country foods which are traditional Inuit foods that are obtained from the local land or waters. While a small number of households maintain indoor gardens to supplement their diets, local food production remains limited. The Iqaluit Greenhouse Society contributes modestly to local food security by providing fresh produce during the short summer and autumn growing seasons.

According to 2021 Statistics Canada, the population of Iqaluit is 7,429 in 2021 representing a growth rate of 11% since 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2021). To support the growing population, there are four main grocery stores in Iqaluit, Nunavut, Inuulisautinut Niuvirvik ᐃᓅᓕᓴᐅᑎᓄᑦ ᓂᐅᕕᕐᕕᒃ, North Mart, Baffin Canners, and Arctic Ventures. The Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre opened recently to increase access to country food by establishing a processing centre and store (Nunatsiaq News, 2023). This initiative strengthens local food sovereignty by providing a regulated space for the preparation, processing, and sale of country foods, including traditionally smoked meats. Given the high cost of imported goods and the limited availability of perishable items, many residents routinely purchase and transport groceries from southern Canada when travelling. These strategies reflect both the economic

challenges of northern food systems and the resilience of Iqaluit’s community in navigating them.

School Lunch Program Resource Manual in Nunavut

Overview and Objectives:

- Clear explanation of the school food program's purpose, goals, and alignment with Nunavut territorial food guide and national policies.
- Importance of culturally relevant and nutritious meals, including traditional country food to support Inuit food sovereignty and wellness.

Policy and Guidelines:

- Summary of current guidelines governing school food programs in Nunavut.
- Nutrition guidelines, food guides, and food safety protocols tailored for Arctic conditions and local food availability.
- School food program standards and expectations.

Cultural Context:

- Information on the unique challenges and opportunities in Arctic communities, such as seasonality of harvested local inuksiuit (clams, Arctic berries, and caribou in the fall – arctic char and seal in spring) , supply chain constraints including sealift shipping delays, Canada Post strikes, and having only one supplier for groceries), and infrastructure limitations (such as not having freezer space to store inuksuit in smaller communities, not having school kitchen, and human resource constraints)
- Guidance on incorporating Inuit traditional knowledge in school food program.
    - ᐃᓅᖃᑎᒌᑦᓯᐊᕐᓂᖅ—Inuuqatigiitsiarniq: Respecting others, relationships, and caring for people.

  - ᑐᙵᓇᕐᓂᖅ—Tunnganarniq: Fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.
  - ᐱᔾᑦᓯᕐᓂᖅ—Pijitsirniq: Serving and providing for family and/or community.
  - ᐋᔩᖃᑎᒌᓐᓂᖅ—Aajiiqatigiinniq: Decision-making through discussion and consensus.
  - ᐱᓕᒻᒪᒃᓴᕐᓂᖅ—Pilimmaksarniq: Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.
  - ᐃᑲᔪᖅᑎᒌᓐᓂᖅ—Ikajuqtigiinniq: Working together for a common cause.
  - ᖃᓄᖅᑑᕐᓂᖅ—Qanuqtuurniq: Being innovative and resourceful.
  - ᐊᕙᑎᑦᑎᓐᓂᒃ ᑲᒪᑦᓯᐊᕐᓂᖅ—Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq: Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment.
- Support for involving Elders and community members in program development and delivery.

Program Implementation:

- Detailed procedures for menu planning, food purchasing (including local and traditional food sourcing), and meal preparation suited to varying kitchen capacities.
- Staffing models including volunteer coordination and opportunities for student involvement. Model 1: hire a chef in charge of food program, Model 2: community volunteers help with food program, Model 3: students in Food and Nutrition classes help with food program, Model 4: Student support assistant and teacher rotation to help with food program.
- Food storage, handling, and sanitation practices specific to the Arctic environment and school kitchens.

Infrastructure and Equipment:

- Guidance on assessing kitchen facilities and equipment needs.
- Recommendations for upgrades and maintenance to support safe and efficient food preparation.

Training and Capacity Building:

- Food safety and nutrition training modules for program staff and volunteers.
- Cultural competency training to ensure inclusive and respectful meal programs.

Sample Tools and Templates:

- Sample policies, menu plans, procurement checklists, volunteer schedules, and evaluation forms.

The resource manual encourages flexible approaches that respect the diversity among Nunavut's 25 communities (Table 1) while upholding standardized nutritional goals based on the Nunavut Food Guide and principles of program sustainability. Integrating culturally relevant content was essential to its success. This context-sensitive manual serves as a foundational tool to support Nunavut schools in enhancing their lunch programs and promoting food security and the well-being of the students.

Resource Manual - Funding List

A Funding List is included in the resource manual as a living document created for teachers, administrators, and school food program coordinators in Nunavut. Its purpose is to help schools stay informed about potential funding opportunities. The goal was to create a comprehensive and accessible reference that outlines all available financial resources, grants, and support programs. Schools can use this tool to initiate, sustain, or expand their lunch programs. Ultimately, the funding list can serve as a practical guide to help schools navigate the complex, ever changing funding landscape and access the resources needed to improve student food security.

Recent federal government investments aim to strengthen school food systems by improving kitchen infrastructure, hiring dedicated staff, and incorporating traditional foods.

However, these funds are primarily directed toward breakfast programs rather than lunch initiatives. As a result, many school lunch programs continue to rely heavily on school fundraising, contributions of non-profit organizations, students' families and volunteer support. Therefore, providing clear and coordinated information about available funding opportunities is essential to help schools secure stable financial resources, enhance the impact of existing programs, and address ongoing challenges related to food insecurity and cultural relevance.

Actioned Steps:

1. Researched and compiled existing federal, territorial, and local funding sources available for school lunch programming in Nunavut, including grants, subsidies, and infrastructure funds.
2. Categorize funding sources by eligibility criteria, application deadlines, funding amounts, and allowable expenses.
3. Design the funding list in a simple format accessible to all Nunavut schools

Outcomes:

- A comprehensive funding list tailored to Nunavut schools' needs for lunch program support.
- Increased awareness among schools of available funding opportunities and eligibility criteria.
- Greater success in securing funding applications due to improved access to information and guidance.
- Enhanced capacity of schools to maintain and expand lunch programs, resulting in improved student nutrition, inclusion of traditional foods, and program sustainability.

Chapter 4 – System Mapping of Nunavut School Food Program

Task One - Actioned Steps:

1. Identified which schools in Nunavut have existing school food programs.
2. Gathered detailed information about each program's policies, funding sources, kitchen infrastructure, and staffing models.
3. Assessed challenges faced by communities without programs regarding starting and sustaining lunch programming.
4. Documented any unique community adaptations, partnerships with hunters and Elders, or standard operating procedures in place.
5. Compiled and analyze all findings into a clear, visual systems map that reflects the policy landscape and program practices.
6. Learned how federal funding is allocated to each school and community.

Outcomes:

- A comprehensive list categorizing communities by presence or absence of school food programs.
- A detailed understanding of funding mechanisms supporting each program and associated challenges.
- Identification of varying policies and standard operating procedures across communities.
- Clear documentation of barriers to program initiation and sustainability.
- Systems map that highlights connections between policies, practices, infrastructure, and funding, serving as a foundation to create a useful, culturally appropriate resource manual that supports the ongoing improvement of school food programs in Nunavut.

General Food Landscape in Nunavut: Market Food and Inuksiutit (Country Food)

Nunavut's food landscape is a hybrid system, where imported market foods operate alongside country foods. Together, these systems support food access, community resilience, and cultural continuity across the territory. Settlement sizes in Nunavut vary widely. Some communities are very small, such as Grise Fiord, with roughly 130 residents, while the largest, Iqaluit, has about 9,000 residents. Most communities fall somewhere in between, often with populations of 500–2,000 (Government of Nunavut, n.d.). Despite the reliance on imported or market-based foods, inuksiutit (country foods) including caribou, Arctic char, seal, and other harvested wildlife remain a fundamental part of the food system. These foods provide nutritional, cultural, and social value, with harvesting, sharing, and preparation reinforcing traditional knowledge and community ties (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2021, p. 7).

Nunavut's food landscape is shaped by its remote geography, small populations, and limited transportation infrastructure. Most communities are not connected to southern markets/cities by all-season roads. Communities have at least one supermarket, which serves as the primary retail sources for items such as fresh produce, dairy, frozen foods, and dry goods. High transportation costs and limited competition contribute to high prices and variable availability and quality, particularly for fresh items. Fresh food is delivered primarily by air cargo, which supplies perishable foods throughout the year. During the open water season, communities also receive annual sealift shipments, where large quantities of non-perishable food and other supplies are transported by cargo ship. The sealift shipments are carefully planned months in advance to ensure sufficient stock and non-perishable items are prioritized. Combined, these factors contribute to the high cost of market-based foods in Nunavut, which in

turn drives disproportionately high rates of food insecurity across communities (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2016; APTN News, 2026). These structural challenges underscore the importance of examining alternative and culturally grounded food systems, as discussed in the following section.

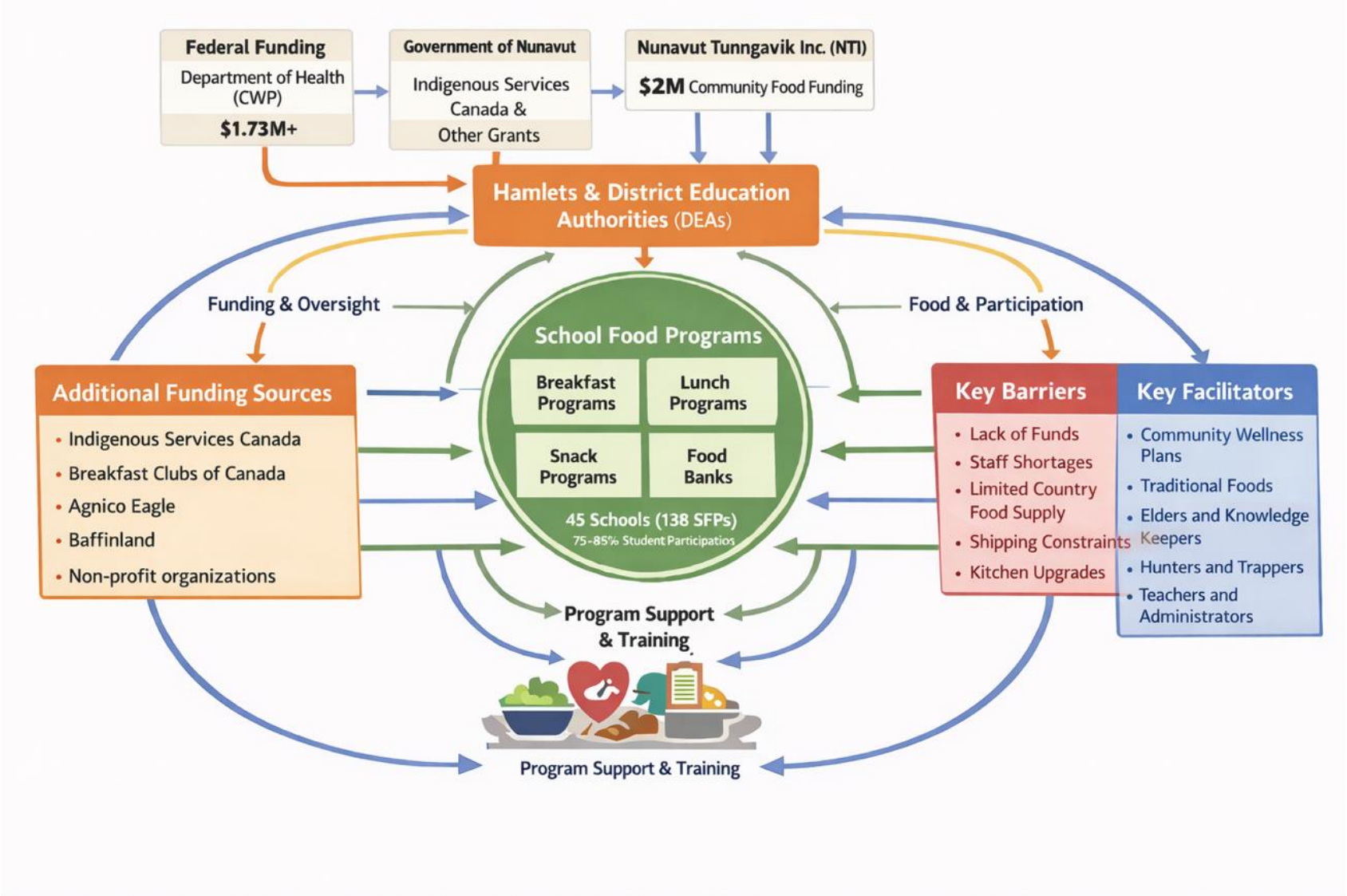
Task 1: System Mapping

This chapter maps the connections, relationships, and influences within complex systems of school food programs (SFPs) in Nunavut. The diagram (Figure 5) illustrates how different parts of a SFP's system interact through feedback loops, key pathways, and leverage points. In the context of Nunavut SFPs, systems mapping facilitates a holistic view of the multiple components and interactions from policy frameworks to community partnerships that impact SFP success. The mapping synthesizes information from public sources, including government reports, strategy documents from the Nunavut Food Security Coalition's Food Security Strategy, the Nunavut Education Act, grey literature, and documents from the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education. It is difficult to find information about SFPs in Nunavut as the school boards generally do not advertise their programs. The Department of Education has indicated its intention to hire a school food coordinator for the territory, who will be tasked to identify the current SFPs in Nunavut schools (Employment and Social Development, 2025).

This system map (Figure 5) of the Nunavut school food program (SFP) helps to identify existing SFPs, such as breakfast programs, lunch programs, snacks in the classrooms, and food banks in the territory and to identify key barriers and facilitators. This portfolio employs systems mapping to visualize and analyze the structure and function of school lunch programs in Nunavut to inform long-term improvement and innovation.

Figure 5

Nunavut School Food Program (SFP) Current System Map (2025)



Nunavut Food Security Coalition

In 2010–2011, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction convened public gatherings in all 25 Nunavut communities to inform the development of a territorial poverty reduction framework (Nunavut Food Security Coalition [NFSC], 2016). These consultations resulted in *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*, which included a commitment to develop a Nunavut Food Security Strategy and a corresponding territorial action plan. This commitment was reaffirmed in *Makimaniq Plan 2* and led to the establishment of the Nunavut Food Security Coalition and the release of the *Nunavut Food Security Strategy* in 2016 (NFSC, 2016). The strategy identifies six priority areas: policy and legislation, inuksiutit (country food), store-bought food, local food production, life skills, and programming and community initiatives (PCI). Under the PCI pillar, one key objective (5.1) is to enhance and extend school nutrition programming for children in Nunavut (NFSC, 2016). However, publicly available meeting records on the Coalition's website indicate that the most recent meeting reports were published in 2016, with no subsequent updates or action plans released in nearly a decade (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, n.d.), raising concerns about accountability, implementation, and sustained policy momentum in addressing food insecurity among Nunavut's most vulnerable populations.

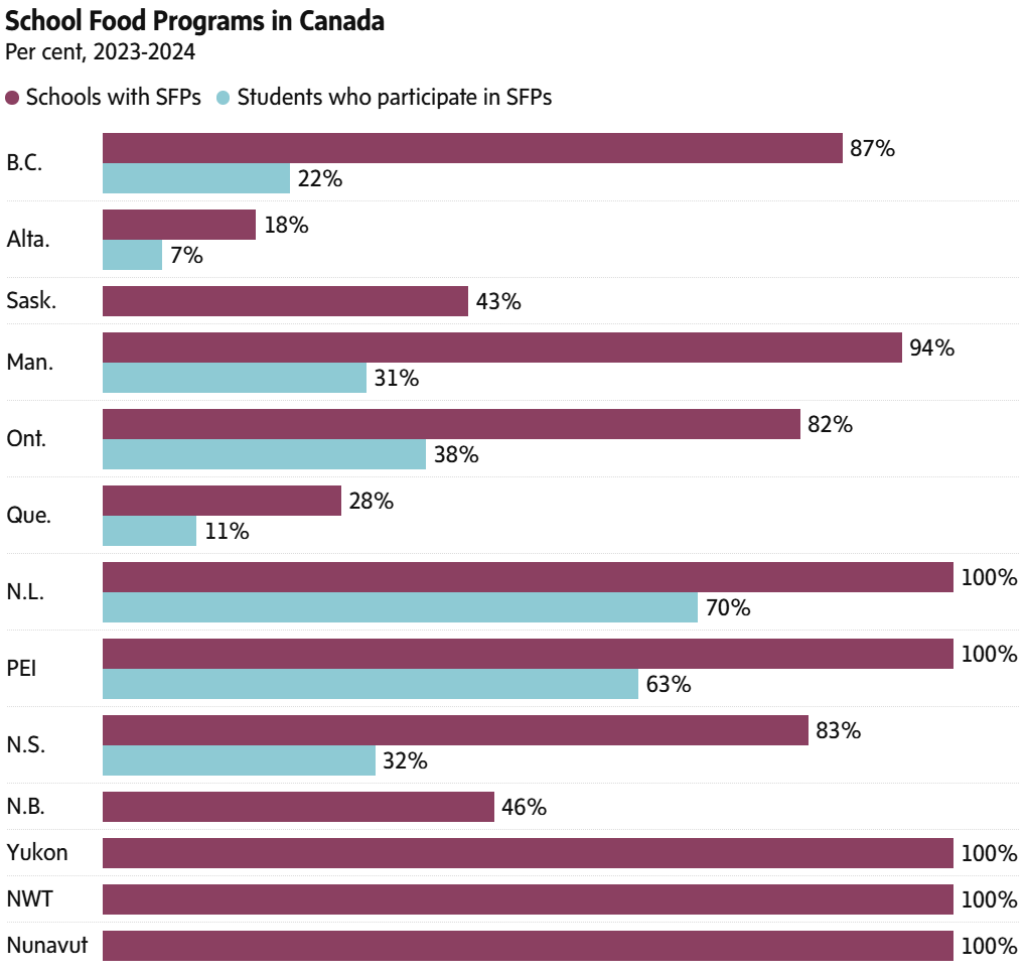
Nunavut School Food Programs (SFP) Overview

In 2020, Troy Rhoades, the Communications Officer for the Government of Nunavut, Department of Education (GN-DOE), stated that during the school year, every school in Nunavut runs a food program (Sharma, 2020). SFP can take a broad range of forms including breakfast, snack and lunch programs. This is depending on the school's capacity, the need, and the resources available.

The food programs are supported by Community Wellness plans developed by the Department of Health. Administrators of the food programs are the municipal governments or district education authorities (DEAs) through their schools. Municipalities or DEAs may also seek other third-party funding or donations to supplement their food programs. School food programs are available to all students in Nunavut, the Government of Nunavut Depratment of Education (GN-DOE) estimates that 75 to 85 percent of students access the food programs offered at schools (Sharma, 2020). When compared to other provinces and territories (Figure 6), the percentage of schools running SFPs and students accessing the SFPs, Nunavut is amongst the highest in both statistics.

Figure 6

SFP Rates Across Canada (McGinn, 2025)



According to the state of school food programming in Ruetz and Tasala (2025) Canada *2023/24: Pre-National School Food Program baseline (2025)* between the 45 schools in Nunavut, covering Kindergarten to Grade 12, a total of 138 universal School Food Programs exist. Every school offers a breakfast program, 35 schools (78%) offer a morning snack program, 31 schools (67%) offer an afternoon snack, and 27 schools (60%) offer a lunch program (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025). In Nunavut, 87% of SFPs included inuksiutit; among these, 25% of the SFPs served it weekly or more frequently. The main barriers to offering inuksiutit were insufficient supply from hunters and gatherers and a lack of staff to prepare it (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025).

Ruetz & Tasala, (2025) state that the total number of meals and unique students participating is unknown; however, all programs are intended to be universal. It is common for students to have more than one serving for breakfast (62%), morning snack (40%) and lunch (24%). According to the Department of Health's *2022/23 Nunavut Wellness Agreement Performance Report*, SFPs in 2022/23 were primarily operated by volunteer school staff (58%). Students, volunteers, and paid SFP staff contributed equally to program operations (42%), with family members (9%) and community members (2%) less involved (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025). The top challenge identified by 13 schools was the need for additional staff and helpers to prepare food (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025). SFPs received nutrition and program support from Regional Nutritionists (registered dietitians) and community and regional wellness staff. The assistance included menu development, food costing, nutrition training for staff and volunteers, providing tools and resources, supporting food safety guidelines, and help with funding applications.

Nunavut Department of Health Recommendation

The Government of Nunavut, Department of Health (GN, 2011) explicitly supports the consumption of country foods. The Nunavut Food Guide encourages incorporating inuksiutit into daily diets, and health programs promote harvesting, sharing, and preparation practices that strengthen community ties. Government policies for care facilities and community nutrition programming emphasize culturally appropriate care and the inclusion of Inuit traditional practices, recognizing the importance of country food (inuksiutit) to health and wellbeing (Government of Nunavut, 2023). Organizations like the Nunavut Food Security Coalition collaborate with public health to ensure access to these foods, highlighting that country foods are essential for food security, healthy eating, and cultural continuity across Nunavut communities (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2016). The department of Public Health periodically issues temporary country food bans to protect communities' members from botulism, foodborne illness, or environmental contaminants such as mercury or PCBs. Advisories often target specific species, animal parts, or vulnerable groups like children and pregnant people. Restrictions can also occur in response to wildlife disease outbreaks (Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, 2023). These measures are localized and temporary, and include guidance on safe alternatives, preparation practices, and public communication through community education, signage, and media. The goal is to prevent health risks while allowing traditional food practices to continue safely.

In 2026, Nunavut Department of Education administrators expect all schools in the territory to implement various strategies to enhance existing food programs according to the National School Food Program (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2025). Although no territory-wide guidebook exists for school lunch programs, the 2013 *Nunavut Breakfast*

Programs Guidebook offers a valuable resource with five key sections: serving healthy food, incorporating country foods, managing budgets, ordering and storing supplies, and keeping food safe (Government of Nunavut, 2013). The Guidebook was created and published by Nunavut's Department of Health to help breakfast program coordinators plan menus, order food, manage budgets, and serve healthy breakfasts in Nunavut schools. The guidebook was created with contributions from breakfast program coordinators, workers, and volunteers across Nunavut, recognizing their role in shaping its content. School lunch programs were not included in the Guidebook's scope and remain to be addressed at the community level rather than by a unified territorial approach.

Funding

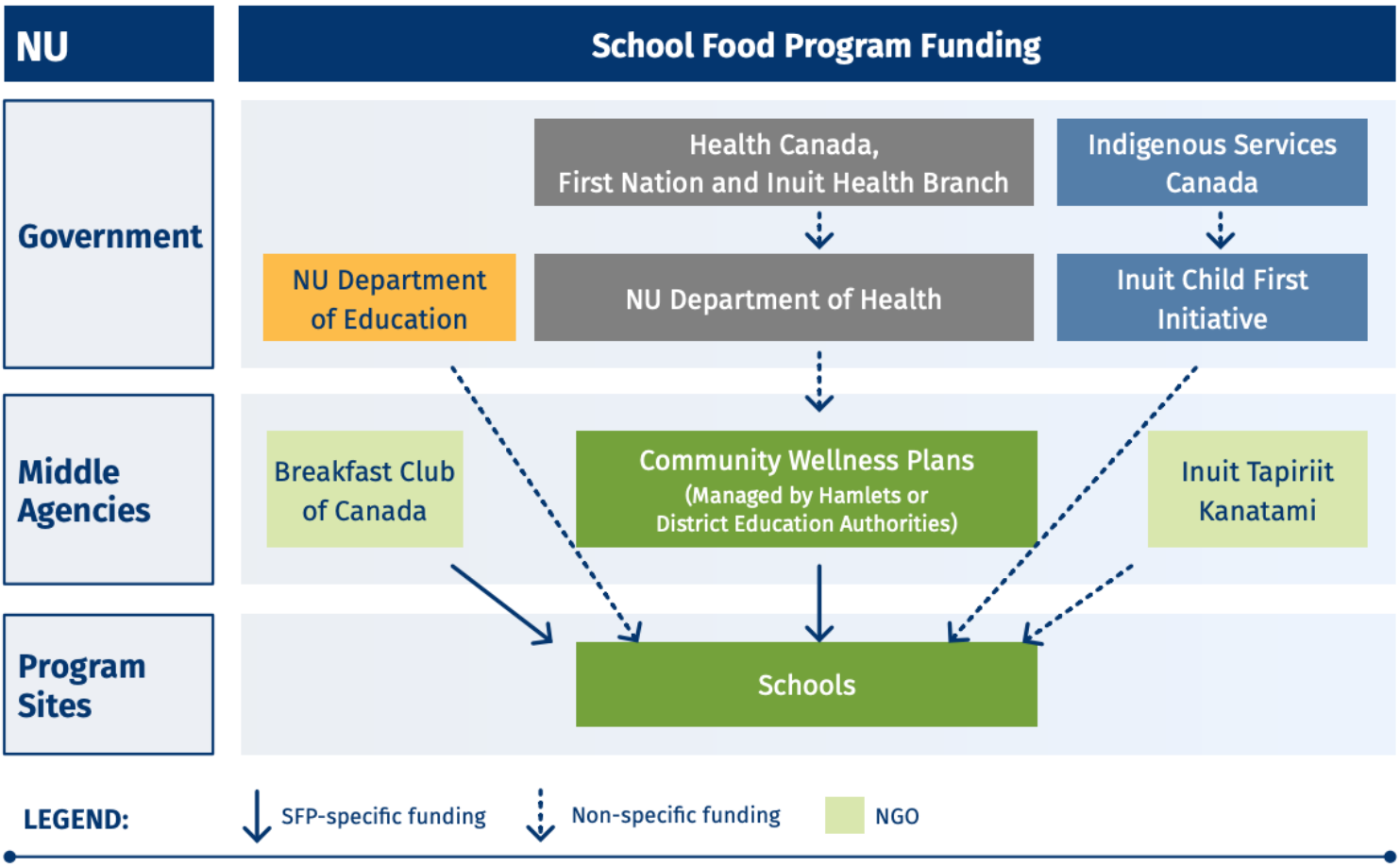
In Nunavut, all 45 schools receive funding for SFPs; however, the exact amount allocated to each school is unclear, which likely leads to variation in program offerings—from breakfast and snacks to full daily hot lunches (Coalition for Healthy School Food, n.d.; Employment and Social Development Canada, 2025) The Department of Health is the primary territorial funder, administering Nunavut School Food Program (NSFP) funding through Community Wellness Plans (CWPs). Municipal governments, District Education Authorities, and non-profit organizations are responsible for local program delivery and administration. Each CWP allocates funding for NSFPs, with the amount determined by the sponsoring agency. In 2023/24, a total of $1,726,646 from the Community Wellness Program, including $100,000 in enhancement funding, was allocated to support NSFPs across Nunavut. This amount represents 20.3% of the Community Wellness Program total funding of $8,469,696 – a major component of the total budget. Additional funding often comes from other sources, including Indigenous

Services Canada's Inuit Child First Initiative, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Breakfast Clubs of Canada, and the Nunavut Department of Education.

To better illustrate how these funding sources interact and contribute to school food programming across the territory, Figure 7 summarizes the primary funding streams that currently support SFPs in Nunavut.

Figure 7

A mapping of funding streams for school food programs in Nunavut, illustrating the pathways from government entities through middle agencies to local schools (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025, p. 41).



As shown in Figure 7, school food programs in Nunavut rely on a combination of territorial, federal, and community-based funding sources. While the Department of Health remains the primary territorial contributor through Community Wellness Programs, additional support from federal initiatives, non-profit organizations, and other government departments plays an important role in sustaining food program delivery. Despite this multi-source funding structure, funding levels remain insufficient, especially considering the higher costs of food and infrastructure due to geography. As a result, hamlets and District Education Authorities (DEAs) may also seek additional third-party funding or donations to supplement programming (Sharma, 2020). In 2023/24, 38% of schools reported compromising the quantity of food served, and 28% ran out of SFP funds at least once (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, additional funding was introduced to support food security initiatives across the territory. On April 3, 2020, the Government of Nunavut announced a joint investment with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) of more than $2 million, which was distributed to hamlets to deliver community food programs tailored to local needs (Government of Nunavut, 2020; Sharma, 2020). Later, on December 8, 2020, NTI announced an additional $8 million through the Indigenous Community Support Fund to support community food security and harvesting activities during the pandemic (NTI, 2020). These initiatives subsequently expanded into broader community-led food distribution and grocery voucher programs. Several pandemic-era voucher and food support programs continued until March 2025, after which new funding frameworks were introduced.

Many school and community food initiatives are also supported through federal programs such as Nutrition North Canada and the Inuit Child First Initiative. Under Nutrition

North Canada, the Harvesters Support Grant distributes limited funding through an application-based process, requiring Indigenous governments and organizations to compete for support for traditional harvesting activities such as hunting, fishing, equipment purchases, fuel, and community food-sharing programs that increase access to country foods (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2022). Complementing this initiative, the Community Food Programs Fund supports community-based programs including school meal programs, community freezers, food banks, and Elder meal programs that improve access to both traditional and store-bought foods in remote northern communities. The funding is allocated through an application process, with proposals assessed based on program criteria (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2022).

In addition to program funding, infrastructure investments also support school food initiatives. The School Food Infrastructure Fund (SFIF), managed by the United Way, provides federal funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to help non-profits purchase and install equipment for school food programs (United Way SDG, 2025). Schools cannot apply directly; instead, non-profits, charities, or community organizations running school food programs supported by a school board letter must apply. In Nunavut, schools can partner with a local non-profit, which installs equipment (e.g., retrofitted SeaCans) and runs the program, while the school provides space and access agreements. Communities with a food bank can also collaborate with non-profits to participate.

More recently, Nunavut became the first territory to sign an agreement with the federal government under the National School Food Program (NSFP). On February 28, 2025, the agreement secured approximately $7.6 million over three years to enhance school food programming, with the potential to support more than 11,000 students across the territory

(Employment and Social Development Canada, 2025). The agreement includes $2.3 million in the first year to support kitchen upgrades, staffing, more nutritious varieties of hot meals, and improved access to inuksiutit and culturally important foods such as caribou, char, and maqtaaq. Additionally, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) proposed $1.26 billion to be available over the next five years to establish comprehensive school food programs across Inuit Nunangat, including Nunavut's 11,000 students, covering infrastructure upgrades, daily breakfast and lunch operations, country foods, and staffing for remote communities (ITK, 2023).

ITK's *proposal* has *not yet been formally funded or approved* by the federal government. The proposal is part of ITK's broader advocacy and pre-budget submissions to secure long-term, Inuit-led school food programs across Inuit Nunangat. This ambitious federal funding request significantly exceeds the current $7.6 million National School Food Program allocation, highlighting the gap between existing breakfast and snack initiatives and the resources required to implement comprehensive daily lunch programs across Nunavut schools (ITK, 2023). Finally, on January 21, 2025, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. approved the distribution of $29.5 million to extend Nutrition North Canada initiatives including the Harvesters Support Grant and the Community Food Programs Fund through to March 31, 2027, ensuring continued support for community food security programs across Nunavut (Letts, 2025). This funding, while essential, remains temporary and contingent on political discretion, highlighting the cyclical and uncertain nature of food security support in Nunavut.

School Food Program Feasibility Study in Iqaluit

In January 2020, the Iqaluit District Education Authority (IDEA) conducted a feasibility study examining the implementation of daily lunch programs across Iqaluit's four schools: Inuksuk High School, Aqsarniit Middle School, Joamie Elementary School, and Nakasuk

Elementary School—serving approximately 1,200 students in total (Gregoire, 2020). Inuksuk High School was the only school offering lunch three days per week, while the remaining schools provided breakfast only. Most students went home for lunch, contributing to traffic congestion in Iqaluit and supervision challenges for families.

The study assessed four implementation options: (A) external catering with supporting kitchen infrastructure and staff recruited from southern Canada; (B) centralized meal production using Inuksuk High School's kitchen, with meals transported to other schools and local staff trained to prepare culturally relevant foods; (C) expansion of lunch service at Inuksuk High School only; and (D) installation of trailer kitchens at each school (Gregoire, 2020). Estimated annual food costs ranged from $1.17 to $1.22 million, equivalent to approximately $1,862–$2,800 per instructional school day (Gregoire, 2020).

Community feedback highlighted the need for adequate lunch supervision and acknowledged existing informal, volunteer-led lunch programs at Nakasuk and Joamie Elementary Schools for students in need. The absence of dedicated government funding prompted recommendations for further board deliberation, community fundraising, and a family survey to assess demand and feasibility (Gregoire, 2020). The feasibility study illustrates the complexity of implementing school food programs in Nunavut, as each proposed option required significant infrastructure investment, staffing solutions, and logistical coordination.

Overview of Existing School Food Programs in Nunavut

Most of Nunavut's 45 schools follow a split-day schedule with dismissal around 12:00 PM for lunch, with afternoon classes starting at 1:00 PM. This enables students to return home rather than eat at school. The midday break aligns with Inuit cultural norms of shared family meals featuring traditional inuksiutit. Importantly, this facilitates parental supervision at home

during daylight hours in Arctic conditions and gives teachers an uninterrupted lunch break. Due to high food insecurity in Nunavut, staff, administrators, and community members support the foundation of lunch program, though it is challenging to prepare or store inuksiutit in limited school facilities amid high food insecurity and import costs. Currently, there are only few schools in the Territory that have an established lunch program. Programs vary widely, and based on the current available data, Iqaluit is best funded (reference).

Drawing on the data that was available, this analysis focuses on three of Nunavut's 24 communities where more detailed school-level information could be obtained. The remaining 21 communities are represented in the table to provide broader territorial context.

Iqaluit—Inuksuk High School

The following detailed information is from the author's role as the food program coordinator of the school. Inuksuk High School in Iqaluit runs a student-led school food program that provides free, nutritious hot lunches on Tuesdays and Thursdays, emphasizing from scratch cooking with proteins, carbohydrates, vegetables, salads, and culturally relevant inuksiutit. These meals are designed to address high rates of food insecurity where nearly 70 percent of local Inuit households are experiencing severe food insecurity.

Initiated in 2017 by the food studies teacher, Lael Kronick, and supported with funding from the Nunavut Food Security Coalition and Qikiqtani Inuit Association, the program involves grades 10-12 students in meal preparation, hydroponic greens production, nutrition education, and cultural education through diverse menus based on student input. As a result of the National School Food Program funding that the school received in December 2025, the lunch program was expanded to include catered lunches from local businesses for Monday,

Wednesday, and Friday. Menus include pizza, pancit (Filipino noodles), and breakfast sandwiches. The lunch program assistants are students hired to help with the program delivery.

The difficulty with this staffing model is that only three to five students can be employed, while more than 10 are interested in working in the SFP. In addition, there is also no substitute list for student lunch program assistants. So, when student staff are absent, school administrators must ask teachers to volunteer to help; as a result, the teachers may spend their prep time washing dishes. This staffing model highlights both the leadership opportunities for students and the operational challenges of relying primarily on student labour for the SFP.

All Nunavut high schools offer Nunavut Cultural Studies (NCS). One of the introductory level courses is NCS1041: Meal Planning and Preparation and NCS1099: Seal Skin Preparation (Ilinniapaa Learning Network, 2024, p. 238). If there is no foods teacher, the NCS can offer support for the implementation of a school food program as a community school adaptation. That means the NCS classes can take the lead on SFPs. Figure 8 shows food-related courses that students can be enrolled in at Inuksuk High School (Ilinniapaa Learning Network, 2024, p. 238). The students are earning credits and contributing to the lunch program. Each semester, students can work towards five courses: FOD1010, FOD1080, FOD140, FOD2140, FOD3910. This is a unique school adaptation that may be easy to implement in other schools in the territory.

Figure 8

The Inuksuk High School Offers Alberta CTS Related to Foods (FOD)

FOODS (FOD)

Students examine the role of food, looking beyond consumption to production, visual appreciation, nutrition, meal planning, economics and preparation.

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/cts/program-of-studies/hrh.aspx

Introductory level		Intermediate level		Advanced level	
Code	**Course title**	**Code**	**Course title**	**Code**	**Course title**
FOD1010	Food Basics	FOD2030	Food Decisions & Health	FOD3010	Food for Life Stages
FOD1020	Contemporary Baking	FOD2040	Cake & Pastry	FOD3020	Nutrition & Digestion
FOD1030	Snacks & Appetizers	FOD2050	Bread Products	FOD3030	Creative Baking
FOD1040	Meal Planning 1	FOD2060	Milk Products & Eggs	FOD3040	Yeast Products
FOD1050	Fast & Convenience Foods	FOD2070	Soups & Sauces	FOD3050	Advanced Soups & Sauces
FOD1060	Canadian Heritage Foods	FOD2090	Creative Cold Foods	FOD3060	Food Presentation
FOD1070	Farm to Table	FOD2100	Basic Meat Cookery	FOD3070	Short-order Cooking
FOD1080	Food & Nutrition Basics	FOD2110	Fish & Poultry	FOD3080	Advanced Meat Cookery
FOD1910	FOD Project A	FOD2120	Meal Planning 2	FOD3090	Butcher Shop
		FOD2130	Vegetarian Cuisine	FOD3100	Entertaining with Food
		FOD2140	Rush-hour Cuisine	FOD3110	Food Processing
		FOD2150	Food Safety & Sanitation	FOD3120	Food Evolution/Innovation
		FOD2160	Food Venture	FOD3130	The Food Entrepreneur
		FOD2170	International Cuisine	FOD3160	Regional Cuisine
		FOD2180	Vegetables & Fruits	FOD3910	FOD Project D
		FOD2190	Grains, Legumes, Pulses, Nuts & Seeds	FOD3920	FOD Project E
		FOD2910	FOD Project B	FOD3950	FOD Advanced Practicum
		FOD2920	FOD Project C		

Cambridge Bay

In Cambridge Bay, SFPs are funded by the Inuit Child First Initiative. They hire community members to run the SFPs instead of regular school staff, teachers, or student support assistants. To meet the requirement of the funding, the kitchen can only be used for the school food program and not for educational purposes.

Kinngait

In Kinngait, Sam Pudlat Elementary School and Peter Pitseolak High School both have daily breakfast and lunch programs by a designated chef funded through Jordan's Principle funding.

Challenges Faced by Communities / Schools Without Food Programs

Communities lacking established school food programs face persistent barriers, including high food costs, unreliable shipping routes, limited kitchen infrastructure, and insufficient sustainable funding and trained staff. However, the specific challenges faced by each school and community are unique and shaped by local conditions, resources, and priorities. As a result, fully understanding the barriers and opportunities for school food programming requires meaningful consultation with the community, including school staff, families, local leaders, and Elders, which is outside of the scope of this project. While Inuit-led, community-designed responses such as partnerships with local hunters are emerging across Nunavut, structural constraints remain significant. Nunavut's 2024–2027 National School Food Program agreement indicates that new federal funding will enhance access to *inuksiutit* and support Inuit Elders' participation in school food programming. Engaging communities in the planning and implementation of these initiatives is essential to ensure that programs reflect local needs, support culturally relevant foods, and build sustainable school food systems.

Figure 9

Map of Nunavut Showcasing the 25 Communities and the 3 Administrative Regions (World Atlas, n.d.)

The three administrative regions of Nunavut are Kitikmeot, Kivalliq and the Qikiqtaaluk (see Figure 9). Schools in each region are supported by the educational administration office for the

region to which they belong. There are five municipalities in the Kitikmeot, seven municipalities in the Kivalliq, and 13 municipalities in the Qikiqtaaluk. Across the territory, there are 45 schools and a breakdown of each school's food programs are presented in Table 2. Table 2 incorporates both documented research and my lived experience as an SFP Coordinator. References are provided for all data drawn from external websites and articles; all other content is based on my firsthand knowledge and practice in the field.

Table 2

The schools in each community (Nunavut Public Library Services, n.d.) and current existing SFPs.

Community	School	Program	Staffing Models, Kitchen Infrastructure, and Funding Sources
Apex (Iqaluit)	Nanook School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Arctic Bay	Inuujaq School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Clyde River	Quluaq School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Grise Fiord	Umimmak School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Igloolik	Iglulik High School	Breakfast Program	Ataguttaaluk Elementary School students begin each day with a nutritious breakfast that could include cereal with milk, yogurt, cheese, fresh fruits and meats. In the afternoon, students were served granola bars, fresh vegetables, crackers and juice, with soup offered twice weekly.

			Inuksiutit are served when available from the local Hunters and Trappers organization (Baffinland, 2021).
Igloolik	Sivuniit Middle School	Grow food indoor gardens, cultural food, purchase local food	Grow food indoor gardens, cultural food, purchase local food (Farm to Cafeteria Canada, n.d.).
Igloolik	Ataguttaaluk Elementary School	Breakfast Program	Arctic Fresh is a community-based social enterprise operating out of lgloolik. The initial venture was to create a store that could provide groceries and household items at a reasonable cost to the community.
Iqaluit	Aqsarniit Ilinniarvik	Breakfast Program	
Iqaluit	Inuksuk High School	Breakfast Program Tuesday and Thursday Lunch Program, Grab and Go Fridge,	Staffing model includes a full-time food and nutrition teacher who coordinates the lunch program twice a week. There are hired student lunch program assistants that are paid $20 for serving and cleaning. Food hampers (turkey, ham, chicken) available to all students to bring home. Funding from NSFP.
Iqaluit	Joamie School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Iqaluit	Nakasuk School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Iqaluit	École des Trois-Soleils	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Kimmirut	Qaqqalik School	Breakfast Program, Snacks, and Lunch Program	Local nurse obtained funding for programs $1 million Non-Profit Indigenous Kids Network of Canada; initiative started in 2023 after community needs assessment carried out. Weekly Meals each Friday.
Kinngait	Sam Pudlat School	Breakfast Program	Daily lunch by designated chef funded by Jordan's Principle.

Kinngait	Peter Pitseolak School	Breakfast Program	Daily lunch by designated chef funded by Jordan's Principle.
Pangnirtung	Attagoyuk Illisavik	Breakfast Program No Lunch Program	The school clubs and sports team do Cafe fundraising to support their travels. There is holiday feast for the staff and students in December. The school host community breakfast for everyone in Pangnirtung for during special events like Orange Shirt Day (Attagoyuk Ilisavik, n.d.).
Pangnirtung	Alookie School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Pond Inlet	Nasivvik High School	Breakfast Program	Staring 2014, Baffinland has been sponsoring lunch program (Baffindland, 2014).
Pond Inlet	Ulaajuk School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Qikiqtarjuaq	Inuksuit School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Resolute Bay	Qarmartalik School	Breakfast Program and Snack Program	Food insecurity initiatives program delivers various food-related initiatives to cope with rampant inflation of food process. Dairy, meat, grains, vegetables and fruits are provided in their snack program (Government of Nunavut, n.d.).
Sanikiluaq	Paatsaali School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Sanikiluaq	Nuiyak Elementary School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Sanirajak	Arnaqjuaq School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Arviat	Qitiqliq Middle School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.

Arviat	John Arnalukjuak High School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Arviat	Levi Angmak Elementary School	Breakfast Program	Calm Air funds a school holiday feast.
Baker Lake	Jonah Amitnaaq Secondary School	Breakfast Program	Calm Air funds a school holiday feast.
Baker Lake	Rachel Arngnammaktiq Elementary School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Chesterfield Inlet	Victor Sammurtok School	Breakfast Program	Offers bananas, apples, and cereal for students (Victor Sammurtok, n.d.).
Coral Harbour	Sakku School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Naujaat	Tuugaalik High School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Naujaat	Tusarvik Elementary School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Rankin Inlet	Simon Alaittuq School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Rankin Inlet	Maani Ulujuk Ilinniarvik	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Rankin Inlet	Leo Ussak Elementary School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Whale Cove	Inuglak School	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.
Cambridge Bay	Kiilinik High School	Breakfast Program	Funded by Inuit Child First Initiative, staffed by community members, creating jobs for Inuit in the school outside of the educational

			staff. The kitchen must be used only for the program, not for school courses to meet the requirement of the funding. The Cambridge Bay Wellness Centre operates a number of programs which include a food-related component. There is a weekly food bank which supports about 50 families.
Cambridge Bay	Kullik Ilihakvik	Breakfast Program	Hot lunches are available on Wednesdays and Fridays. Mondays will be hotdogs for students. The Hamlet staff support the lunch program (Kullik Ilihakvik, n.d.).
Gjoa Haven	Qiqirtaq Ilihakvik	Breakfast Program and Lunch Program	Daily lunch program is available for students.
Gjoa Haven	Quqshuun Ilihakvik	Breakfast Program	Daily lunch program is available for students.
Kugaaruk	Arviligruaq Ilinniarvik	Breakfast Program and Hot Lunch	The breakfasts are served at 8:00am to 8:45am, Monday to Friday, and the lunches are served from 12:00pm to 12:50pm, 2 cooks, and 2 servers. The funding is from Brighter Futures (GovNunavut, Community Projects for Kugaaruk).
Kugluktuk	Kugluktuk High School	Breakfast Program	Unique community adaptations: Kugluktuk Food Bank's funding foes directly to the high school and elementary school to help buy groceries to feed students (APTN News, 2026).
Kugluktuk	Jimmy Hikok Ilihakvik	Breakfast Program twice a week	Unique community adaptations - Kugluktuk Food Bank's funding foes directly to the high school and elementary school to help buy groceries to feed students (APTN News, 2026).
Taloyoak	Netsilik Ilihakvik	Breakfast Program	Teachers and Student Support Assistants help with classroom-based snacks delivery.

Gaps in School Food Programs in Nunavut

Formal guidance for SFPs is embedded in territorial strategies (e.g., the Nunavut Food Security Strategy and Nunavut Wellness Agreement) and school-level documents that outline objectives such as universality, cultural relevance, and safe food handling. At the school and community level, day-to-day practices are governed by locally developed procedures such as staffing expectations, rules for serving inuksiutit, and coordination with community partners, which vary across communities and are not consistently documented or publicly available. Key barriers include inadequate and unstable funding, limited kitchen infrastructure, chronic staffing shortages and volunteer burnout, and high food and shipping costs. These pressures make it difficult for schools to move beyond ready-made (toast, bagels, cereal, milk and yogurt) breakfast only models to daily lunch programs and to sustain high quality, culturally relevant meals, even where there is strong community will and emerging Inuit led initiatives (Ruetz & Tasala, 2025)

Conclusion

While universal access to school food programs is reported, publicly available data does not allow consistent identification of communities without daily lunch programs, highlighting a transparency or data gap in Nunavut's school food governance. Nonetheless, the presence and persistence of breakfast and snack programs across all schools despite enormous barriers is a positive and valuable finding and illustrative of the need. This systems mapping was conducted without direct engagement with schools, educators, or community members. All findings are derived from publicly available documents, government reports, media coverage, and grey literature. While this approach supports a high-level understanding of Nunavut's school food system, it limits the ability to verify school-level and community-based/driven operations,

funding allocations, and informal community practices. This includes the likely presence of informal or ad hoc food supports such as teachers personally providing snacks, schools keeping small supplies on hand, or staff-led initiatives that are not formally documented. Food sharing in Nunavut is grounded in values of care, humility, and reciprocity, operating through strong informal networks where families regularly exchange food and access to traditional foods depends on relationships (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2016). Historically, this system functioned as a "moral economy," reducing reliance on formal food systems and supporting community-wide sharing during large gatherings and feasts. However, in larger centres like Iqaluit, sharing can be less frequent today due to increased reliance on store-bought food. These practices are not captured in available data but may play a meaningful role in meeting students' day-to-day needs. These gaps are treated as findings of the system itself, reflecting structural limitations in reporting rather than deficiencies in community programming.

Chapter 5

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in Practice: Nunavut School Food Program Resource Manual

Created by Aira Villanueva

Land Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that this work takes place within Inuit Nunangat, specifically in Nunavut, the homeland of Inuit and a region governed under the Nunavut Agreement. I recognize Inuit as the rights holders and stewards of the land, waters, and food systems, and I respect the role of Inuit knowledge, including Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, in guiding this work.

Executive Summary

The Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in Practice: Nunavut School Food Program Resource Manual is a guidance document intended to support the planning, delivery, and management of school-based food programs across Nunavut. The resource manual's main purpose is to improve student learning, health, and well-being by ensuring consistent access to nutritious, safe, inclusive, and culturally relevant foods in schools. The resource manual also emphasizes the importance of supporting students in ways that reflect community values and Inuit culture.

The resource manual provides practical direction for Food Coordinators, educators, and school administrators. It covers key areas such as program standards, policies, procurement, funding, and daily operations. It also includes guidance on menu planning aligned with the Inuit Calendar Year and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles, along with inventory management, food storage, staffing responsibilities, and strategies to reduce workload pressures and prevent burnout. Health and safety are also addressed through kitchen sanitation, food handling procedures, and equipment requirements.

In addition, the manual offers useful tools such as sample menus, recipe ideas, food safety logs, and flexible program models like grab-and-go meals and school food support initiatives. It recognizes the unique challenges of operating in Nunavut communities and highlights the importance of seasonal availability, local input, and culturally grounded approaches.

Introduction

This resource manual document was developed as part of a requirement for the degree of Master of Education in Education for Change at the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. It is based on my experience coordinating school food programming at Inuksuk High School in Iqaluit, where I have worked for the past two years. In this role, I plan, organize, and deliver school-based meal programs in collaboration with students, staff, and community members.

Through this work, I have gained hands-on experience in menu planning, food procurement, safe food handling, and day-to-day program coordination within the unique context of northern and remote communities. My approach focuses on making school food programs that are accessible, culturally relevant, and responsive to local needs and available resources.

My understanding of school food programming has also been informed by time spent in multiple Nunavut communities, including Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Arctic Bay, and Pond Inlet. These experiences have helped shape my awareness of the diverse realities, challenges, and strengths that exist across communities in Nunavut.

I created this guide to support educators who take on the role of Food Coordinator, often in addition to regular teaching responsibilities. The goal of the resource manual is to provide clear, practical guidance that can be adapted to different school sizes, staffing structures, and community contexts across Nunavut. Where possible, I have worked in collaboration with Elders, community members, and school staff to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles into food programming, supporting student well-being while strengthening connections to culture, land, and community.

Qujannamiik, Mat’na, Nakurmiik, Quana, Thank you!

Terms and Definitions

Elder: A respected Inuit community knowledge holder who may support cultural teaching, food preparation, harvesting knowledge, and intergenerational learning. Nunavut's school food funding explicitly includes wages for Inuit Elders to provide traditional knowledge (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2025).

Food insecurity: The lack of consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food necessary for an active and healthy life (United Nations World Food Programme, 2025). In Nunavut, food insecurity is widespread and deeply connected to colonial disruptions of Inuit food systems, climate change, limited infrastructure, and the high cost of store-bought food (Tarasuk et al., 2019).

Food security: Condition in which individuals and households have reliable access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. This concept often focuses on availability and access but may not fully address cultural relevance, local control over food systems, or reliable access to potable water (Morrison, 2011).

Food sovereignty: The right of communities, particularly Indigenous peoples, to define and control their own food systems, including how food is harvested, produced, distributed, and consumed, in ways that uphold cultural traditions, self-determination, and ecological balance (Martin, 2014).

Food Coordinator: The individual responsible for planning, organizing, and managing the day-to-day operations of a school food program, including food preparation, procurement, safety, and record-keeping.

Food procurement: The process of sourcing and obtaining food and supplies through retailers, suppliers, and local or community-based harvesting and sharing networks.

Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO): Community-based Inuit organizations that play a central role in managing harvesting and supporting traditional food systems. Each community has an HTO made up of local Inuit hunters and trappers, and these organizations help regulate harvesting practices, distribute country food, and ensure sustainable use of wildlife resources under Inuit governance systems.

Inuksiuit / Country food: Traditional, locally harvested foods such as caribou, Arctic char, seal, and other wildlife. These foods are central to Inuit culture, identity, nutrition, and land-based practices, and play a vital role in community well-being and food systems (Egeland et al., 2015).

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ): The Inuit system of knowledge, values, and beliefs rooted in lived experience, cultural traditions, and relationships with the land. IQ guides decision-making, community practices, and interactions with the environment and one another.

Nunavut School Food Program (NUSFP): A school-delivered initiative that provides students with access to nutritious and culturally relevant food, supporting learning, health, and well-being while aligning with community priorities and Inuit values. The NUSFP is a Government of Nunavut – Department of Education program that includes breakfast, lunch, snacks, or other food supports to students during the school day.

Nunavut School Food Program Resource Manual
Overview and Objectives

Nunavut's school food programs play a vital role in addressing high levels of food insecurity in the territory, particularly among Inuit children and youth. Food costs in Nunavut are significantly higher than the Canadian average due to its remote Arctic geography and location, reliance on air and sealift transportation, and limited local food systems. As a result, many households struggle to consistently access affordable, nutritious food. School food programs therefore function as an essential intervention to reduce hunger during the school day and support student learning, attendance, and well-being.

School food programs provide students with meals and/or snacks at little or no cost. The food insecurity rates in Nunavut are among the highest in Canada with over 60% of residents and approximately three-quarters of children experiencing some level of food insecurity (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2021). School food programs function not only as educational supports but also as essential social safety nets that enable students to attend, engage, and succeed in school.

The National School Food Policy (NSFP**)** is a federal policy developed by the Government of Canada, through Employment and Social Development Canada in 2024. Its vision is for all children and youth in Canada to have access to nutritious food in inclusive, non-stigmatizing school environments that support learning, well-being, and connections to culture and community (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2024).

The NSFP is guided by principles of accessibility, health promotion, inclusivity, flexibility, sustainability, and accountability. It also emphasizes culturally appropriate programming, Indigenous leadership, and collaboration with communities, Elders, and local food systems.

Maataaq is frozen whale skin and blubber – typically narwhal or beluga. Students love to pair it with aromat seasoning and soy sauce.

Nunavut's school food programming (NUSFP) operates within this broader federal context while being shaped primarily by territorial needs, community priorities, and local implementation. In Nunavut, school food programs do not operate according to a single standardized model but are run as a collection of locally delivered programs across schools and communities. These programs are supported in part through federal investments aligned with the NSFP and build on existing territorial and community led initiatives. NUSFP serves approximately 11,000 students across 25 communities. It is designed to respond to the unique realities of Nunavut, including high food costs, geographic isolation, and high rates of food insecurity (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2025). Within this context, programs often incorporate both store-bought foods and country foods such as tuktu, maaqtaaq, iqaluk, and berries, depending on availability and community practices. Country foods are sourced either from local HTOs or local processing facilities.

School food programs (SFP) provide important benefits that support students' overall success and well-being. By ensuring regular access to nutritious meals and snacks, they help reduce hunger and improve students' ability to focus, participate, and learn in the classroom. These programs are linked to better attendance, increased energy levels, and improved academic outcomes (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2024). They also promote healthy eating habits and food skills that can last a lifetime.

In Nunavut, SFP are especially important because they help address food insecurity and the high cost and limited availability of food. Offering a SFP creates a more equitable environment where all students start the day with the same basic support, regardless of their home situation. School food programs also strengthens cultural connections when traditional foods are included, builds a sense of community through shared meals, and supports student well-being in a respectful and inclusive way. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) is reflected in NUSFP through principles such as sharing, respect, collaboration, and care for others. Food is provided in a way that supports collective well-being and community responsibility.

Key Lessons from a New School Food Program Coordinator

This resource manual is a product of what I have learned while coordinating a school food program in Nunavut. These reflections come from my experience as a Food and Nutrition teacher at Inuksuk High School (IHS), where I manage a lunch program alongside my teaching responsibilities while working closely with students, staff, Elders, and administrators.

When I first began, I did not have all the answers. Much of what I have learned has come through daily experience and practice—figuring things out as I went, adjusting, and learning from both successes and challenges. This role often extends beyond the classroom, requiring flexibility, patience, and a willingness to learn from others in the school and community.

I acknowledge that I also recognize that I am not always the expert in the room. This required me to respect and draw on the knowledge and experience of Elders and community members. I am sharing these lessons in the hope that they offer some guidance, reassurance, and practical insight to others who are in a similar position or new to it. This resource manual reflects what has helped me navigate the role to date, while recognizing that each school and community has its own strengths, needs, and ways of doing things.

- It is important to develop and hold an understanding and appreciation of Inuit culture. The inclusion of Inuit culture in Nunavut educational settings is essential for a respectful engagement with students and ensures that programs are relevant to the community.
- Teacher burnout is real. Coordinating SFP often extends beyond regular hours. Effective time management, clear boundaries, and prioritizing rest are essential for maintaining well-being and long-term sustainability in the role.
- For new teachers or Food Coordinators, regular communication with the administrative team, and the school staff is essential. Ongoing discussions on successes and challenges helps clarify expectations, roles, and responsibilities.
- Experienced staff members are valuable resources. Consulting veteran teachers can provide insight into school culture, annual routines, and practical strategies. Staff meetings are important opportunities for guidance and mentorship.
- High school students are important contributors to program development. Senior students are often willing to share knowledge about school traditions and existing programs.
- When starting a SFP, it is helpful to begin with simple menus, such as sandwiches, or soup. This allows procedures to be clearly established before introducing more complex menu items.
- Mistakes are a natural part of learning in a new role. Food Coordinators, Chefs and Food and Nutrition Teachers carry significant responsibilities, and practicing self-compassion is important for professional growth. Remember that mistakes are inevitable.
- The school food program should not depend on a single individual. Clear checklists and standardized operating procedures (SOPs) help ensure the program can continue smoothly if staff changes occur.
- Embrace the role of a Nunavut School Food Coordinator – it is a truly rewarding opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Nunavummiut students.

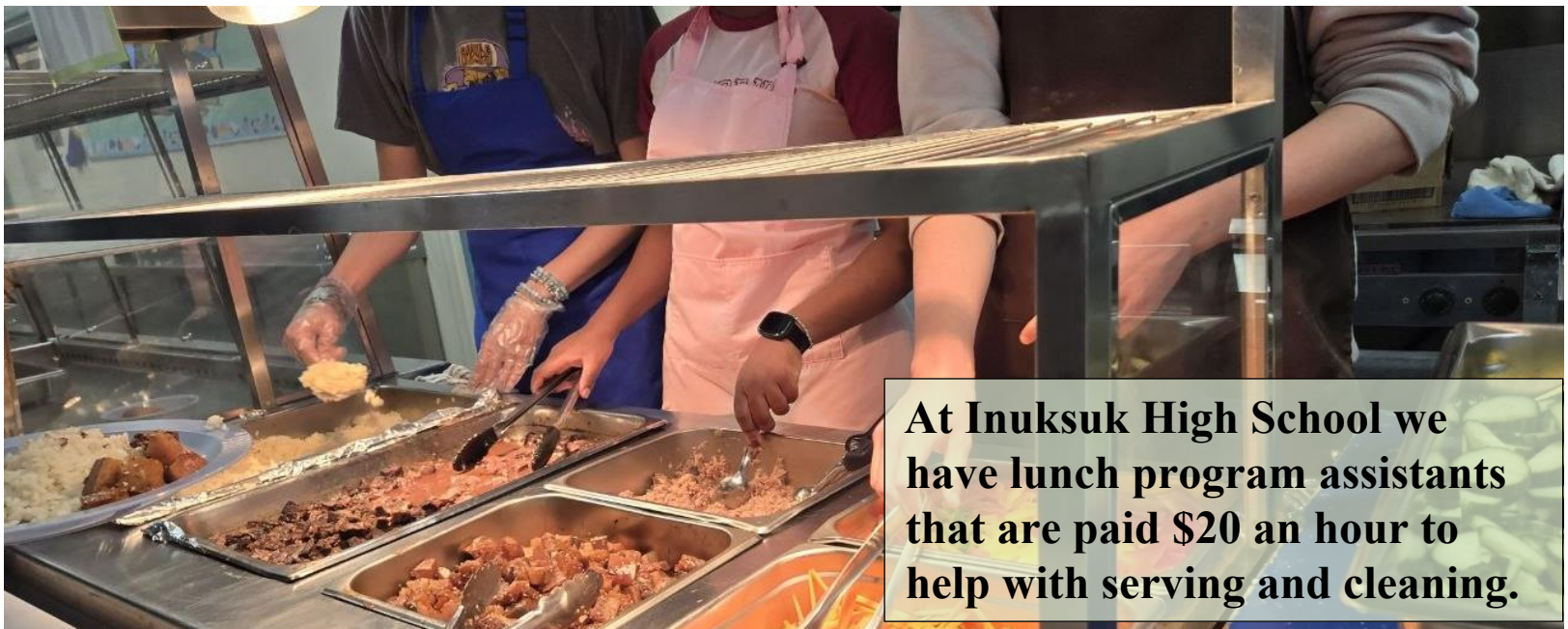
School Food Program Standards and Expectations

At Inuksuk High School, there is a breakfast program Coordinator and lunch food program Coordinator. The programs serve approximately 150-200 students every day and include breakfast, a lunch program and a Grab & Go fridge. As the Food and Nutrition teacher, I oversee the lunch program and have developed this resource manual for educators who may take on a similar role. The program is delivered in collaboration with students, Elders, staff, and administrators.

Day-to-day operations vary but include menu planning, food preparation, safe food handling, and food procurement. Generally, a single SFP Coordinator is responsible for managing all aspects of school food programming. Together, these standards and practices support a program that is organized, inclusive, and responsive to the unique context of each school community. During the serving of the lunch program from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM, Elders are allowed to go in line first, then students who have clubs during lunch, and then the rest of the students.

School Food Program Flow Chart for General Nunavut School

School Food Program Flow Chart (Breakfast and Lunch)	
7:50-8:10	Breakfast served (cereal, bagels, fruits, milk)
9:00-9:30	Prepare serving materials such as plates, utensils, and the cardboard boxes and ulus for inuksiuit feast. Start cooking what is on the menu or reheat leftovers if needed.
10:00-10:30	Thaw the country food outside, as per Elders' guideline.
11:30-12:00	Prepare the food and set up serving area. Ensure proper handwashing and food safety practices.
12:00-12:30	Lunch is served; students must line up to maintain order. Servers may include staff, or students depending on school model.
12:30-12:45	Second or third servings available. Pack leftovers for take-away (students can grab these for dinner, or snacks in the afternoon). Begin dishwashing and clean up.
12:45-1:00	Continue to clean dishes and kitchen area
1:00-2:00	Prepare food for the next day. Refill the Grab & Go fridge.
2:00-3:00	Prepare the preorder for the following week.



Suggestions for School Food Program Coordination (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Aligned)

Use food programming as an opportunity to strengthen cultural learning, including sharing knowledge about traditional foods, harvesting practices, and community food systems.

Piliriqatigiinniq (Working Together) and Pijitsirniq (Serving and Leadership)

- For feasts or celebrations, plan ahead and coordinate additional support from Student Support Assistants and teachers, ensuring clear communication in advance.
- Involve Elders and students in menu planning when possible to support engagement, ownership, and interest in the lunch program.
- Gather regular feedback from students and staff to better understand preferences, improve menus, and reduce food waste. Their input is essential, as they are the ones consuming the meals.

Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (Respect and Relationships)

- Post monthly lunch menus in shared school spaces to keep staff and students informed, build anticipation, and support participation.
- Align menus with seasonal changes and school events to strengthen connections between food, culture, and the school community (examples: Pride Week, Orange Shirt Day).
- Ensure that all the dietary needs of the students are included and that all students can access meals in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Qanuqtuurniq (Innovation and Problem-Solving) and Aajiiqatigiingniq (Shared Decisions)

- Plan one to two weeks ahead for ordering, storage, and delivery due to long distances from southern suppliers. Maintain a small supply of shelf-stable and frozen foods to manage potential delays.
- Keep backup meal options simple and flexible (e.g., soup, pasta, rice dishes) to adapt to unexpected shortages or delays.
- Adjust portion planning and menu choices based on attendance patterns and feedback to decrease food waste while ensuring that students are adequately fed

Frozen raw tuktu (caribou), Maataaq (whale), and iqaluk (Arctic char) are all staple country food that we serve for NUSFP.

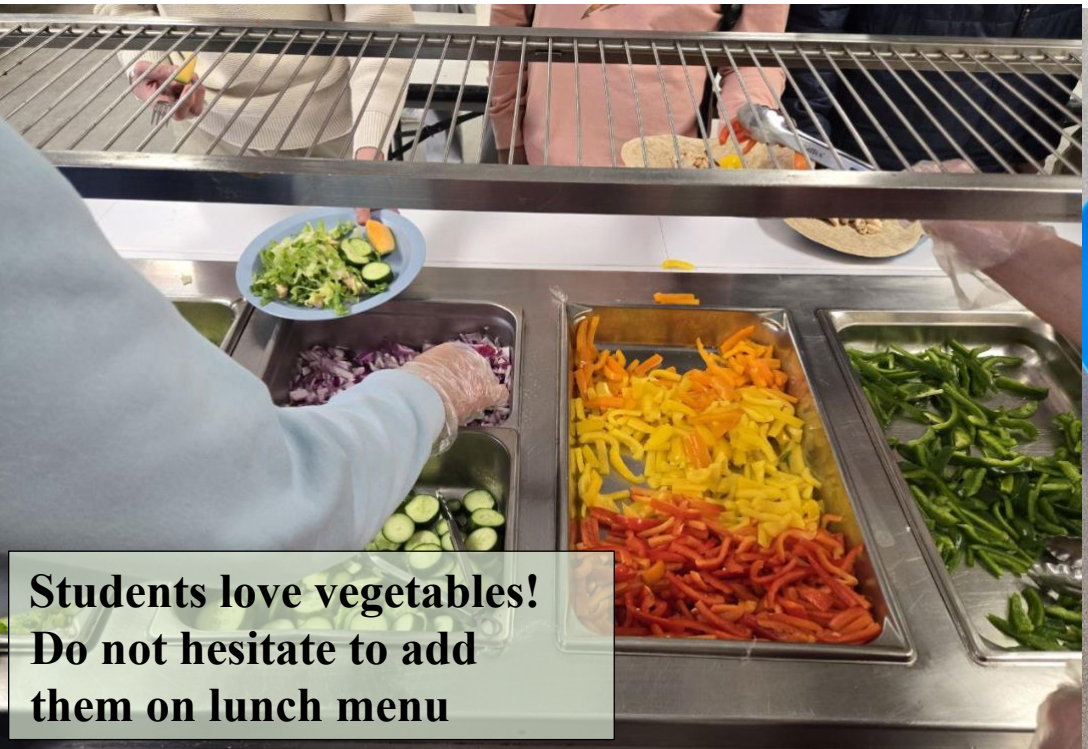
School Food Program (SFP) Operation

The SFP operates through careful planning, preparation, and service of meals and snacks to students in a consistent and organized manner. In Nunavut, menus are developed with attention to nutrition, cultural relevance, and available foods. Supplies are sourced from local vendors and, whenever possible, from country food providers such as the local Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO). Food is safely stored and prepared by staff according to local Public Health guidelines. The program requires ongoing coordination, especially in remote communities where deliveries can be affected by weather. It is supported by school staff and community partners to ensure all students are served in an inclusive and reliable way.

The involvement of Elders in NUSFP is essential for the reclamation and continuation of Inuit culture and knowledge that was disrupted through colonization and the legacies of Canada's Indian Residential School system. Many Inuit children were separated from their families and communities, interrupting the transfer of language, cultural practices, and traditional knowledge related to harvesting, preparing, and sharing country foods (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2021).

The inclusion of Elders in SFPs supports the restoration of these intergenerational connections. Elders provide students with direct access to Inuit knowledge systems, including teachings on Inuksiuit, seasonal harvesting practices, and the cultural importance of food sharing within communities. This supports cultural continuity, strengthens student identity, and contributes to broader efforts of healing and cultural revitalization within schools.

Menu planning is student-centred, developed collaboratively with school staff, and with guidance from Elders. Monthly menus are posted in visible school locations to ensure students are informed of upcoming meals. This promotes familiarity with the food being served and may support increased student participation and school attendance.



Challenges of Hosting School Food Programs in Nunavut

This section outlines key challenges associated with implementing and sustaining school food programs in Nunavut. These challenges reflect both practical and systemic barriers. Despite these barriers, school food programs play an important role in supporting student health, learning, and food security, making ongoing investments essential.

Infrastructure and Facilities

- Nunavut's school infrastructure is aging, with some buildings dating back to the late 1960s.
- Schools are often the only public buildings in the community; as a result, utilization rates are high, which limits space for NUSFP and kitchen expansion.
- Many schools lack adequate kitchen facilities, equipment, and storage to support hot meal programs.
- Upgrades and renovations to school infrastructure can take significant time, from months to several years.
- Electrical and structural limitations can restrict the use of even small kitchen appliances.

Cost and Food Affordability

- The high cost of food in Nunavut significantly impacts program budgets and limits menu options.
- Transportation and shipping costs increase the price of both fresh and non-perishable foods.
- Funding may not always keep pace with rising food prices, making it difficult to sustain consistent quality programming.
- Food support often does not match school needs, with bulk canned goods creating storage issues, limiting variety, increasing workload, and reducing access to fresh or culturally appropriate foods.

Food System and Supply Challenges

- Communities often rely on a limited number of suppliers, sometimes only one store, affecting availability, quality, and price.
- Deliveries are dependent on weather and long transportation routes, leading to delays and inconsistent supply.
- Perishable foods may arrive with reduced shelf life due to long transit times.

Access to Country Foods (Inuksiuit)

- Availability of traditional foods is highly seasonal and dependent on harvesting conditions.
- Climate change and wildlife disruptions are affecting the predictability of harvesting.
- Limited freezer and storage capacity can restrict the ability to store country foods.
- Programs must remain flexible and adapt menus based on food availability.

Human Resources and Capacity

- Limited staff capacity can affect food preparation, service, and program coordination.
- Some schools do not have dedicated food program staff or sufficient training opportunities

Country foods are an important part of Inuit culture, identity, and nutrition in Nunavut. Under the territory's Food Safety Regulations, country food that is harvested and handled in traditional ways is generally exempt from abattoir-style processing, but when it is served in schools it must still be prepared and stored in a permitted school kitchen that follows Nunavut's food-safety standard (Government of Nunavut, 2024, and Nunavut Food Security


Mamaqtuq!
ᒪᒪᖅᑐᓗᒪᓕᕆᔨᒃ!
This is so delicious!
C’est vraiment délicieux!

Policy and Guidelines

School Food Programs in Nunavut must comply with three key food safety policies and guidelines: (1) Nunavut Public Health Act, (2) the Government of Nunavut *Food Safety Toolkit* document, and (3) the *Serving Country Food in Government-Funded Facilities and Community Programs* document. Together, these ensure that school food programming is safe, consistent, and importantly allow country foods to be included in school meals in a way that respects Inuit food systems.

Environmental Health Officer Public Health Inspections

School Food Programs must comply with Nunavut's Public Health Act. Compliance is enforced by Environmental Health Officers (EHOs), who conduct routine and risk-based inspections of school kitchens and food storage areas. These inspections focus on sanitation, temperature control, pest management, and prevention of cross-contamination.

EHOs have the authority to issue orders, require corrective actions, suspend operations, or order the disposal of unsafe food. Inspections may occur with advance notification, and Food Coordinators are expected to be present during visits to respond to questions and provide program information.

General expectations include:

- Temperature logs must be maintained for all refrigerators and freezers, with regular monitoring completed and recorded (see Appendix A – Fridge/Freezer Temperature Logs).
- Approved cleaning and sanitizing solutions must be available and used regularly to maintain safe food preparation areas.

Government of Nunavut Food Safety Toolkit

NUSFP Coordinators are expected to use the Government of Nunavut's *Food Safety Toolkit*. This toolkit, developed by the Department of Health, provides guidance to support compliance with food safety standards and best practices in food service operations.

The toolkit includes:

- Factsheets outlining food safety requirements, including handwashing, food storage, temperature control, cleaning and sanitizing, dishwashing, and emergency procedures (such as boil water advisories and power outages in food premises).
- Operational tools such as logs, forms, factsheets, and posters that support the safe day-to-day operation of school food programs and demonstrate how food safety requirements are applied in practice.

***Tuktu* (caribou) is a pillar of Inuit culture and a central part of food system in Nunavut. Serving tuktu connects students to the *Nuna* (Land), the Inuit Calendar Year, and generations of hunters who have stewarded the land for centuries.**

Serving Country Food in Government-Funded Facilities and Community Programs

The *Serving Country Food in Government-Funded Facilities and Community Programs* document provides required guidance for incorporating country foods into school food programming while complying with the Public Health Act. It was developed by the Government of Nunavut in collaboration with the Nunavut Food Security Coalition to safely increase access to country foods in high-risk settings such as schools (Government of Nunavut & Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2017).

This document applies to all SFPs because schools are government-funded facilities that serve high-risk populations, including children. As a result, strict food safety procedures must be followed when handling country foods.

The document outlines Nunavut-specific procedures, including:

- Inspecting deliveries to ensure safe temperatures (≤4°C for refrigerated items; frozen foods must remain frozen upon arrival).
- Repackaging food in approved food-safe materials.
- Labeling and tracking food using required documentation forms.
- Safe storage and thawing practices, including refrigeration and placement on lower shelves to prevent cross-contamination.
- Cooking country foods to safe internal temperatures (fish ≥70°C; seal and whale ≥75°C). Raw fish must be frozen at -20°C for at least 7 days when required.
- Following strict handwashing, cross-contamination prevention, and appropriate feast protocols.

Tracking forms must be completed as part of program documentation (see Appendix B – Country Food Tracking Form).

There is no tool quite like the *ulu* for preparing *iqaluk* (Arctic char). Students in Nunavut are preserving skills passed down through generations. Empowering youth in the kitchen helps them connect with the land and Inuksiuit.

Inuksiuit is the heart of the school food program in Nunavut. Incorporating country food strengthen Nunavummiut students' connection to Inuit culture.

Experience-Based Guiding Expectations for NUSFP Coordinators

- Follow all Nunavut food safety guidelines and Elders' cultural protocols (e.g., proper thawing of country food).
- Maintain cleanliness and hygiene at all stages (prep, serving, and cleanup).
- Ensure respectful handling of country food and traditional tools (e.g., ulus).
- Promote equitable access so all students have an opportunity to eat before seconds are offered.
- Monitor portion control to reduce waste while allowing additional servings when available.
- Encourage student responsibility in cleanup and maintaining shared spaces.
- Properly store and distribute leftovers safely for later consumption (store-and-go-fridge).
- Maintain efficient time management to keep the program on schedule.
- Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment during mealtime.

These are the serving stations at Inuksuk High School.

General Guide for Food Purchasing: Market Food

This section provides a general guide for purchasing market foods for school food programs. It outlines practical steps for planning, ordering, receiving, and safely storing ingredients to ensure reliable meal preparation throughout the week.

- Plan weekly, monthly or even yearly menus in advance, considering shipment schedules and food availability in the community.
- Create a detailed list of ingredients needed for the week based on the planned menu.
- Send the purchase order to the preferred supplier at least one week in advance to allow for processing and delivery times.
- Place orders early with local stores or suppliers, as deliveries can be affected by weather and transportation schedules.
- When shipments arrive, receive and check food program items to ensure they are correct and in good condition.
- Remain flexible with menu planning in case certain foods are unavailable or delayed.
- Store all food items properly according to food safety guidelines (refrigerated, frozen, or dry storage).
- Use the purchased ingredients to prepare planned meals for the week.
- Purchasing cases of frozen meat (such as chicken, beef, and pork) through Northern Shoppers is often more cost-effective. When stored properly in a freezer at a safe and consistent temperature, these items can support meal planning for several months, depending on storage capacity and program needs.

Purchasing food:

In Iqaluit, the preferred supplier is Baffin Canners, as they offer delivery services. Another supplier is Northern Shoppers, an online ordering service where groceries and goods can be purchased. Northern Shoppers handles packing and shipping for large orders. Currently, Northern Shoppers is available only in the following communities: Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Igloolik, Kimmirut, Kinngait, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet, Qikiqtarjuaq, Resolute, and Sanirajak.

Here is an example of foods I order for Inuksuk High School on a weekly basis. I place an order every Wednesday and it is available the following Monday. This list feeds 150 students for 7-10 days**:**

- Case of eggs
- Case of milk
- Case of bananas
- Case of apples
- Case of tangerines
- Case of grapes
- Case of blueberries
- Case of romaine lettuce
- 4 cases yogurt tubes
- ½ case bread
- 5 watermelon
- 20 assorted bell peppers
- 5 broccoli, 4 cauliflower
- 5-10 lbs celery, carrots,
- 3 lbs onion, garlic, ginger
- 15 lbs of potatoes
- Dressings, ranch & caesar
- 2lbs Cheddar cheese

General Guide for Food Purchasing: Local and Traditional

Local and traditional foods are an important part of school food programs, supporting both nutrition and cultural well-being. In Nunavut, Inuksiuit (country food) plays a vital role in connecting students to land, language, and tradition while also strengthening local food systems and economies. Schools are encouraged to incorporate country foods whenever possible through respectful, safe, and community-driven purchasing practices. This includes working closely with local Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs), regional suppliers, Elders, and community members to ensure that traditional foods are sourced responsibly, handled safely, and included in ways that reflect seasonal availability and cultural guidance.

Sourcing Country Foods:

- Where possible, school purchasing should follow the Government of Nunavut Nunavummi Nangminiqaqtunik Ikajuuti (NNI) procurement policy by prioritizing local Inuit businesses, HTOs, and community suppliers.
- Regional suppliers such as Kivalliq Arctic Foods may provide processed or packaged country foods when available.
- When possible, schools should prioritize purchasing directly from local harvesters through HTOs to support the local economy and strengthen community food systems.
- Schools may also work with community partners, hunters, and families to include donated or shared country foods when appropriate and permitted by policy.

Planning and Cultural Guidance:

- Menu planning should reflect the seasonal availability of country foods such as caribou, Arctic char, seal, and berries.
- Elders and community members should be consulted to guide the respectful and culturally appropriate use of country foods in school meals.
- Whenever possible, purchasing and planning should support locally harvested and culturally relevant foods to strengthen Inuit food sovereignty and cultural continuity.

Food Safety and Handling

- All country food purchases must follow territorial health and site-specific food safety guidelines for safe handling, storage, and preparation.

Colorful, fresh, and ready for our students! By pairing produce with Inuksiuit, we can provide students with the diverse nourishment they need to thrive throughout the school day.

Planning the School Food Program According to the Inuit Calendar Year (ICY)

It is recommended that SFP Coordinators follow the Inuit Calendar Year (ICY) to plan the school year. The ICY respects and aligns with Inuit food sovereignty and the seasonal availability of country foods and should be central to school food program planning and development. This six-season framework reflects a knowledge system grounded in ecological relationships and lived environmental experience rather than fixed calendar dates that follow a European-Canadian calendar (Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, n.d.). The ICY, a part of Nunavummiut students' identity and sense of belonging, is understood relationally and shaped through close observation of the land, animal migrations, light patterns, and changing conditions of ice, snow, and water. The cycle consists of six distinct seasons, each marked by ecological, climatic, and subsistence indicators that SFP Coordinators should be aware of when planning menus and programming.

The six seasons are:

- **Ukiaqsaaq (Early Fall)** is marked by returning darkness and southward geese migration. It aligns with caribou hunting, berry ripening (paurngaq/crowberries, kigutanngait/blueberries), and fish returning upriver from the ocean.
- **Ukiaq (Fall)** follows, with fattened caribou and thick fur ready for harvest. First snowfall occurs, coastal storms increase, and after the first frost kimmirnait (cranberries/lingonberries) are ready to pick. Sea ice formation begins.
- **Ukiuq (Winter)** is defined by extreme cold and very little daylight, with the sun barely rising. Sea ice is fully formed, temperatures are lowest, and nanuq (polar bear) is present.
- **Upirngaqsaaq (Early Spring)** brings increasing daylight though cold conditions remain. Seal pups are born, and it is an important time for ice fishing, seal hunting, and inland harvesting of ptarmigan.
- **Upirngaq (Spring)** sees rapid environmental change and near-continuous daylight. Migratory birds return in stages (songbirds first, then swans and geese), ptarmigan move toward the coast, and camping becomes easier.
- **Aujaq (Summer)** is continuous daylight with the midnight sun. Fish move to the ocean, enabling drying (pitsi). Boating, egg collecting, and camping are common. Plants bloom, mosquitoes emerge, and caribou move to coastal areas to feed on salt and cool down.

Integrating the Inuit Calendar Year and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into School Food Programs

Month to Month Food Menu Based on the Inuit Seasonal Cycle

Month	Monthly Menu Theme/Celebration	Inuit Calendar Year: Inuksiuit Availability	Elders, staff, and community members participation
September	Ukiaqsaaq Feast Orange Shirt Day, Truth and Reconciliation Month	Caribou, Berries,	Youth-Elder Sharing Table *Elder Sharing at Lunch* ***Fall:*** *Berry picking and caribou hunting stories*
October	Halloween, Ukiaq Feast	Clams, Berries, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table
November	Ukiaq Feast	Clams, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table
December	Holiday Ukiuq Feast	Seal, Beluga, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table *Elder Sharing at Lunch* ***Winter:*** *Living on the land, ice safety, and weather knowledge*
January	Community & Well-Being, Ukiuq Feast	Seal, Beluga, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table
February	Inuktitut Language Month Black History Month, Upirngaqsaaq Feast	Seal, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table
March	Nutrition Month Upirngaqsaaq Feast	Ptarmigan, Seal, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table *Elder Sharing at Lunch* **Spring:** Animal migration and seal hunting
April	Toonyk Time (Community Spring Feast) Upirngaq Feast Earth Month	Ptarmigan, Char, Geese, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table
May	Asian Heritage Month Upirngaq Feast	Ptarmigan, Char, Geese, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table *Elder Sharing at Lunch* **Summer:** Fishing, travel, and time on the land
June	National Indigenous History Month Pride Month (LGBTQ2S+) Aujaq Feast	Ptarmigan, Geese, Char, Inuksiuit Feast	Youth-Elder Sharing Table

Guiding Principles for School Lunch Program based on Nutrition Focus

These seasonal guiding principles align school lunch programs with Inuit knowledge, local food availability, and students' changing nutritional needs throughout the year. They may also vary by community, depending on local harvesting practices, access to country foods, and regional priorities.

They continue to evolve in response to climate change, which affects weather patterns, animal migration, and food availability. They are grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) values that emphasize respect for the land, sharing, adaptability, and community well-being.
Each season focuses on supporting students' health in practical ways: building strength in the fall, maintaining energy and warmth in the winter, supporting recovery and growth in the spring, and promoting hydration and activity in the summer. By incorporating traditional foods alongside balanced meals, schools can provide culturally relevant, nutritious, and consistent food that supports student well-being year-round.

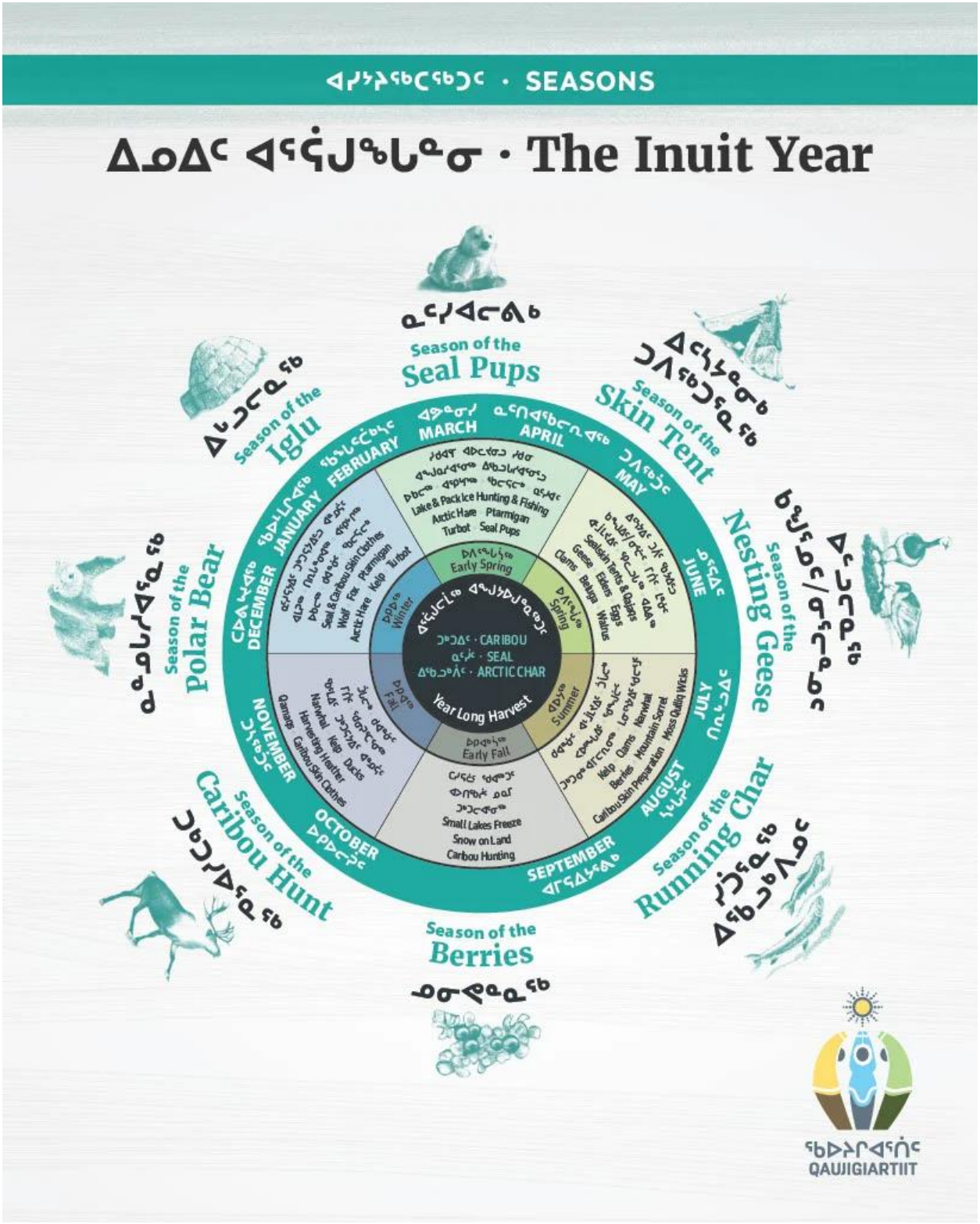
Inuit Season	Guiding Principle	Nutrition Focus	What it Looks Like in Lunch Program
Ukiaqsaaq / Ukiaq (Fall)	Build strength and immunity for colder months	Iron, protein, vitamins (A, C), fibre	Caribou, fish, berries; warm balanced meals like soups, stews, bannock + protein; consistent meal routines
Ukiuq (Winter)	Fuel warmth and energy during extreme cold and low daylight	Healthy fats, protein, vitamin D, omega-3s	Seal, fish, hearty stews and soups; larger portions; hot meals daily; consistent access to food
Upirngaqsaaq / Upirngaq (Spring)	Support growth and recovery after winter	Protein, calcium, iron, mixed nutrients	Ptarmigan, char, geese; lighter but balanced meals; increased variety of foods; continued warm options
Aujaq (Summer)	Hydrate and energize for active, warmer months	Hydration, carbohydrates, balanced nutrients	Char, geese; lighter, simple meals; more fruits/vegetables when possible; easy-to-eat options

Designing a school food program in Nunavut requires careful attention to community-specific infrastructure, equipment reliability, and logistical constraints such as sealift schedules and storage limitations.

Climate change in Nunavut is profoundly altering the landscape and ecosystems, directly impacting the availability, safety, and accessibility of country food.

fresh *amumajuq* (clams) during Ukiaq season.

Arctic char is available year-round.



The Inuit Seasonal Cycle (Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre, n.d.)

Inventory and Storage Management

This section outlines best practices for the safe and efficient storage of food in freezers and refrigerators, as well as proper labeling, stock rotation, and country food handling. These practices support food safety, reduce waste, and ensure that meals served in school food programs are fresh, organized, and safe for consumption.

How to organize freezers and fridges efficiently.

Freezer	Fridge
• **Group similar foods together (meat, fish, meals)** • **Label and date everything** • **New items go behind old items (FIFO)** • **Avoid overpacking for airflow** • **Store frequently used items near top / front**	• **Raw meat on bottom shelf in sealed containers** • **Ready-to-eat foods on top shelves** • **Dairy in middle shelves** • **Fruits/vegetables in drawers** • **Keep items labeled and organized**

Labeling system

Labeling System
• **Include name, date, and expiry** • **Use waterproof labels/tape** • **Use colour coding if possible** • **Keep labels clear and readable** • **Replace damaged or unclear labels**

FIFO (First In, First Out) guides

First In, First Out guides
• **Use oldest stock first** • **Place new items behind old items** • **Always date food on arrival/prep** • **Check weekly for expired items** • **Train staff on rotation system**

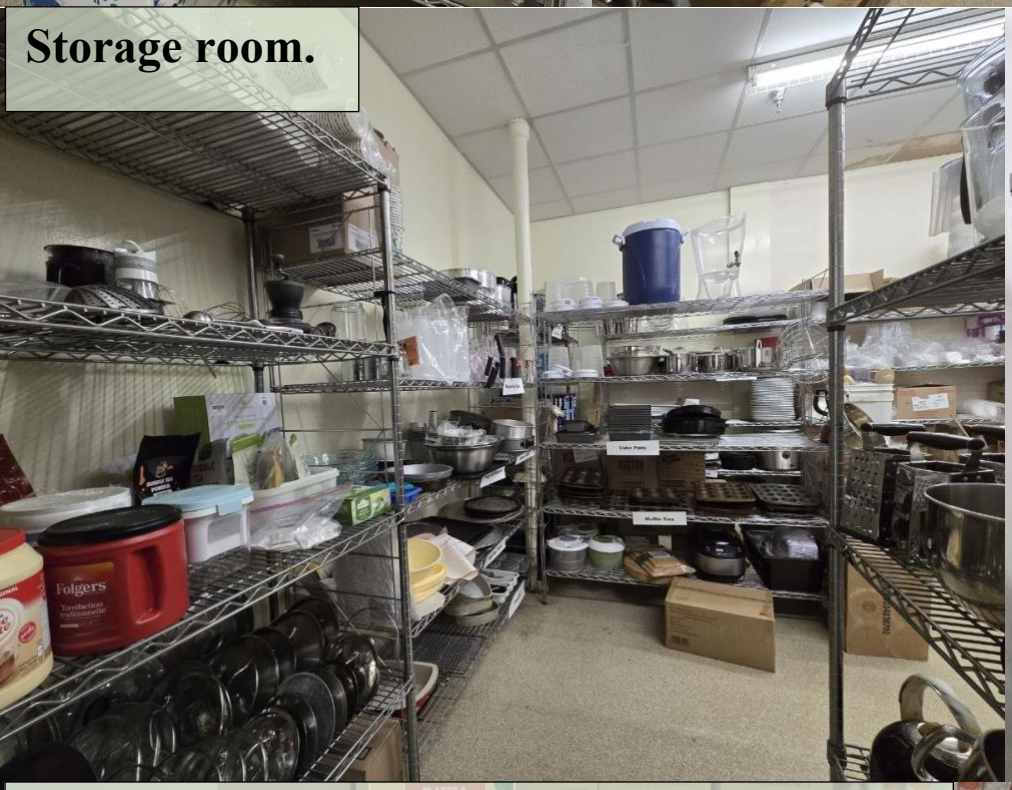
Country food storage best practices

Country Food Storage Best Practices
• **Freeze quickly after harvesting** • **Use clean, sealed packaging** • **Label with type and harvest date** • **Store separately from store-bought food** • **Avoid repeated thawing/refreezing** • **Follow local food safety practices**

Fresh produce section in the fridge.

Dry storage room with labels.

Storage room.



Meat section in the fridge.

Lots of posters to remind students to return dirty dishes.

Cleaning supplies in one area.

Staffing Models of SFP and Burnout Prevention

Implementing a sustainable school food program requires selecting a staffing model that aligns with your school's capacity, budget, and educational goals. The table below outlines four distinct approaches, which range from professional culinary hiring to community-driven and student-led initiatives. These models are presented to highlight the unique advantages and challenges associated with each organizational structure.

	Model 1 Hire a Chef	**Model 2 Community Volunteers**	**Model 3 Student-run food classes with teacher**	**Model 4 Student Support Assistant and teacher rotation to help with food program**
Pros	• Reduces workload on teachers and school staff.	○ Encourages community involvement and ownership of SFP. ○ Helps build lasting positive relationship between schools and the community.	○ Provides hands-on learning opportunities for students. ○ Encourages student ownership and engagement in SFP.	○ Uses existing school staff, reducing need for additional hitting. ○ Shares responsibility among staff members.
Cons	○ If chef is absent, the program may struggle to continue. ○ Limited student opportunities. ○ Hiring trained chef may exceed school food program budgets.	○ Volunteers may not be always available. ○ Staff must spend time organizing schedules and supervising volunteers. ○ Relies on goodwill rather than structure staffing.	○ Student absenteeism can affect the SFP. ○ Students require constant supervision. ○ Students' motivation decline.	○ Added workload on teachers and support staff. ○ Not all teachers/ SSA have food preparation skills. ○ Increased stress and burnout. ○ Staff do not have same culinary expertise as dedicated food program coordinator.

Infrastructure and Equipment

Kitchen Facilities & Equipment Assessment Checklist

Nunavut School Food Coordinators
Use this checklist to assess whether the school kitchen has the facilities and equipment needed to safely prepare meals and snacks in Nunavut schools.

Kitchen Space and Layout
☐ Adequate counter space for preparing meals for students.
☐ Separate preparation areas for raw meat/country food and ready-to-eat foods.
☐ Good lighting and ventilation in the kitchen.
☐ Clear workflow from food receiving → storage → preparation → cooking → serving.

Food Storage
☐ Refrigerator maintains 4 °C (40 °F) or lower.
☐ Freezer maintains –18 °C (0 °F) or lower.
☐ Sufficient freezer space for country foods (e.g., caribou, Arctic char, seal, goose).
☐ Dry storage space for rice, pasta, flour, canned foods, and other non-perishables.
☐ Shelving keeps food at least 15 cm (6 inches) off the floor.
☐ System for labeling and rotating foods (First In, First Out).
☐ Separate storage areas for cleaning chemicals and food.

Food Preparation Equipment
☐ Cutting boards (separate boards for raw meat and produce).
☐ Chef knives and basic food preparation tools.
☐ Aprons, oven mitts and potholders.
☐ Large mixing bowls and measuring cups/spoons.
☐ Food thermometer for checking safe cooking temperatures.
☐ Heavy-duty knives or tools for preparing country foods.

Cooking Equipment
☐ Stove or range in working condition.
☐ Oven available for baking and roasting.
☐ Large pots and pans suitable for preparing meals for groups.
☐ Slow cooker, griddle, or other appliances for preparing soups, stews, or hot lunches.

Cleaning and Sanitation
☐ Handwashing sink with soap and paper towels.
☐ Dishwashing sink or dishwasher for cleaning utensils and dishes.

☐ Laundry machine to wash kitchen towels and aprons.
☐ Food-safe sanitizing solution for surfaces and equipment.
☐ Cleaning schedule for counters, equipment, and food preparation areas.
☐ Garbage bins with lids and regular waste removal.

Safety and Maintenance
☐ Common allergies are posted in the kitchen space.
☐ Kitchen equipment is clean and in good working condition.
☐ Appliances are regularly inspected and maintained.
☐ Staff or volunteers are trained in safe food handling practices.
☐ Record keeping of safe food handling certificates/ onboarding training.

Nunavut-Specific Considerations
☐ Adequate freezer storage for bulk food deliveries and country foods.
☐ Plan in place for power outages affecting refrigeration or freezers.
☐ System for safe preparation and serving of country foods when available.
☐ Storage space for bulk groceries delivered by air or sealift.
☐ Limited food deliveries, requiring adequate freezer and storage capacity.
☐ Upgrades and maintenance of equipment to support safe and efficient food preparation takes time, ensure that it is managed well.

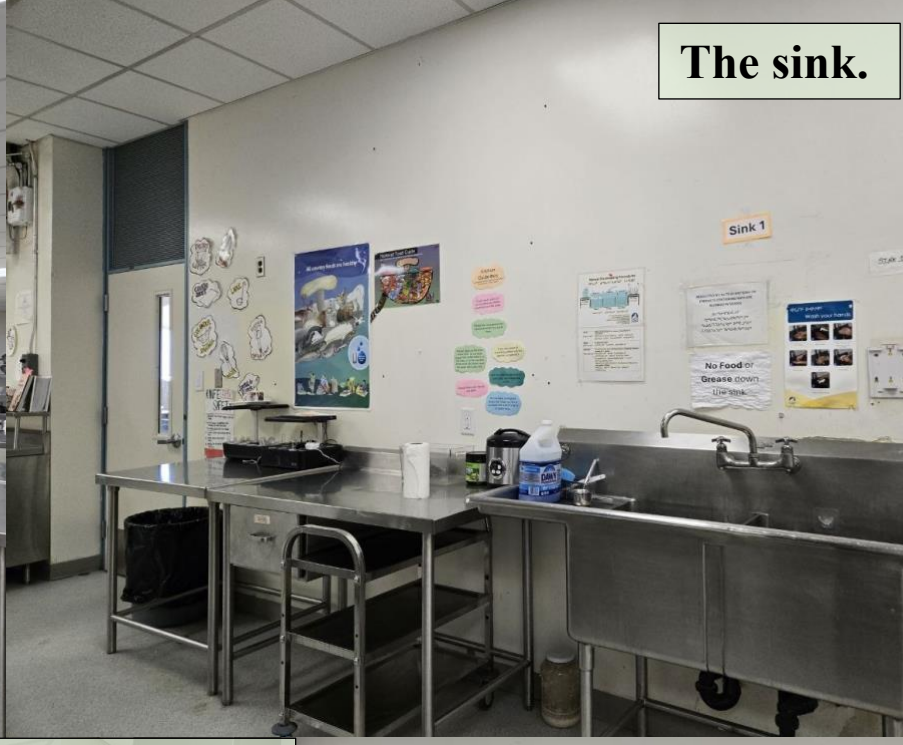
The cafeteria is more than just a place to eat. It is the heart of the school. It's where community comes together, stories are shared, and students find the nourishment they need to grow and learn.

Infrastructure and Equipment Requirement Based on Student Size

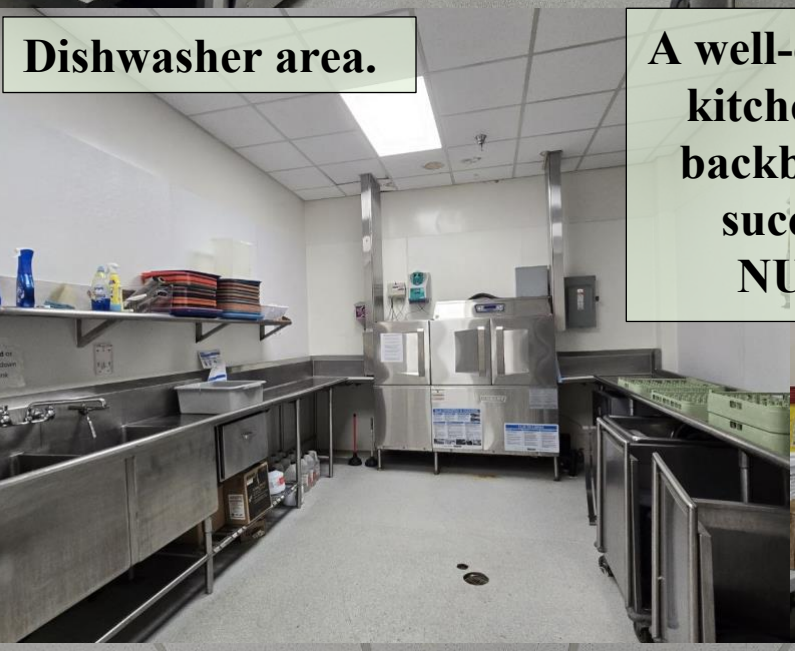
	Small sized school (~50 students)	Intermediate sized school (~100 students)	Large School (~250 students)
Kitchen space available	• 2 stoves/oven • 1 sink • 2 commercial fridges • 1 freezer (chest or upright) • 5 ulus • 60 plates, bowls, utensils and cups • 1 Stainless steel prep tables	• 2 stoves/ovens • 2 sinks • 2 commercial fridges • 3 freezers (chest or upright) • 7-10 ulus • 110 plates, bowls, utensils and cups • 2 Stainless steel prep tables	• 3 stoves/ovens • 3 sinks • 2 commercial fridges • 4 freezers (chest or upright) • 10-15 ulus • 250 plates, bowls, utensils, and cups • 3 Stainless steel prep tables
Storage	• Dry storage for equipment • 2 small shelving units	• Dry storage for equipment • 3-5 shelving units	• Dry storage for equipment • 7-10 shelving units
Cooking Equipment	• 2-3 Toasters • 3 kettles • 1 each microwave, slow cookers and rice cookers • 2-3 thermometers	• 3-4 Toasters • 4 kettles • 2 each microwave, slow cookers and rice cookers • 4-5 thermometers	• 4-5 Toasters • 5 kettles • 3 each microwave, slow cookers and rice cookers • 5-6 thermometers
Suggested equipment to buy through Canada–Nunavut National School Food Program Agreement 2024 to 2027	• 1 Dishwasher • 7 Hotel pans	• 1 Dishwasher • 1 Additional freezer for Inuksiuit • 10 Hotel pans	• 1 Dishwasher • 1-2 Additional freezer for Inuksiuit • 13 Hotel pans

The kitchen.

The sink.



Dishwasher area.



A well-organized kitchen is the backbone of a successful NUSFP!

Seasoning station.

Kitchen utensils.

Labeled shelves of kitchen tools.

Reminders about Infrastructure and Equipment of Nunavut Schools

Designing a SFP in Nunavut requires careful attention to community-specific infrastructure, equipment reliability, and logistical constraints such as sealift schedules and storage limitations.

Key Operational Recommendations

1. **Some schools in Nunavut have only small canteen-style spaces or home economics rooms, while others have more fully equipped kitchens. Food program design often must adapt using classroom prep, mobile equipment, or partnerships with community facilities.**
2. **Each school is unique to the communities in Nunavut and will know their capabilities and limitations when it comes to their school food program.**
3. **Using this resource manual may help make the NUSFP more effective. Inuksuk High School has the infrastructure and equipment of a large school and utilizes Model 3 (student run with foods teacher coordinator).**
4. **Plan food purchasing and menus around limited storage capacity (especially freezers), and account for power outages and water limitations that may affect food safety and preparation**
5. **Use durable, easy-to-repair equipment, ensure regular maintenance and cleaning, and provide training for staff and students on safe use**
6. **When buying equipment, it is important to plan ahead so that it can be ordered for delivery on the sealift.**
7. **Use a work order system to track equipment issues, prioritize repairs, and account for potential delays due to shipping and limited access to parts in Nunavut communities.**
8. **Clean cardboard is used during feasts. Ensure it is clean and always use the inside surface.**

Though Inuksuk High School operates with a large setup, the goal of nourishing our students remains the same in every Nunavut community. These practices are designed to be practical and adaptable, no matter the size of your school or your space.

Food Coordinator Training and Capacity Building

Training Title	Description	Price
Cultural Competency Training	Helps staff understand Inuit culture, values, food traditions, and the impacts of colonization. Promotes respectful collaboration with Elders and supports culturally appropriate school food programs.	Varies (often community-based or provided locally)
Inuktitut Language Training	Supports coordinators in learning Inuktitut to improve communication, respect cultural protocols, and integrate Inuit knowledge into programs. Often offered through community-supported courses.	Often free or funded
Ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre (iSDC) – FoodSafe Level 1	Accredited in-person food safety training in Nunavut. Provides certification and focuses on safe food handling practices for school programs.	$149 (may be free for schools)
Food Allergy Canada – AllergyAware.ca	Free online course on managing severe food allergies and anaphylaxis, including emergency response and certification.	Free
WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)	Training on safe handling, storage, and use of hazardous products like cleaning chemicals to ensure food and workplace safety.	Free or low cost
First Aid & CPR Training	Prepares staff to respond to medical emergencies, including injuries and severe allergic reactions, especially important in remote communities.	Varies (often funded or subsidized)
Country Food Handling & Traditional Knowledge Training	Led by Elders or local experts to teach safe handling, preparation, storage, and cultural protocols for country foods.	Usually community-based (often free or honorarium-based)

Recipe Ideas and Recommended Books (per 100 portions)

Cook From Scratch Lunch Menu Plan (per 100 portions). The recipes can be scaled up or down depending on the number of portions required; the 4-week sample rotating menu is found below.

Ingredients	Instruction
Tuktu (Caribou) Stew • Caribou meat – 20 kg, cubed • Potatoes – 15 kg, peeled and diced • Carrots – 10 kg, sliced • Onion – 5 kg, chopped • Celery – 5 kg, chopped • Garlic – 20 cloved, mined • Tomato paste – 2kg • Bay leaves, dried thyme, black pepper, salt – ¼ cup	1. Brown tuktu in batches (optional). 2. Sauté onion, celery, and garlic until soft. 3. Add tomato paste and cook briefly. 4. Add tuktu, potatoes, carrots, and seasonings. 5. Cover with water or broth. 6. Bring to a boil, then simmer 1.5–2 hours until tender. 7. Adjust seasoning, remove bay leaves, and serve hot.
Bannock Palaugaaq (ᐸᓪᐳᐃᖅ) • All-purpose flour: 12 cups • Baking Soda: 6 tbsp • Milk Powder: 3 cups • Milk or Water: 7 ½ cups • Salt: 3 tsp salt	1. Mix flour, baking soda, milk powder, and salt in a large bowl. 2. Add milk or water gradually and mix into a soft dough. 3. Knead lightly until smooth (do not overmix). 4. Divide and shape into small rounds or flatten into discs. 5. Cook by frying in oil or baking at 375°F (190°C) until golden and cooked through. 6. Serve warm.
Inuksiuit Country Food Feast • Frozen Char: 5 to 10 pieces • Maaqtaaq: 4 kg • Frozen Tuktu: 20-30 pieces • Bannock: 120 small pieces (fried or baked) • Tuktu Stew (1/2 of the ingredients from the resource manual	1. Thaw char, tuktu, and maaqtaaq safely (follow local/Elder guidelines). 2. Prepare tuktu stew using half recipe; keep hot for serving. 3. Cook char (bake, boil, or pan-fry) until fully cooked. 4. Boil or cook tuktu pieces until tender. 5. Cut maaqtaaq into small serving pieces. 6. Prepare bannock (fried or baked) and keep warm.

	7. Serve all items together so students can choose their portions.
Chicken Wrap • Shredded lettuce: 4 kg • Bell peppers assorted colors (sliced): 3 kg • Cucumbers (sliced): 3 kg • Tomatoes (diced): 3 kg • Spinach: 2 kg • Red onions (thinly sliced, optional): 1.5 kg • 3 cases (4kg/each) frozen grilled chicken • Large whole-wheat tortillas – 100 (usually 1-2 case) • Mayonnaise: 4L • Mustard: 2L *Students can build their own chicken wraps*	1. Cook frozen grilled chicken according to package, slice or shred. 2. Wash and prepare all vegetables. 3. Warm tortillas slightly for easier wrapping. 4. Set up a serving station with chicken, vegetables, and sauces. 5. Students build their own wraps with desired ingredients.
Taco Tuesday • Hard taco shells or soft tortillas: 200 • Shredded lettuce 4kg • Diced tomatoes: 4kg • Frozen corn: 4kg • Shredded cheese: 4-5 kg • Mild salsa: 8L • Sour cream: 5L • Lean ground beef (2-3 cases) 11-12 kg *usually sold frozen* • Cumin, chili powder, garlic powder, onion powder, ½ cup • Salt & pepper: ¼ cup (adjust for low sodium) *Students can build their own taco wraps*	1. Cook ground beef; drain excess fat. 2. Add spices, salt, pepper, and a small amount of water; simmer 10–15 minutes. 3. Heat taco shells or tortillas. 4. Prepare and set out all toppings (lettuce, tomatoes, corn, cheese, salsa, sour cream). 5. Set up a serving station. 6. Students build their own tacos with desired ingredients.

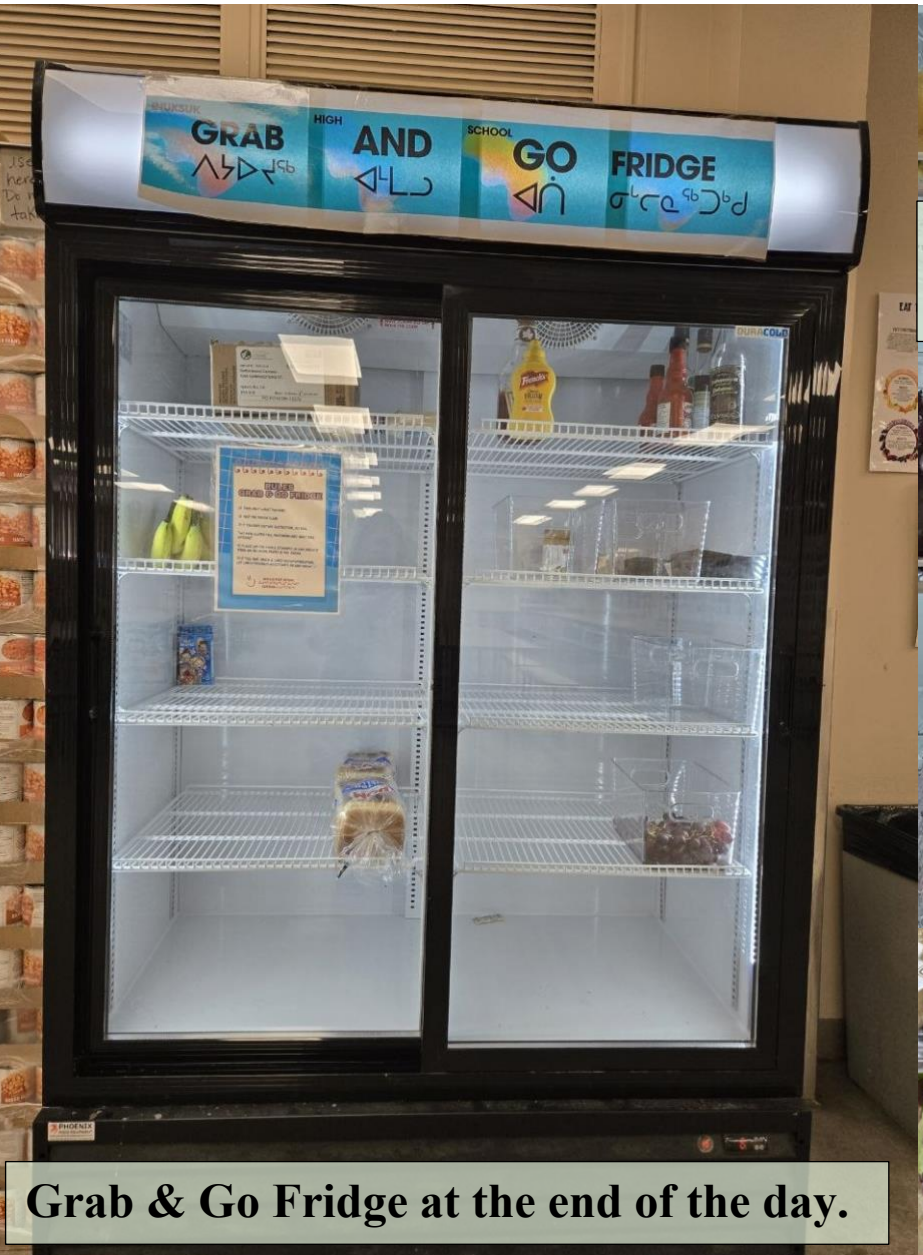
Rainbow salad • Romaine letuce – 10 heads, chopped • Red cabbage – 2 heads, slices thinly • carrots – 25 large, shredded • bell peppers assorted - 15 pieces sliced • Roma tomatoes - 15 pieces sliced • boiled eggs – 60 pieces • Pitsi (smoked Arctic char) or grilled chicken – 10 kg	1. Wash and prepare all vegetables (chop, slice, shred). 2. Boil eggs, cool, peel, and cut in halves or quarters. 3. Flake smoked char (pitsi) or slice grilled chicken. 4. Combine vegetables in a large bowl or serving trays. 5. Top with eggs and char or chicken. 6. Serve with dressing on the side.
Brunch • Scrambled eggs: 120 eggs, milk 2L, salt & pepper 1/4 cup • Bacon: 5-7kg • Pancake: 8kg dry mix, milk 12L, oil for griddle: 1-2 cups • Maple syrup 3L • Apples, oranges, bananas, grapes, pineapples – 3 kg each • Yogurt tubes – 3 cases • Baked or fried bannock – 100 pieces	1. Cook bacon until crispy; keep warm. 2. Whisk eggs with milk, salt, and pepper; cook scrambled eggs in batches. 3. Prepare pancake batter and cook on griddle until golden. 4. Warm or prepare bannock (baked or fried). 5. Wash and cut fruit into serving pieces. 6. Set up a serving area with all items, including yogurt and syrup. 7. Serve hot and allow students to choose items.
Pasta with canned sauce • Dry pasta (spaghetti or penne) – 10kg • Canned pasta sauce – 10-12 large cans • Ground musk ox, tuktu or beef – 8kg • Minced onion and garlic – 2 cups each • Oil – 1 cup • Dried oregano, basil, thyme or Italiano seasoning – ½ cup total • Salt & pepper to taste	1. Cook pasta in large pots; drain and set aside. 2. Heat oil and cook meat until browned. 3. Add onion and garlic; cook until soft. 4. Stir in canned sauce and seasonings; simmer 15–20 minutes. 5. Combine with pasta or serve sauce on top. 6. Adjust seasoning and serve hot.
Char Chowder • Seasoning – ½ cup total • Salt & pepper to taste • Arctic char (fresh or frozen, cubed): 12–15 kg • Potatoes (diced): 15 kg	1. Sauté onion, celery, and carrots in butter/oil. 2. Add potatoes, broth, and bay leaves; simmer until tender. 3. Add char and cook gently (10–15 min).

• Onion (chopped): 4 kg • Celery (chopped): 3 kg • Carrots (diced): 5 kg • Milk or evaporated milk: 10–12 L • Water or broth: 10–12 L • Butter or oil: 2 cups • Flour: 2–3 cups (for thickening) • Salt & pepper: ¼ cup • Bay leaves: 10–15 leaves	4. Mix flour with a bit of water/milk, stir in to thicken. 5. Add milk, season, and heat (do not boil).
Chili (beef, tuktu, or musk ox) • Ground beef or tuktu: 10–12 kg • Canned beans (kidney or mixed): 8–10 large cans • Diced tomatoes (canned): 8–10 large cans • Onion (chopped): 3 kg • Chili powder, cumin, garlic powder: ½ cup total • Salt & pepper: ¼ cup • Oil: 1 cup	1. Cook meat in large pot; drain excess fat if needed. 2. Add onion and cook until soft. 3. Stir in spices and canned tomatoes. 4. Add beans and simmer 30–45 minutes. 5. Adjust seasoning and serve hot.
Steamed Mixed Vegetables • Frozen mixed vegetables: 5-10 kgs • Butter or oil: 1-2 cups • Salt and pepper	1. Stem and season. Simple side for any meal.
Build your own Sandwiches • Sliced deli meat (tukey, ham, chicken) 4-5 kg • Canned tuna – 5-7 kg, drained • Cheese slices, 3-4 kg • Lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, red onion: 3 kg each • Mayo and mustard: 3L	1. Prepare and slice all ingredients (bread, meats, cheeses, vegetables). 2. Set out spreads (mayonnaise, mustard, etc.) in serving containers. 3. Arrange all items in a self-serve station. 4. Students choose bread, fillings, and toppings to build their own sandwiches. 5. Serve immediately or wrap for take-away.

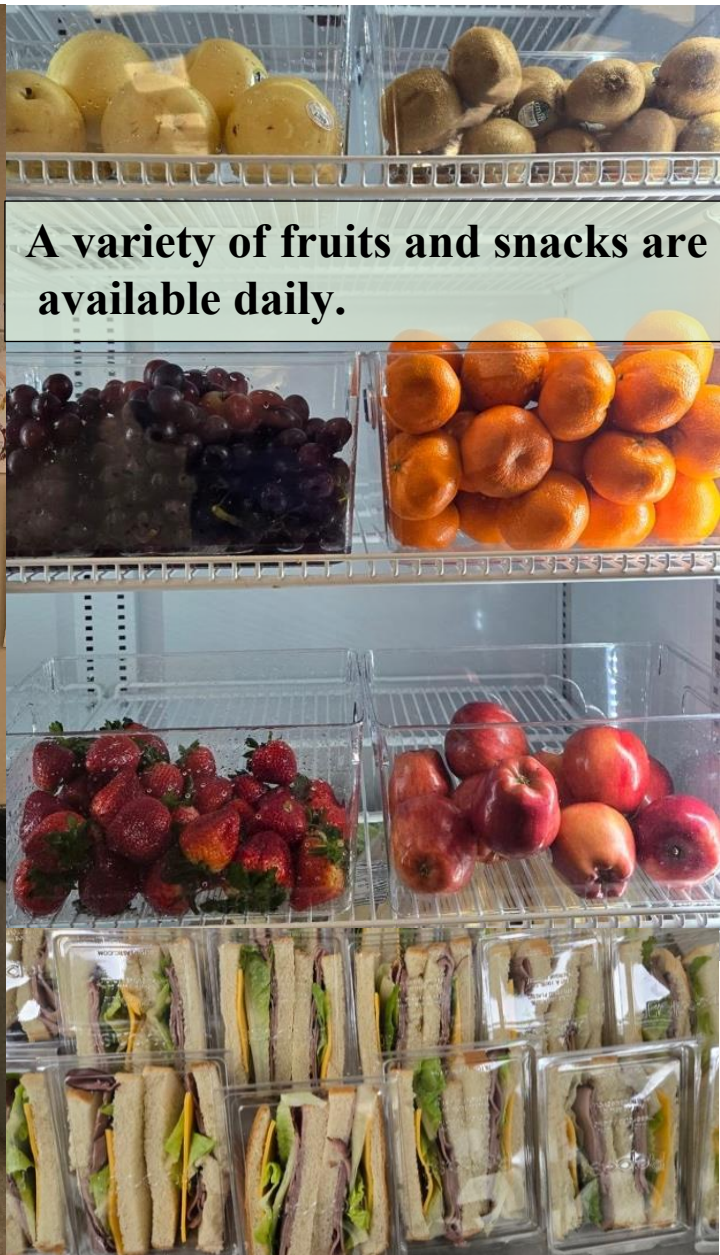
Grab & Go Fridge Sample Menu Plan

A Grab & Go Fridge can be placed in the main area of school such as cafeteria, learning commons, or by the school office. The NUSFP Coordinator's responsibility can include ensuring that the fridge is always full of ready-made grab & go snacks, and that the fridge is clean. Students can go at recess, in between classes, and or during lunch to grab food.

- Grapes, Apples, Bananas, Blueberries, Oranges: One bin for each fruit, refill as needed
- Carrots and cucumber slices: in medium size bowl, refill as needed
- Yogurt Tube: 50 pieces, and refill as needed
- Nut-free granola bars: 50 pieces, and refill as needed
- Tuna Sandwiches: 15-20 pieces, and refill as needed
- Prepackaged salad: 50 servings.
- Leftover food from lunch, prepackaged to one serving: 50 servings.



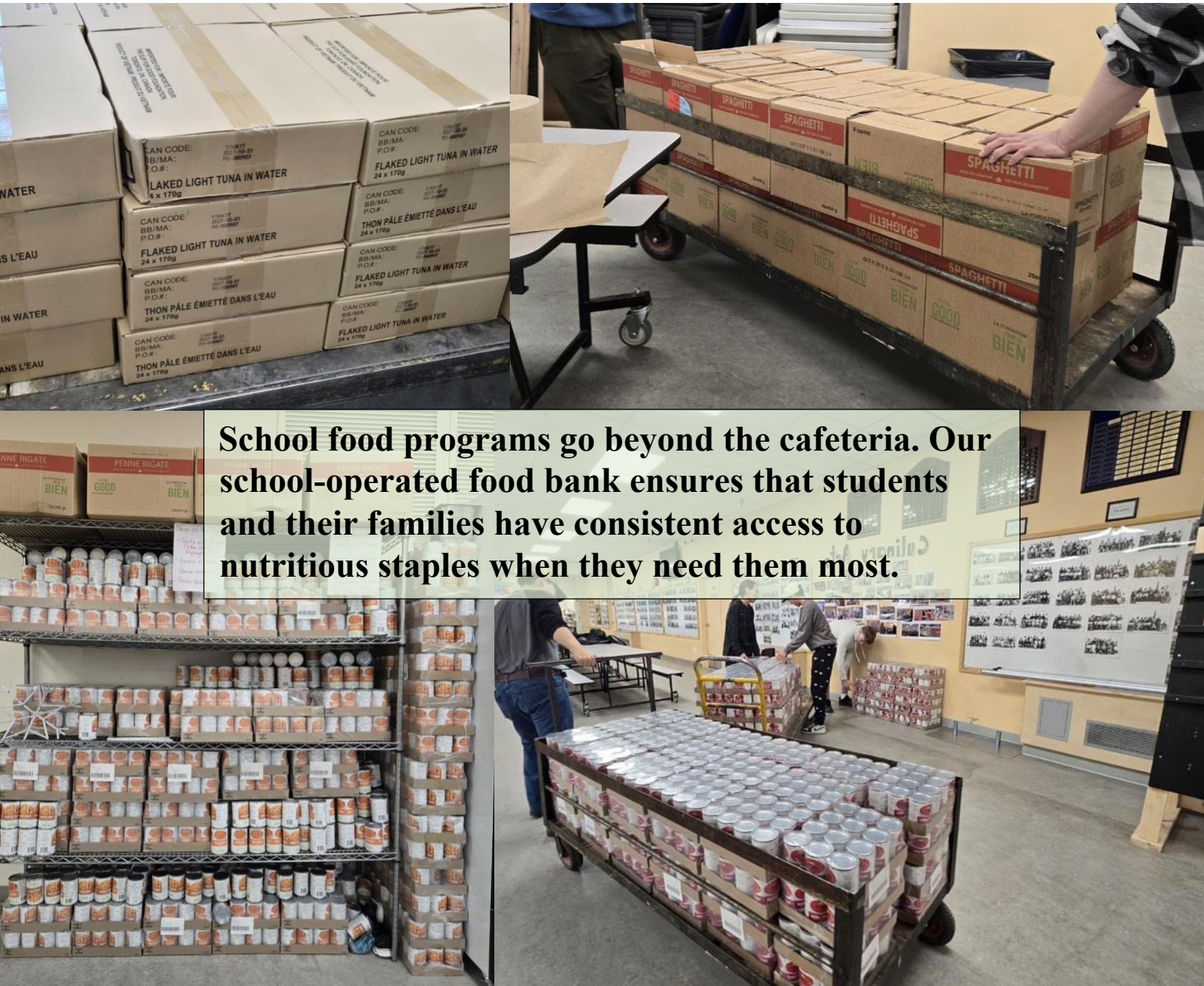
Grab & Go Fridge at the end of the day.



A variety of fruits and snacks are available daily.

School Operated Food Bank to Support for Students

Food Banks Canada works in partnership with schools and local food organizations in Nunavut to support student food programs. Through these partnerships, non-perishable food items are sent and distributed to schools to help address food insecurity. These items typically include shelf-stable foods such as canned goods, pasta, rice, and cereal, which can be safely stored and used in school-based food programs to support students' nutritional needs. Students are also encouraged to take some items home to supplement their household pantry and help support food security beyond the school setting.



School food programs go beyond the cafeteria. Our school-operated food bank ensures that students and their families have consistent access to nutritious staples when they need them most.

Reminders in the Cafeteria and Learning Commons

These reminders are for everyone using the cafeteria and learning commons during school food program times. Please take only what you need, respect shared food and shared spaces, clean up after yourself, and let staff know if food needs refilling or if you have any questions about the program.

School Food Program Reminders	Cleanliness & Respect Reminders
• Food is available to support students. Please take what you need. • Be respectful and mindful so there is enough for everyone. • You are welcome to take items home to support your household pantry. • If you are unsure about the program, please ask a staff member. • Please let the staff know if there needs to be refill.	• Please clean up after yourself after eating or using food program items. • Dispose of garbage in the proper bins (recycling, compost, waste). • Wipe down your table and keep shared spaces tidy. • Wash or sanitize your hands before and after eating when possible. • Respect shared spaces so they stay welcoming for everyone.

Snapshot of the school food program at Inuksuk High School.

Recommended Nunavut Food Books

Food Coordinators should engage with Inuit cookbooks to better understand traditional food practices and ensure that school and community meal programs are culturally relevant, respectful, and reflective of Inuit knowledge and food sovereignty.

Books	Description
Nirjutit Imaani: Edible Animals of the Sea **Nunavut Arctic College. (2014). *Nirjutit imaani: Edible animals of the sea*. Nunavut Arctic College.**	Introduces readers to traditional and contemporary Inuit knowledge about marine animals used for food. It provides information on identification, harvesting, and safe preparation of edible sea species in the Arctic.
Niqiliurniq: A Cookbook from Igloolik **Arreak, M., & Tester, F. (2009). *Niqiliurniq: A cookbook from Igloolik*. Inhabit Media.**	Collection of traditional Inuit recipes from Igloolik, blending cultural knowledge with practical instructions for preparing local foods and preserving culinary traditions
Niam! Cooking with Kids **McCluskey, K. (2015). *Niam! Cooking with kids*. Inhabit Media.**	Cookbook designed for children and families, offering simple, fun, and safe recipes that encourage kids to learn about cooking and healthy eating while exploring Inuit and local ingredients.
Nunavut Day Cookbook **Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. (2017). *Nunavut Day cookbook*. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated.**	Compilation of recipes celebrating Nunavut Day, highlighting traditional Inuit foods alongside contemporary dishes that reflect the culture, community, and culinary heritage of Nunavut.
The *Mamaqtuq Cookbook* (2004) by Tungasuvvingat Inuit	Highlights traditional Inuit foods and preparation methods while also incorporating accessible, everyday ingredients to support cultural knowledge, community practices and food security.

At Inuksuk High School, country food is served once a week through the SFP, which is a strong goal for other schools to work toward, but where that is not yet possible, any food offered is still appreciated by students.

Cleaning the Kitchen Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure the school kitchen is left clean and tidy after use. Make sure all items are done before you leave. As foods student / food program worker, this is your responsibility.

✔	**BEFORE YOU LEAVE….**
	Food leftovers are stored properly: • Non-perishable foods are put away in appropriate cupboards. • Perishable foods are wrapped, labeled with the date used, and put in the fridge/freezer. • Fridges and freezer are left neat and tidy. No items should be on the floor.
	Ovens and stoves are turned off and wiped down.
	Grilles/ other small appliances are cleaned well and put away.
	All dirty dishes have been washed and put away in their appropriate locations. Clean dishes are put away from previous classes (if any are left over).
	Dishwasher is loaded and started (before you leave your class). If dishwasher is finished its cycle, empty and put dishes away appropriately.
	Large items that need to be hand-washed are washed properly, and put away
	All counters and tables are wiped down and cleaned with sanitizer or hot soapy water. This includes cleaning under appliances.
	Garbage cans are changed and tied up. New garbage bags are put in the garbage cans.
	Floor is swept and mopped.
	Food carts are wiped down and cleaned.
	Seats are wiped down and cleaned, especially the tops where there are usually crumbs.
	Sink are rinsed down and cleaned. There should not be any food or grime left in the sinks. There should be nothing left in the sink (no dishes).
	Make sure each sink has dish soap and paper towel.
	Laundry is either running or completed. If washer cycle is finished, put clothes in the dryer on low. If dryer cycle is finished, fold items and put away appropriately. Clean the lint trap after each dryer load. cx

Cleaning the Kitchen Checklist – Inuktitut Version

Use this checklist to make sure the school kitchen is left clean and tidy after use.
Make sure all items are done before you leave. As foods student / food program worker, this is your responsibility.

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	ᐊᖏᔪᑦ ᐱᖁᑎᑦ ᐊᒡᒐᒧᑦ ᐅᐊᓴᖅᑕᐅᔭᕆᐊᓖᑦ ᐅᐊᓴᖅᑕᐅᑦᑎᐊᖅᐸᒃᐳᑦ, ᑐᖅᑯᖅᑕᐅᑦᑎᐊᖅᐸᒃᓗᑎᓪᓗ
	ᑭᐳᓕᒫᑦ ᑭᐳᓕᒫᓪᓗ ᐊᓪᓚᖅᑎᖅᑕᐅᕙᒃᐳᑦ ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᖅᑕᐅᕙᒃᓗᑎᓪᓗ ᖁᐱᕐᕈᐃᔭᐅᑎᒧᑦ ᐆᓇᖅᑐᒧᓪᓘᓐᓃᑦ ᐅᐊᓴᐅᑎᓕᖕᒧᑦ ᐃᒪᕐᒧᑦ. ᑕᒪᓐᓇ ᐃᓚᖃᖅᐳᖅ ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᐃᓂᕐᒥᒃ ᐊᑖᒍᑦ ᑲᑉᐳᔾᔭᖅᑐᒨᖅᑐᑦ.
	ᐊᒃᑕᕐᕖᑦ ᐊᓯᔾᔨᖅᑕᐅᓪᓗᑎᒃ ᕿᓚᒃᓯᒪᓕᖅᓗᑎᓪᓗ. ᓄᑖᑦ ᐴᒃᓴᐃᑦ ᐊᒃᑕᕐᕕᒻᒨᖅᑕᐅᕙᑉᐳᑦ.
	ᓇᑎᖅ ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᖅᑕᐅᓪᓗᓂ ᓇᑎᓕᖅᑕᐅᓪᓗᓂᓗ.
	ᓂᕿᑖᕐᕖᑦ ᐊᓪᓚᖅᑎᖅᑕᐅᕙᒃᐳᑦ ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᖅᑕᐅᓪᓗᑎᓪᓗ.
	ᐃᒃᓯᕙᐅᑕᐃᑦ ᐊᓪᓚᖅᑎᖅᑕᐅᕙᒃᐳᑦ ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᖅᑕᐅᕙᒃᓗᑎᓪᓗ, ᐱᓗᐊᙳᐊᖅᓗᓂ ᖄᖏᑦ ᓴᓂᖅᑕᖃᕿᔪᒃᐸᒃᑐᓂ.
	ᐅᐊᓴᕐᕖᑦ ᐃᕐᕈᖅᑐᖅᑕᐅᕙᒃᐳᑦ ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᖅᑕᐅᓪᓗᑎᓪᓗ. ᓂᕿᓂᒃ ᓱᕈᕐᓇᖅᑐᓂᓪᓘᓐᓃᑦ ᕿᒪᐃᔪᖃᓪᓗᐊᙱᓚᖅ ᐅᐊᓴᕐᕕᖕᓂ. ᐅᐊᓴᕐᕕᖕᒥ ᐊᒥᐊᒃᑯᖃᓪᓗᐊᙱᑦᑐᖅ (ᓂᕆᓯᖃᕆᐊᖃᙱᑦᑐᖅ).
	ᐅᐊᓴᕐᕖᑦ ᓂᕆᓯᓄᑦ ᐅᐊᓴᐅᑎᖃᕐᓗᑎᒃ ᐊᓕᓚᔪᕐᒥᓪᓗ ᐊᓪᓚᕈᑎᖃᕐᓗᑎᒃ.
	ᐊᓐᓄᕌᓂᒃ ᐅᐊᓴᕐᓂᖅ ᐃᖏᕐᕋᔪᖅ ᐅᕝᕙᓘᓐᓃᑦ ᐱᐊᓂᒃᓯᒪᓕᖅᑐᖅ. ᐅᐊᓴᕐᕕᒃ ᐱᐊᓂᒃᐸᑦ, ᐊᓐᓄᕌᑦ ᐸᓂᖅᓰᕕᖕᒧᐊᕐᓗᒋᑦ ᐊᑦᑎᒃᑐᒦᑎᓪᓗᒍ. ᐸᓂᖅᓰᕕᒃ ᐱᐊᓂᒃᐸᑦ, ᐃᒧᓗᒋᑦ ᐱᖁᑎᑦ ᑐᖅᑯᑦᑎᐊᕐᓗᒍᓗ. ᓴᓗᒻᒪᖅᓴᕐᓗᒍ ᐴᖅᓯᕕᒃ ᐸᓂᖅᓰᕕᒃ ᐸᓂᖅᓯᕐᓂᒃᑳᖓᑦ.

Procurement Policies

Procurement Policies guide how school food programs choose suppliers, place orders, and receive food in a way that supports Inuit economic participation, community food security, and student well-being. In Nunavut, these policies should prioritize Inuit-owned and Nunavut-based suppliers whenever possible, while also ensuring that all foods meet safety, quality, budget, and delivery requirements.

NNI (Nunavummi Nangminiqaqtunik Ikajuuti) Policy mandates prioritization of Inuit Firms and Nunavut businesses in all Government of Nunavut (GN) procurements, including school food suppliers, to promote Inuit economic participation and best value (Government of Nunavut, 2017). Purchasing food directly from local Inuit hunters aligns perfectly with the spirit and requirements of the NNI Policy as it directly supports Inuit economic participation, cultural food security, and local procurement priorities.

Country food may be purchased or accepted as a donation for school-food programs as long as it is sourced from trusted local providers (e.g., Hunter and Trapper Organizations, experienced hunters, or licensed processing facilities), arrives in food-safe packaging, and can be properly tracked and stored. Purchasing agreements and volunteer/donation protocols must require inspection at delivery, complete labelling, and documentation that all food is handled according to Nunavut's Food Safety Regulations and the Serving Country Food in Government-Funded Facilities and Community Programs guide. This approach ensures that schools can ethically support local harvesters while still meeting public-health and food-safety expectations.

Key Priorities

- Procurement should prioritize Inuit-owned and Nunavut-based suppliers (NNI Policy).
- NUSFP support Inuksiuit and community-based food sources.
- Ensure foods are nutritious and appropriate for students.
- Balance quality, cost, and shipping reliability.

Supplier & Ordering

- Supplier is Inuit-owned or Nunavut-based whenever possible.
- Food safety and handling standards are met.
- Local sourcing options were considered first.
- Order supports community food security goals.
- Budget and delivery timeline are confirmed

Inuksiuit Country Food Considerations

- Sourced through approved Inuit hunters, fishers, or processors.
- Safe handling, storage, and freezer capacity confirmed.
- Seasonal availability and harvesting conditions considered.
- Fair and respectful distribution planned for students.

Logistics

- Shipping accounts for weather, air freight, and sealift delays.
- Orders placed with sufficient lead time.
- Backup options identified in case of delays.
- Storage capacity confirmed (dry, refrigerated, frozen).

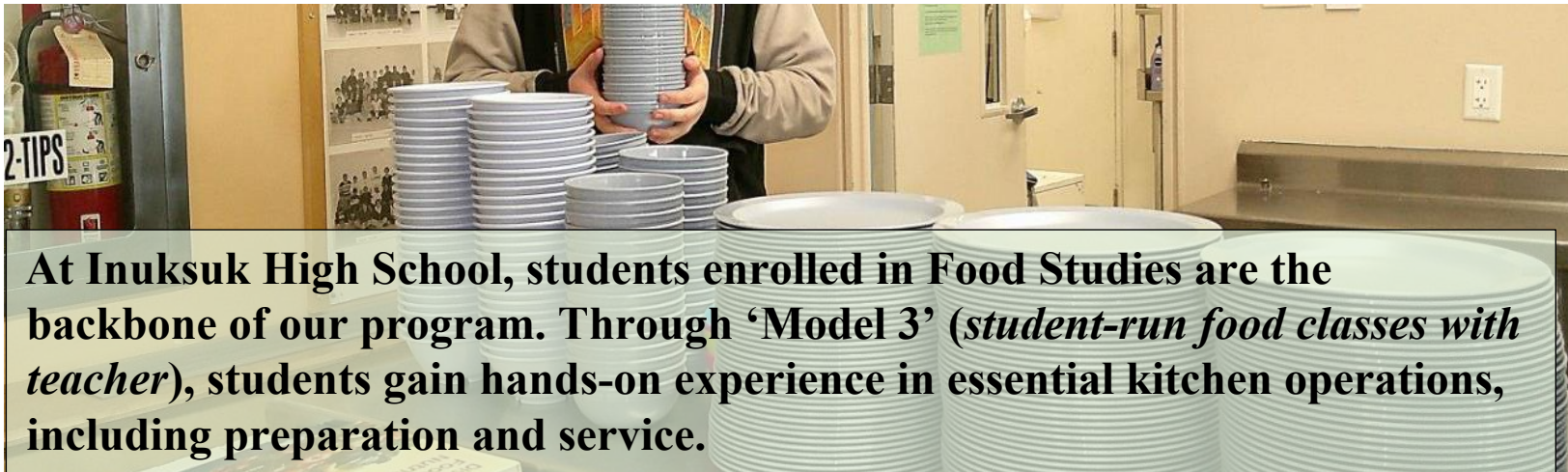
Kivalliq Arctic Foods in Rankin Inlet operates a small but busy processing plant that buys caribou, muskox, Arctic char and other wild foods from Inuit hunters and fishers, then processes, packages, and ships these Inuksiuit to households, schools, and retailers across Nunavut, including through "Country Food Pak" bundles (Nunavut Development Corporation, n.d.).

Funding Sources

In addition to formal funding streams, many Nunavut school food programs rely on informal and community-based supports, including local partnerships, donations, and internal school resources. These contributions are essential but inconsistent, further contributing to variability between programs.

Funding Source	Can Schools Apply Directly?	Type of Support	How It's Used	Reality / Limitations
Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs)	No	In-kind (Inuksiuit/country food)	Provides Inuksiuit (caribou, seal, fish) for meals	Depends on harvesting success, season, and relationships
Regional Inuit Organizations (KivIA, KitIA, QIA)	Sometimes (often indirect)	Project-based funding	Supports harvesting, equipment, or food initiatives	Not guaranteed; varies by region and priorities
Nutrition North Canada – Community Food Programs Fund	No (typically)	Federal funding	Supports community food programs including schools	Accessed through Inuit orgs; no direct school applications
Inuit Child First Initiative (ICFI)	No	Individual-based funding	Can support food access for Inuit children	Not intended for full school programs; inconsistent access
President's Choice Children's Charity	Yes	Grant funding	Supports school meal and snack programs	Competitive; not guaranteed or long-term
Territorial School Food Funding (via Government of Nunavut)	No	Core funding	Base funding for school food programs	Varies widely by school; often

					insufficient alone
Hamlet / Municipal Support		Sometimes	Local funding or in-kind	May support food, space, or equipment	Informal and depends on local priorities
Local Businesses / Stores (e.g., Northern, Co-ops)		Yes (informal)	Donations / discounts	Food donations or reduced pricing	Relationship-based; inconsistent
Community Organizations / NGOs		Sometimes	Project funding	Supports youth, wellness, or food security programs	Short-term and program-specific
School Budget Contributions		Yes (internal)	Internal funding	Schools allocate part of their own budget	Limited and not sustainable as primary funding
Fundraising (school/community)		Yes	Community-raised funds	Supplements food program costs	Time-consuming; unreliable for core funding
Federal School Food Program		Yes(currently)	Federal funding	Flows through territorial agreements to support programs	Accessible to schools
Public Health / Wellness Programs	Sometimes (indirect)	Health-related funding	Supports nutrition and student well-being initiatives	Must align with health goals; not always food-specific	



At Inuksuk High School, students enrolled in Food Studies are the backbone of our program. Through 'Model 3' (*student-run food classes with teacher*), students gain hands-on experience in essential kitchen operations, including preparation and service.

Closing Reflection

Living in the Arctic is one of the most rewarding professional and personal experiences of my life. I am deeply committed to my role as a school food coordinator because this work is essential. The student's energy, resilience, and engagement bring purpose to each day. In Nunavut, supporting students extends beyond the classroom, and school food programs are vital in ensuring they are nourished, ready to learn, and able to thrive.

Nunavut offers a way of life grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, generosity, and a strong relationship with the land. Food, sharing, and wellbeing are closely connected, and school food programs are a natural extension of this reality. Whether coordinating programming, supporting food access, or working with community members, this work directly contributes to student success and wellbeing. For a School Food Program Coordinator, Nunavut offers a unique opportunity to make a meaningful impact. This role goes beyond program management. You support food security, strengthen culturally relevant food systems, and contribute to initiatives that value Inuit knowledge and local food practices.

If you are seeking a role with immediate impact, where food programs support student learning, health, and community connection, the 25 communities in Nunavut offer an unparalleled opportunity. This is a chance to contribute to something meaningful while working in a place where your efforts matter every day.

Appendix A – Fridge/Freezer Temperature Logs

Temperature Log Form **Month________________**
Fridge/Freezer (circle one)

Date	Time	Temperature Log	Notes/Initial

Appendix B – Country Food Tracking Form

Country Food Tracking Form

This form should be completed each time a program or facility receives country food. Keep all forms in one confidential location.
The information will help to keep food in facilities and programs safe.

Name of Facility or Community-based Program	Community
Name of hunter (with contact information) or Commercial Supplier:	
Location of harvest (place name or GPS coordinates)	Date animal was harvested DD MM YY
Date country food was received DD MM YY	Check one: ☐ Purchase ☐ Donation
Please describe the country food (type, part of animal, quantity) and any observations regarding the animal:	
Who butchered this animal?	☐ Hunter named above or commercial supplier ☐ Facility/ program staff ☐ Other person (name: _____)
What was the temperature of this food when it was received?	
For walrus, was the animal tested for trichinella?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Form completed by	Date DD MM YY

* "Commercial supplier" refers to a country food processing plant or seller like Kivalliq Arctic Foods or Iqaluit Country Food Store

Appendix C – Sample Menus

Week 1

Day	Meal
Monday	Caribou stew, bannock, frozen vegetables, milk
Tuesday	Tuna sandwich, apple slices, yogurt, bannock
Wednesday	Arctic char soup, rice, mixed vegetables
Thursday	Bannock with peanut butter, berries
Friday	Chicken stir fry with rice and vegetables

Week 2

Day	Meal
Monday	Spaghetti with meat sauce, side salad, milk, bannock
Tuesday	Egg salad sandwiches, cucumber slices, yogurt, bannock
Wednesday	Goose soup (or chicken soup), bannock
Thursday	Oatmeal with berries, milk, bannock
Friday	Beef and vegetable stew, rice, bannock

Week 3

Day	Meal
Monday	Arctic char with rice and vegetables, bannock
Tuesday	Ham and cheese sandwiches, apple slices, bannock
Wednesday	Caribou chili (or beef chili), bannock
Thursday	Yogurt, granola, banana, bannock
Friday	Chicken soup with vegetables and pasta, bannock

Week 4

Day	Meal
Monday	Caribou and vegetable stew, bannock
Tuesday	Char salad sandwiches, cucumber slices, bannock
Wednesday	Goose stew with rice, bannock
Thursday	Bannock with berries and yogurt
Friday	Arctic Chowder (char), vegetables, bannock

Appendix D – Cleaning Checklist

Kitchen Surfaces

Task	Frequency	Completed	Notes
Wipe counters and prep surfaces with sanitizer	Daily		
Clean cutting boards (separate for meat, fish, vegetables)	After each use		
Wipe refrigerator and freezer handles	Daily		
Clean sink and faucets	Daily		

Inuksiuit/Country Food

Task	Frequency	Completed	Notes
Ensure country food is stored at safe temperature immediately after delivery	Upon delivery		
Sanitize surfaces used for cutting/prepping country food	After each use		
Clean and sanitize containers for frozen/dried country food	Weekly		
Ulu and knifes are clean and sanitized after use	After each use		

Equipment

Task	Frequency	Completed	Notes
Wash knives, utensils, and cutting boards in hot soapy water	After each use		
Sanitize knives, utensils, and cutting boards	After each use		
Clean stovetops and ovens	Daily		
Clean microwaves inside and out	Daily		
Empty and sanitize dish racks	Daily		

Floor and Waste

Task	Frequency	Completed	Notes
Sweep and mop kitchen floor	Daily		
Empty trash bins and sanitize	Daily		
Clean and sanitize garbage containers	Weekly		

Storage Areas

Task	Frequency	Completed	Notes
Clean shelves and storage bins	Weekly		
Check for expired food and remove	Weekly		
Sanitize containers for dry goods	Weekly		

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