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Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

November 25, 2005

The Honorable Mary Anne Chambers
Minister of Children and Youth Services
56 Wellesley St. W., 14th floor
Toronto ON M5S 2S3

Dear Ms. Chambers,

Thank you for committing to help all Ontario students succeed and lead healthy, productive lives by doubling your investment in student nourishment programs. We also applaud your recognition that a community-based, decentralised program delivery model provides more nutritious food to more students.

The community partnership model has strengthened community connections by engaging more parents in the school system to care for the wellbeing of our children and youth. The countless volunteer hours, in-kind donations, and leveraged contributions resulting from this approach have truly minimised the reliance on government funding.

We strongly encourage your Ministry to continue to recognise the value of community partnerships by allocating a portion of funds each year for community partners program co-ordinators. The recently completed Ontario Child Nutrition Program Evaluation Project, funded by the Trillium Foundation and managed by BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING, identified Best Practices of student nutrition programs that needed additional support. Issues identified, such as assistance in creating great local partnerships and developing local plans for sustainability, are key roles of the community partners program co-ordinators. Tremendous progress has been made, but more work is essential to ensure a strong and sustainable provincial network of community-based nutrition programs. Without these co-ordinators, the whole partnership risks falling apart with each program isolated and more dependent on the government for the support it needs.

You have demonstrated that you value community partnerships and student nutrition. Please ensure that this commitment is reflected in your next announcement regarding student nourishment program funding and program guidelines. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Tracy Woloshyn, Chair of the Food Security Workgroup, 905-895-4512 ext. 4352.

Sincerely,

Dr. Garry Aslanyan
President, Ontario Public Health Association

cc. Regional contact, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Regional office