

Fall 2024

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers,

We are delighted to inform you that River East Transcona School Division is implementing a new program, initiated and funded by the province, for the 2024-25 school year: the **Universally Accessible School Nutrition Program**.

This initiative's main goal is to ensure that no child goes through the school day hungry, helping them focus better and perform well in their academic year. By providing free, healthy supplemental snacks to all students, regardless of perceived needs, the program aims to:

- ✓ Reduce hunger among students.
- ✓ Follow Canada's Food Guide and Canada's nutritional guidelines.
- ✓ Accommodate food allergies and intolerances.
- ✓ Accommodate cultural and religious dietary needs.
- ✓ Be barrier free and stigma free.
- ✓ Support overall well-being and academic success.
- ✓ Respect public health guidelines including following food safety protocols and procedures.

Scheduled to start in the first part of the third week of September, your child will have access to healthy snacks offered at the school canteen as part of a sponsored voucher program. These vouchers will be distributed barrier-free by school staff to ensure students who may benefit from the support can easily access them.

Parents and guardians should know that this program is meant to fill gaps. While your child's school will be offering the snack voucher program, it supplements existing services at home and in-school and is not meant to replace them. Parents and caregivers should continue sending food with their child, knowing the program will address any additional needs.

As the year progresses, we will be sharing periodic updates with you about this important support in your child's school.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making our schools a healthy and thriving environment for all.

Thank you,
River East Transcona School Division's Nutrition Team