

Nutrition grant brings breakfast program to Penhold Elementary School

For Immediate Release, September 21, 2017: A healthy breakfast program is just the start of a new pilot project being launched this week at Penhold Elementary School.

The Grade 3-5 school received a nutrition grant through Alberta Education, which invited school divisions throughout the province to each select one school as the site of the nutrition program for this year. The program will also involve healthy eating and healthy living activities and information sessions, and the school will be working with organizations, businesses and individuals to enable the program to continue after the grant is complete. For now, the grant involves a coordinator to plan and prepare a simple, healthy breakfast for all 200 students each school day.

“We were really pleased to receive the grant and our students are excited to share a meal together at the start of the day,” said Principal Clark Peters. “The research is very clear that proper nutrition, particularly a healthy breakfast, sets children up for better success in the classroom. Healthy eating results in better academic results, longer attention spans, and stronger overall attentiveness. There are a multitude of physical, emotional and mental health benefits from proper nutrition, and we are pleased to be sharing this priority together!”

The breakfast coordinator will be working with a clinical dietician to plan breakfast menus that are appealing and nutritious for children, and will access the cooking facilities at Penhold Crossing Secondary School for the breakfast prep. Karyn Barber, Liaison Superintendent for Chinook's Edge schools in Penhold, feels the collaboration of resources, expertise and community is the perfect recipe for success.

“Having access to healthy food and forming a strong nutrition landscape in a school provides long term health benefits to everyone involved,” said Barber. “Healthy students learn better and become adults who continue to pursue healthy lifestyles. Beyond basic nutrition, this program is providing information and support to increase student leadership opportunities, including developing skills and knowledge in food preparation. It's a great local story of community connectedness that creates a positive healthy culture in school.”

As part of their safe and caring culture, schools throughout Chinook's Edge are engaged in projects and activities that foster student health and wellness. At many schools, this involves longstanding breakfast programs which are the result of strong involvement from local neighbours and businesses.

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