



Public Health Association of British Columbia

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Dear School District 68 Trustees,

On behalf of the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC), we would like to extend our support for the Community School Coordinator (CSC) positions that have greatly benefited many hands-on learning opportunities for students in SD68 in collaboration with the Farm to School BC (F2SBC) program. PHABC is a voluntary, non-profit, non-government, member driven organization that provides leadership to promote health, wellbeing and social equity. We fulfill our mission through advocacy, collaboration, education and research. PHABC administers Farm to School BC (F2SBC): a provincially funded healthy eating program that works with over 270 K-12 schools and communities to empower and support people in building and sustaining programs that foster vibrant, sustainable, regional food systems. We have been collaborating with SD68 over the last three years through our Central Island Regional Hub where CSCs have provided a critical role coordinating, promoting and supporting food literacy programs through the F2SBC program.

Community School Coordinators have served as members of the F2SBC Advisory Committee where they played a critical role helping to bridge school programming with community partners. Specifically, the CSCs have supported our programming by providing information about schools' needs, communicating resources and opportunities to schools, and promoting our programs to schools. Often, the CSCs are the main contacts for the schools we provide programming for and the knowledge & expertise that CSCs bring has fostered stronger collaboration opportunities to more effectively and efficiently implement Farm to School BC programming.

During the pandemic when the CSC positions were redeployed, we observed a significant gap in the ability to implement our programming, reaffirming the important role that CSC members play in the F2SBC Advisory Committee. For example, our direct connection to schools in SD68 has been challenging to maintain without the support of the CSC role. Furthermore, our strategic planning for District-wide initiatives has lacked the in-depth knowledge of the five CSC's understanding of their catchment area.

It is our hope that the school district maintains all CSC positions in the future. They are the connective tissue that helps to bridge programming with community partners and we greatly value their support and commitment to the school district and its students. Thank-you for considering the important impact that the CSC role brings to school programming in SD68.

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