



# FOOD IN SCHOOLS

Supporting school communities to thrive

## EXTENDED SCHOOL LUNCH PILOT

### Frequently Asked Questions

The Department is committed to ensuring Tasmanian children have the best possible start to life, to lead happy, healthy and active lives.

School Food Matters (SFM) (formerly the Tasmanian School Canteen Association) received \$1.87 million from the Tasmanian Government to expand the School Lunch pilot that took place in late 2020.

In Term 2, 2022, the first 15 schools commenced participating in the extended Pilot.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) are now open to Tasmanian Government schools to select a further 15 schools to join the Pilot in 2023. Priority will be given to schools in lower socio-economic areas.

#### 1. Are there any mandatory requirements for involvement in the pilot?

Yes. Schools will need to:

- Have a current School Food Matters Membership
- Be accredited under the School Food Matters SmartFood Program, or working towards it
- Be willing to participate in the pilot evaluation, including interviews and surveys with the school community.
- Have endorsement by the school Principal to participate in the pilot

#### 2. Is the EOI only open to schools K – 10?

Yes. Only Tasmanian Government schools with students from kinder to year 10 are eligible to apply.

#### 3. Are schools that were unsuccessful through the EOI process in 2021 eligible to reapply?

Yes. Schools that were unsuccessful in round one of the process are encouraged to review feedback provided and resubmit an EOI.

#### 4. How many schools will be selected for round two of the pilot?

The second phase of the pilot is to work with a further 15 schools, taking the total number of schools in the pilot during 2023 to 30. This staged implementation has allowed time to assess and understand school readiness, in terms of infrastructure and the development of partnerships within the wider community.

#### 5. What support will schools receive if they are successful in being part of the pilot?

Successful schools will be supported by School Food Matters to

- Determine equipment needs and purchase identified kitchen equipment
- Develop a [School Food Plan](#)
- Implement a healthy lunch program, based on a formulated menu with input from a dietician

Throughout the Pilot, schools will receive day to day on the ground support from School Food Matters School Lunch Co-ordinators.

Schools will either be provided with ingredients (which will be procured by School Food Matters) or a premade main component of the meal that has been prepared and cooked from a central kitchen through a partnership with Loaves and Fishes Tasmania.

The meals will be different from traditional school canteen menus. The ideal approach will be cooking from scratch, embracing the five food groups using local produce and tying into seasons.

It is also hoped that participation in the pilot will introduce schools to new networks of food sources and food providers in their local community.

## **6. Will staffing support be provided?**

No. Staffing is not part of the funding for this pilot. Schools are required to resource their role in the pilot through the allocation of existing resources.

The amount of staff hours required to support the pilot depends on the number of days the school is providing lunch. Schools involved in the current pilot allocate approximately 4 -6 hours of staff time for each day of lunch delivery. However, each school has approached resourcing to suit their individual context.

## **7. What resources will my school be required to provide?**

As part of the pilot, an evaluation will be undertaken by the Menzies Institute of Medical Research (Menzies) to examine the impact on students and families. Through the evaluation process, schools will be required to communicate with parents regarding the distribution of surveys and establishment of focus groups. Support will be provided to schools by Menzies to do this.

If your school is selected, School Food Matters recommends developing a leadership group to drive the Pilot in your school. This may include your school Canteen Manager, Teachers Assistant/s, senior staff, classroom teacher/s and staff member/s that have a food background.

## **8. My school has limited equipment to undertake the pilot. Will any equipment be provided?**

School Food Matters will work with successful schools to undertake an equipment audit to determine any additional requirements and will procure and provide reimbursement to install essential equipment

## **9. Does lunch have to be provided five days per week?**

No. This will depend on the school and its circumstances. For example, a school may take a staged approach, starting with one day per week in Term 1, and extending over the course of 2023. Schools may also choose to feed particular grades or classes, and then expand their program over the life of the pilot.

School Food Matters has capacity to provide lunches in schools up to three days per week. If your EOI is successful, the final days and number of lunches the pilot can provide will be negotiated with School Food Matters prior to commencement.

## **10. What is the process for becoming a member and/or accredited with School Food Matters if our school doesn't have a canteen? Can we do it as part of this program?**

Schools are encouraged to contact School Food Matters to discuss support for accreditation and membership options: [kirsty@schoolfoodmatters.org.au](mailto:kirsty@schoolfoodmatters.org.au) or 03 6223 8023

## **11. Does the food need to be prepared in a commercial kitchen - as the food is not for sale, does this change normal council requirements?**

The food doesn't need to be prepared in a commercial kitchen. However, having appropriate equipment and access to food kitchens (normally found in High Schools and District High Schools) will be an asset.

Schools participating in the pilot will need to be accredited with School Food Matters. Part of the accreditation is about Food Safety and Food Preparation. The Local Council's Environmental Officer visits school canteens as part of the accreditation process to sign off on the Canteen Manager operating in a safe manner. Food won't be able to be cooked from homes and brought to school as part of this pilot.

The central kitchen in partnership with Loaves and Fishes is one way of delivering the school lunch pilot at your school. This partnership will be supported through School Food Matters.

## **12. Part of the last pilot required students to be seated for lunch. Will this remain a requirement for phase two of the program?**

Seated lunches are preferred. This project is for all students to enjoy lunch together and not discriminate. However, the format of the lunch program will be determined with the school based on its context.

## **13. Are students with food intolerances and allergies able to participate in the pilot?**

Currently School Food Matters is addressing the ability to provide school lunches to children with allergies/intolerances. The aim is to be able to provide school lunches for all children if possible.

## **14. Will the Program continue past 2023?**

The extended School Lunch Pilot will be evaluated at the end of 2023 by the Menzies Institute of Medical Research. The evaluation aims to understand if there are benefits to student engagement, challenges and costs of providing nutritious cooked school lunches. The Tasmanian Government will review the evaluation in considering whether the program will be continued past 2023.

## **15. Who do I contact for further information?**

If you have further questions about the EOI process please contact [wellbeing.unit@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:wellbeing.unit@education.tas.gov.au)

For information on how the school pilot may work in your school's context, contact Julie Dunbabin, School Food Matters [julie@schoolfoodmatters.org.au](mailto:julie@schoolfoodmatters.org.au)

If your school is interested in participating in the pilot in 2023, please complete the Expression of Interest by **Wednesday, 7 September 2022**.

## Key Dates

24 August 2022	Expression of Interest open to schools
7 September 2022	Applications close
15 September 2022	Assessment panel meeting
26 September 2022	Schools notified of EOI outcome
29 September 2022	Feedback session for unsuccessful schools
Term 4, 2022	Successful schools supported by SFM to be pilot ready
Term 1, 2023	Successful schools to commence pilot