



THE IMPACT OF FOOD INSECURITY ON THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND POST-SECONDARY TRANSITIONS OF TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD STUDENTS

Paul Anisef, Professor Emeritus, York University

Karen Robson, Associate Professor, McMaster University

Dr. Robert Brown, Toronto District School Board

Reana Maier, Ph.D.

Multidisciplinary Collaboration in Longitudinal and Lifecourse Research

Stirling, October 12, 2017

RESEARCH QUESTION & DATA

- **What is the impact of food security on student's academic success and how does self-identified race interact with food security to shape students' academic success?**
- **2011 TDSB Student Census and focus on 17 year olds merged with existing administrative data, university and community college admission data for multiple years (2012, 2013 and 2014) and Federal Census data on neighborhood income.**



WHAT DOES A LITERATURE REVIEW ON FOOD INSECURITY TELL US?

- **Widespread problem in Canada.**
- **Multiple measures of the concept are employed in the research literature.**
- **Food insecurity impacts negatively on most aspects of child development**
- **There are comparatively fewer studies of adolescents and PSE students than young children.**
- **Adults underreport children's experience of food insecurity.**
- **Our study fills an important research gap.**



1. Two Measures of Food Security

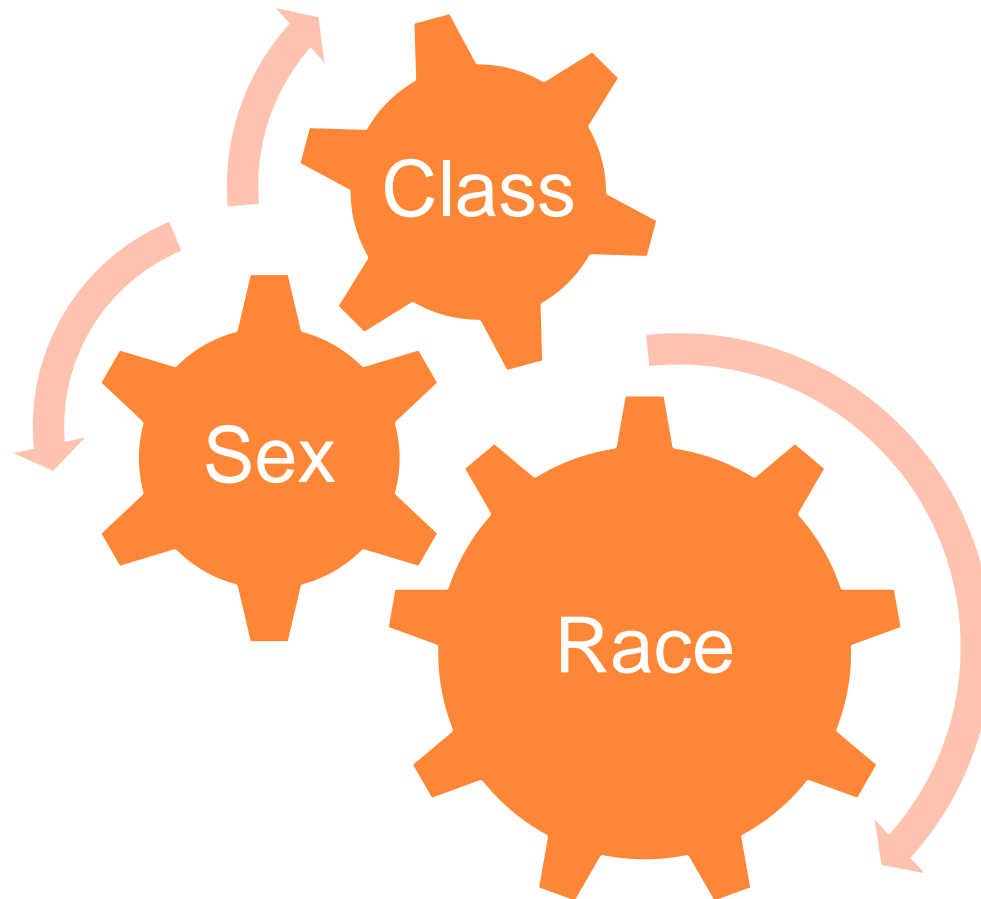
- Self-reported frequency of eating breakfast (never, 1-2 times a week, 3-4 times a week, 5 days/week)
- Index consisting of breakfast consumption, parental occupational status, parental PSE & neighborhood income)

2. Outcomes of Interest

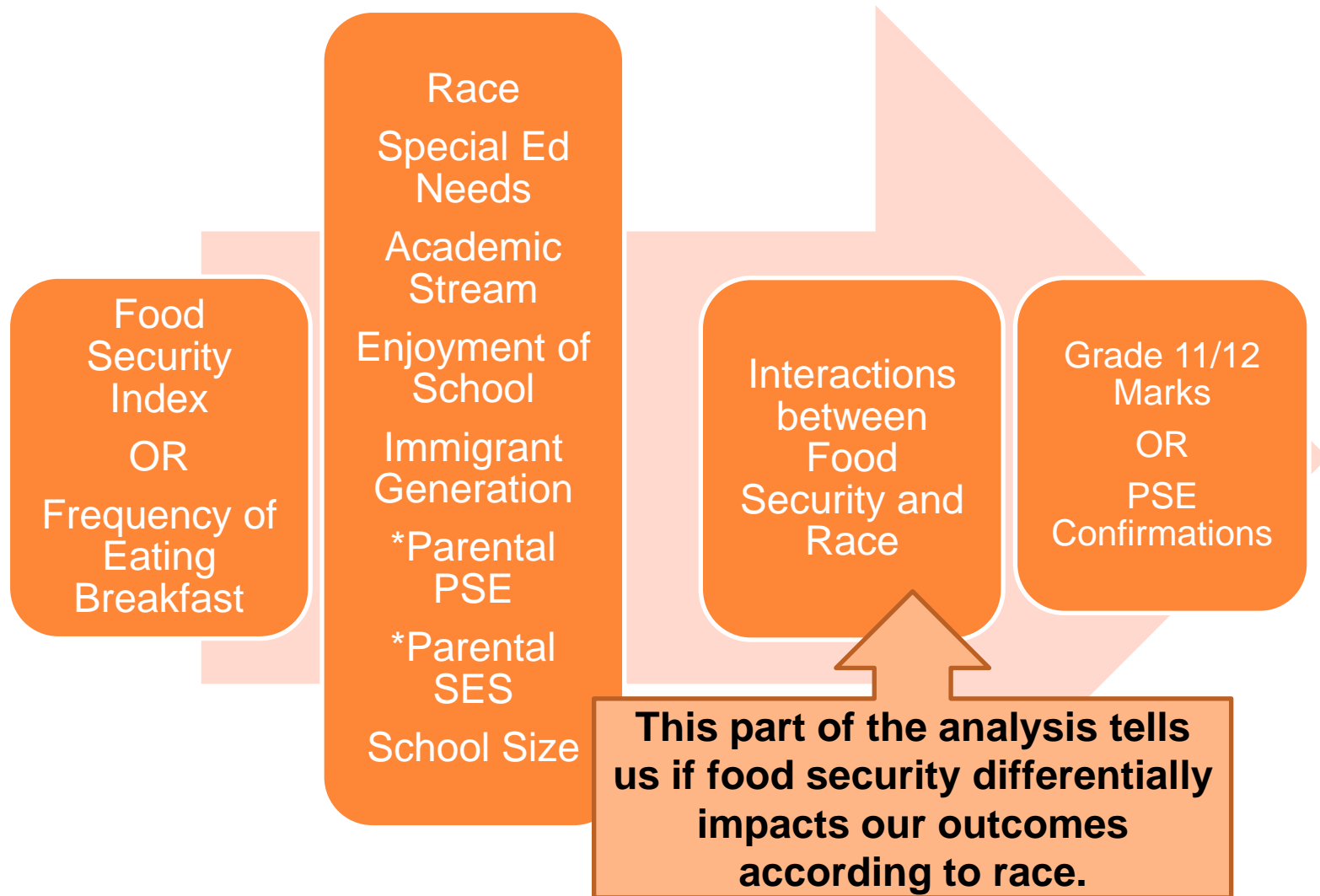
- Average high school marks (Grades 11/12)
- PSE Confirmations (University, College, None)



- **How can an intersectionality perspective help to inform our analysis?**

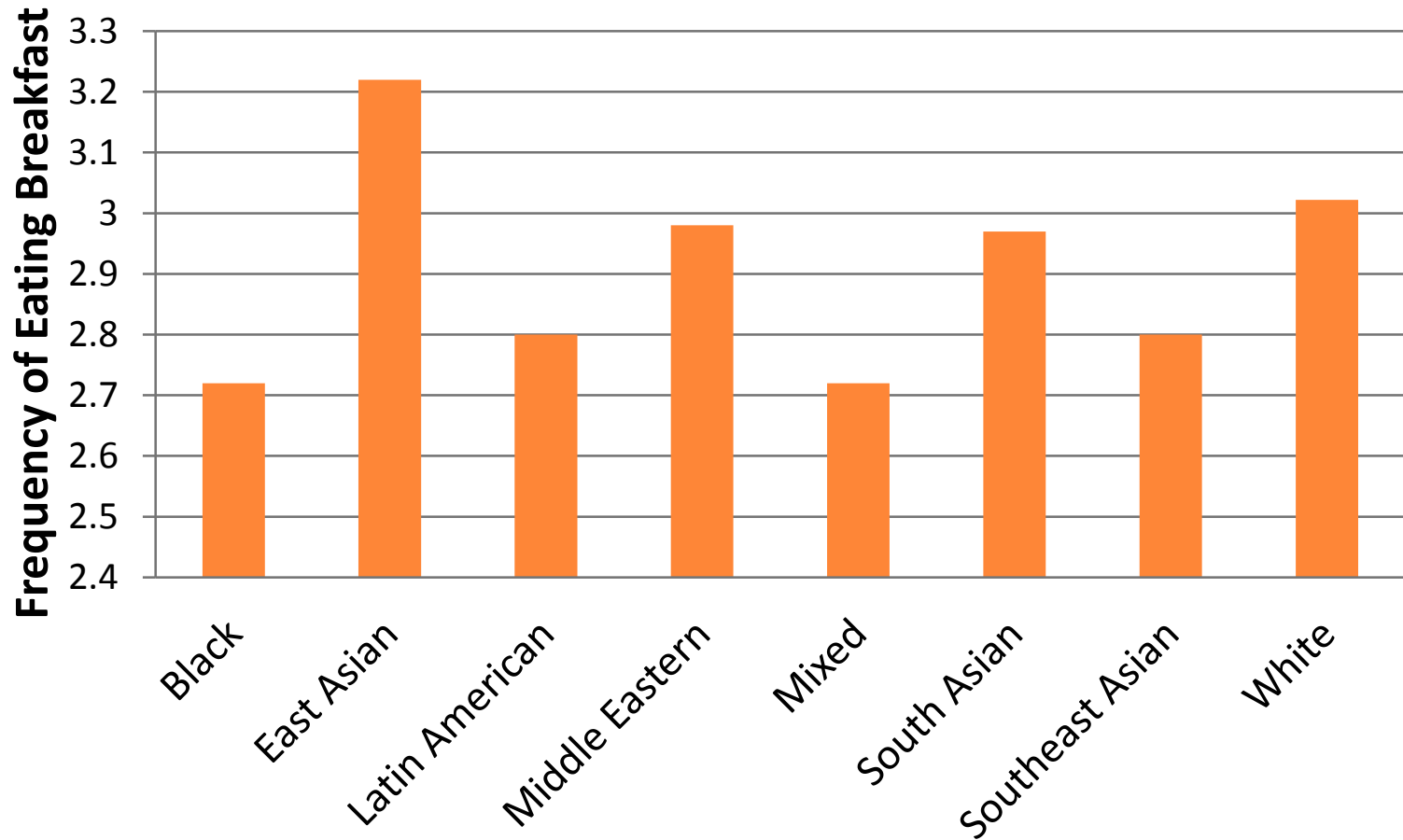


CAUSAL MODELS



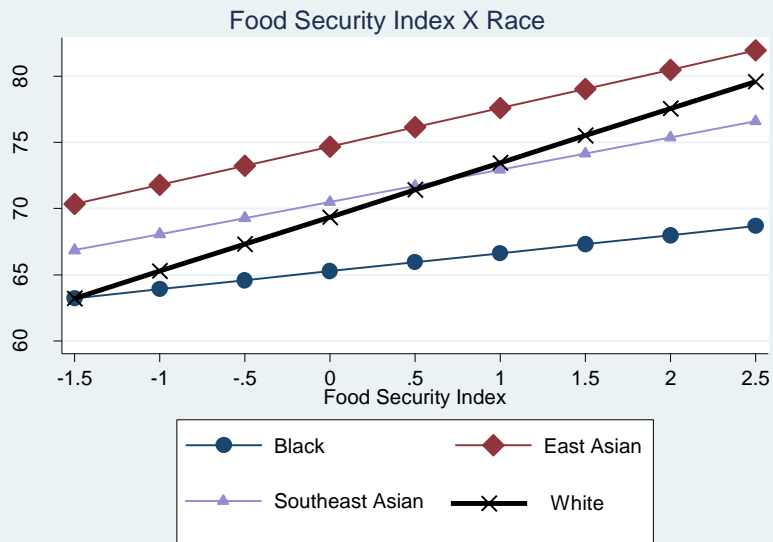
DESCRIPTIVES

Differences in Breakfast Habits by Race

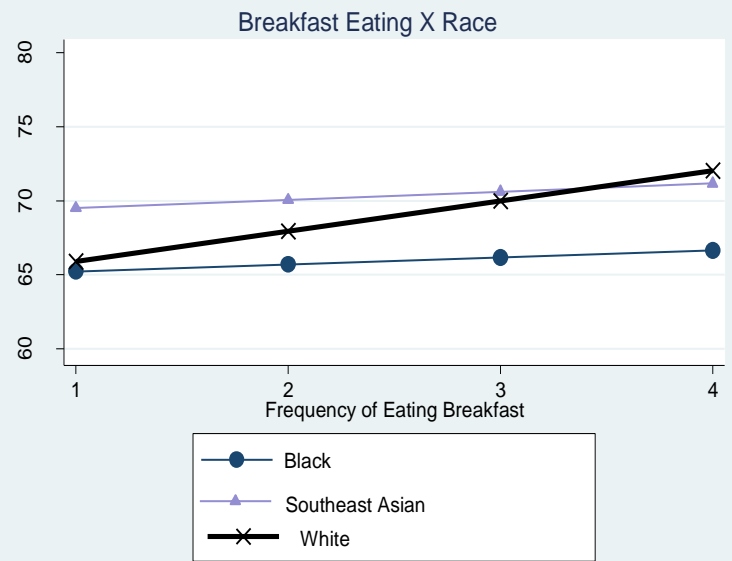


GRADE 11/12 MARKS: SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BY RACE

Food Security Index



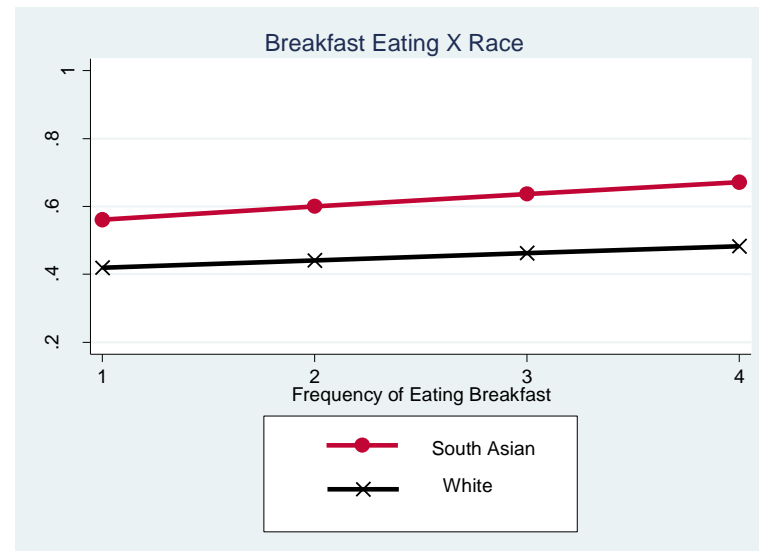
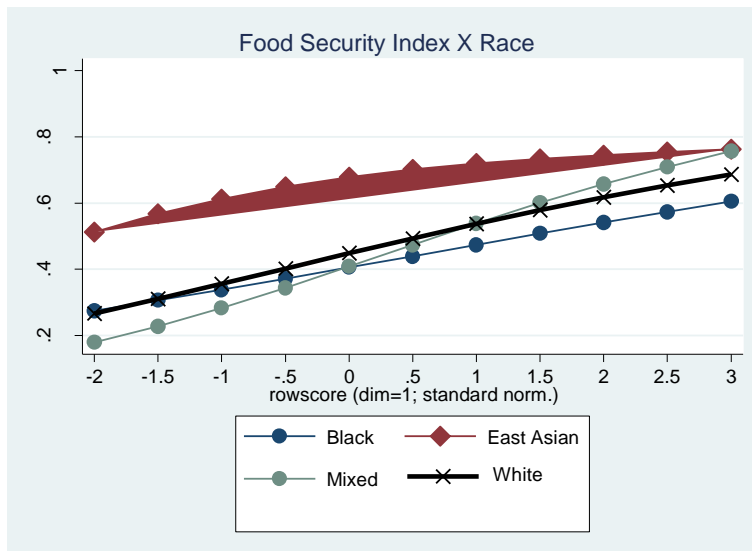
Frequency of Eating Breakfast



CONFIRMING UNIVERSITY: SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BY RACE

Food Security Index

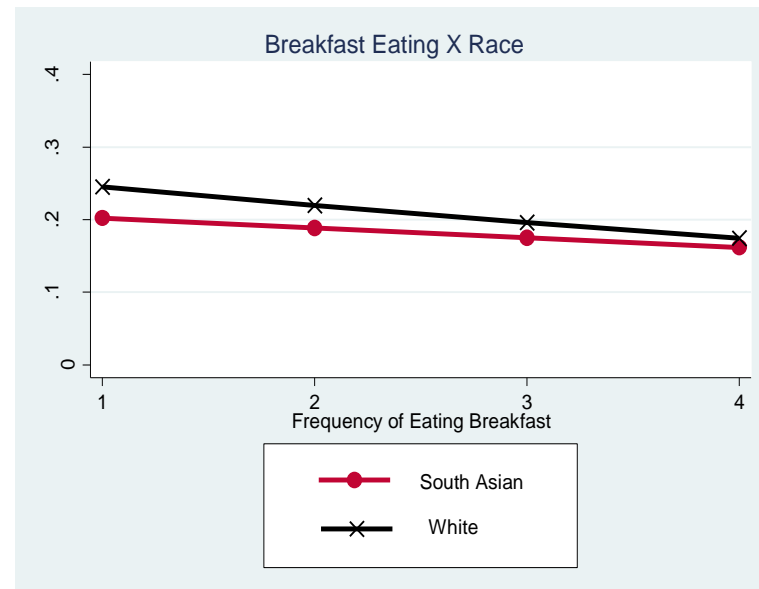
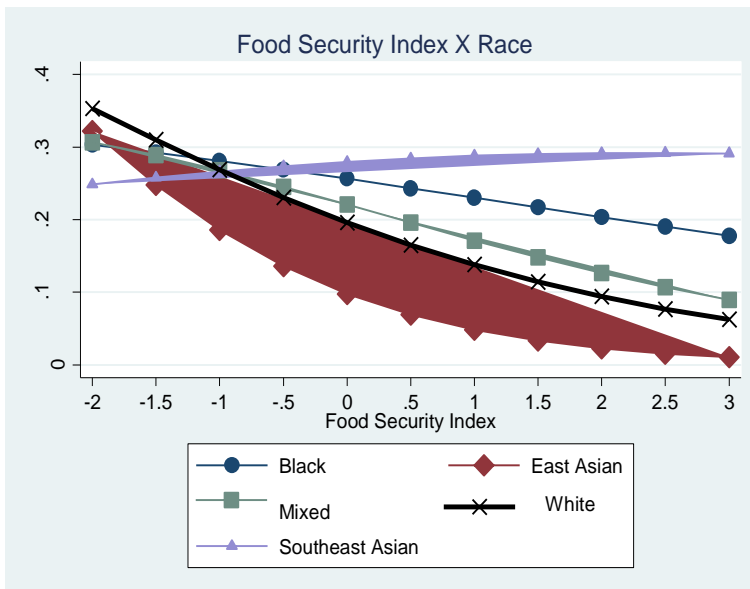
Frequency of Eating Breakfast



CONFIRMING COLLEGE: SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BY RACE

Food Security Index

Frequency of Eating Breakfast



PSE OUTCOMES: SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BY RACE

- **Food security, regardless of how it is measured, has a strong effect on marks and confirmations.**
- **The interactions tells us whether the measures of food security employed have differential impacts by race on the academic outcomes – they do.**
- **Our use of the food security index, which incorporated measures of economic resources, social position and breakfast consumption, revealed more complex differences among the various ethno racial groups.**
- **Ethnoracial differences are much more pronounced if we use the index.**
- **The use of these measures demonstrate the multi-faceted nature of deprivation and how much it differs across ethno-racial groups.**



CONCLUSIONS

- **Our study is limited in several ways: (1) we look at Grade 12 only. What is the relation of food security and school success in earlier grades? (2) we only examine the TDSB. What about other school boards located in other parts of Ontario? (3) our measure of self identified race employs general categories. There may well be diversity in educational outcomes within these categories that relate to country of origin.**
- **Such limitations raise questions regarding the efficacy of blanket policies for all youth, when policies should be introduced and whether targeted programming aimed at specific ethno racial groups is more effective in improving educational outcomes and maximizing their chances for transitioning to PSE.**



ALBERTA LEADING THE WAY?

Alberta.ca > Announcements > Successful school nutrition program going provincewide

Alberta Government

Share   Search Alberta.ca

Apr 05, 2017  Media inquiries

Successful school nutrition program going provincewide

Alberta's school nutrition program is being expanded to every school board in the 2017/18 school year, thanks to an additional \$10 million from Budget 2017.



Premier Notley, Education Minister Eggen and Health Minister Hoffman visit Our Lady of Peace School in Edmonton to announce the expanded school nutrition program

The school nutrition program was first rolled out in the current school year with \$3.5 million in funding to 14 school boards. More than 5,000 students in 33 schools have been receiving a nutritious meal or snack each day, according to figures provided to Alberta Education.

"We know students can't focus in class if they have an empty stomach. Giving students access to a daily nutritious meal not only ensures they have the fuel they need to get through the school day, it also helps develop the skills that ensure lifelong healthy nutrition. That's how we are working to make life better for Alberta families."

- Rachel Notley, Premier

Related information

[Alberta nutrition guidelines for children and youth \(pdf\)](#)

[School nutrition pilot program](#)

[Budget 2017](#)

Multimedia

[Listen to the news conference](#)





UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

