



Flourish!
— School Food Society —

THEORY OF CHANGE

DEFINING THE OUTCOMES OF OUR WORK



ABOUT

This document outlines the key outcomes that we hope to achieve with our work at Flourish! School Food Society.

All of the issues and outcomes defined in what follows have been synthesized from interviews and surveys conducted with school staff, parents and students. This process has recorded input from over 30 school staff, SPEAC parent leaders, more than 100 students and many Flourish staff.

The outcomes defined in what follows will be used to refine a three to five year evaluation plan, which we will operationalize beginning in the 2025/26 school year.

Through participatory evaluation, we will continue to gather input and feedback from all the partners we serve, while assessing how we are doing on achieving key outcomes our community has identified as important.

All of this work is informed and inspired by the School Food Program Plan that was collaboratively developed by many of our partners in the Sooke School District #62. This plan is a backbone that has led to the creation of this document.

THANK YOU

To everyone who has contributed to supporting our work nourishing children and youth.

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Spring, 2025

THREE KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED



Our partners see that school food programs can play a vital role in helping address these three big problems.

2) Agriculture is a leading cause of climate change and ecological degradation. By supporting local food producers and engaging food literacy education in schools, we are working to reduce our dependence on an **unsustainable food system**.

3) Connection to caring adults is a key supportive factor in youth mental health. Our work aims to create connection and care at school, helping alleviate the growing problem of **social isolation and anxiety** in youth.

1) **Food insecurity** disproportionately effects school aged children and youth.

- 11% of adolescents report going to bed hungry because there was not enough food at home;
- 45% of adolescents report frequently skipping breakfast. 33% skip lunch and 8% skip dinner.

Increasingly we lack appreciation for the value of nourishing, seasonal food. This is a health issue that cuts across the socio-economic spectrum and is influenced by knowledge and culture.

WE HELP BY:

Increasing

Positive Relationships to Food

Supporting

Local Economies & Food Systems

Facilitating

Connection and Health



OUR VISION, OUR WORK...

We imagine a region in which all students can access nourishing food and learn through immersive experiences growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing it.

Our mission is to support: efficient, nourishing school food services; hands-on food literacy programming, and; development of nourishing food environments in schools.

Flourish provides three key supports to schools:

1. **Fun, nourishing meals.** Following mother nature's guidance we create diverse, seasonal and youth friendly menus and prepare and distribute hundreds of home cooked meals and snacks daily.
2. **Food aggregation and distribution.** Through partnership we help connect school communities with the foods they need to ensure students are nourished and ready to learn. We provide breakfast staples, snacks and other thoughtfully sourced grocery items.
3. **Food literacy.** We support school gardens and promote good practice in school food services. We believe there is magic in experientially connecting with seeds, gardens, kitchens, and composts.

INTENDED IMPACT

Strengthen school food security; increase the amount of local food purchased by / consumed at school and; help facilitate connection to reduce anxiety and promote good mental health in children and youth.

WHO WE ENGAGE

- Students
- CUPE
- Teachers
- Admin
- Parents
- Farmers and Makers
- Governments
- Elders and Knowledge Holders
- Partners/Supporters

OUR APPROACH

SCRATCH COOKED MEALS

GROCERIES TO SCHOOLS

FOOD LITERACY SUPPORT

Culturally Inclusive

(equity, caring, open)

OUTCOMES

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Strengthen relationships with farmers, chefs . . . food systems
- Create opportunities to connect with families
- Create opportunities for everyone at school to participate together

SUPPORT STUDENTS

- Support learning (ability to show up fully in classroom)
- Empower students to set and achieve goals
- Improve connection and sense of belonging at school
- Improve mental health and reduce anxiety
- Reduce disregulation

Research Focus in Next 3-5 Years

ACCESS TO FOOD

- Meaningfully address food insecurity
- Students enjoy and want to eat our food
- Food is open to all (barrier free)
- Food is distributed without judgement
- Food is culturally relevant

Research Focus in Next 3-5 Years

SUPPORT LEARNING

- Support educators to:
 - Integrate food literacy into pedagogy
 - Support applied physical health education
 - in gardens, in kitchens, in classrooms...

SUSTAINABILITY

- Reduce waste and support composting
- Enable land based learning
- Support local food
- Inspire future growers and advocates

Systems Sustainability

(infrastructure: physical, financial, social, HR)

Student Centred
(students involved in design and delivery)

Quality Food
(the food is actually good)

LONGTERM OUTCOMES

- Schools integrate hands on food learning throughout the curriculum, K-12
- All children and youth in our region are well nourished at school
- School food programs support a diverse and prosperous local food system

ULTIMATE IMPACT

Truly nourishing school food environments support all students. A culture of connection to and care for the people and places that sustain us flourishes, benefitting the health and wellbeing of all.



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