

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION # 90/14  
MINISTRY PAPER

**SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME**

**PURPOSE**

Members are being asked to note that the Ministry of Education, (MoE) is improving its School Feeding Programme to provide meals for approximately 65% of the entire school population.

**BACKGROUND**

Research shows that the nutritional choices available to children are crucial to their growth and development in the early years. This makes the School Feeding Programme a priority. The Ministry, through the Nutrition Products Limited, (NPL) conducted a pilot breakfast programme to determine menu acceptance, daily requirements, food preparation and cost. The pilot fed 12,000 Early Childhood students using local ripe bananas, eggs and carrots to make muffins and local fruits to make drink juice.

**INITIATIVES UNDER THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME**

Based on the pilot and other data we will implement the following options in the new school year to provide better nutrition for students:

- Approximately 65% of the entire school population (368,140) will be provided with either breakfast, lunch or both. In particular, 70% of the Early Childhood cohort or 139,000 children including PATH beneficiaries, will receive a free breakfast and lunch. At the upper primary and secondary levels, the MoE will provide subsidised meals to approximately two hundred and twenty nine thousand (229,000) students.
- The MoE will use a combination of breakfast produced by the NPL as well as that provided at the local school level.
- PATH beneficiaries will continue to receive a free lunch 3 days per week. Where they can, parents will be asked to contribute between J\$45 and J\$60 per day of the cost of the meal for the other 2 days

- Parents of the approximately 30% vulnerable non-PATH beneficiaries who are inconsistent in the provision of lunch for their children, will be asked to pay approximately 50% of the cost for a school lunch, when needed.
- The Ministry will ask principals and other school administrators to continue to assist children whose families sometimes find it difficult to provide them with a meal.
- Government will purchase less tinned corned beef, tinned mackerel, flour and cornmeal and will no longer store and distribute these. The school feeding menu will use locally produced protein, meat or peas and beans. The menu will include porridge with banana bread, sandwiches, carrot cake and fruit juice, scones and fruit juice. This will increase the emphasis on contracting local farmers to provide supplies of starches, proteins and vegetable.

### **BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS**

It will cost the Government of Jamaica 1.05 Billion Jamaican Dollars to provide free breakfast and lunch for the 70% Early Childhood cohort and another 2.4Billion Jamaican Dollars to provide free lunch to PATH beneficiaries 3 days per week.



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Minister

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