

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MINISTRY PAPER 47

THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to ensure that the less privileged students benefit from the educational experience in order to break the cycle of poverty, the Ministry of Education, is implementing a revamped School Feeding Programme. This programme will be fully implemented by the 2016/2017 Academic Year.

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Education has implemented the National School Feeding Policy aimed at:

- i. Improving students' nutrition, attendance and learning
- ii. Providing meals for the most vulnerable, including students on the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)
- iii. Increasing the use of local foods, including fruits and vegetables in the School Feeding Programme

INITIATIVES/HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAMME

- The Ministry is on track to meeting the target of providing breakfast to one hundred and thirty eight thousand (138,000) children. At present, one hundred and twenty six thousand (126, 000) children of the Early Childhood cohort , aged 3-8 years now receive breakfast and lunch free of cost. Where possible, parents are asked to make a contribution to the cost of the meals.
- PATH beneficiaries aged 9-18 years in Grades 4-13 at the upper primary and secondary levels will continue to receive a free lunch 3 days per week. Provision is made for one hundred and fifty one thousand (151,000) students in this group. Parents are asked to bear the cost of the lunches for the other two days.

- Partnerships are being forged with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and its agencies such as, Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS) and the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) to increase the use of local produce in the School Feeding Programme. Rice is the only commodity which is purchased centrally and sent to schools.

BENEFITS OF THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

- Improved school attendance
- Increased student learning and improved educational outcomes
- Reduced hunger

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Government of Jamaica has been its sole source of funding since 1998. The budget for the Financial Year 2015/2016 is J\$4,561,412,000.00. This includes the Early Childhood component of J\$191,528,000.00.

PROJECTIONS/PLANS

- Nutrition Products Ltd. (NPL) will continue to prepare breakfast across the island, moving the numbers from the current 24,000 to 80,000 students by the 2016/2017 Academic Year. The entity will provide the private sector with opportunities to supply eggs, milk, meat proteins, vegetables and fruit, for use in their products.
- Increased use of a wider variety of local produce in the School Feeding Programme



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