

Pacific Rim School District Launches Expanded Meal Program in Partnership with Nourish Cowichan



Port Alberni, BC, October 31, 2024 - Pacific Rim School District announces a partnership with BC food charity Nourish Cowichan to deliver a new School Meal Program in Port Alberni and Ucluelet in the 2024-2025 school year.

The School Meal Program, co-funded by the [Ministry of Education and Child Care](#), provides students with nutritious lunches and snacks daily.

“We are thrilled to announce this partnership, which marks a significant step in our commitment to address food insecurity and ensure that every student has access to nutritious meals,” said Pam Craig, Chair of Pacific Rim School District's Board of Education. “By collaborating with Nourish Cowichan we can better support our students' health, well-being and academic success, empowering them to focus on learning and growth without the barrier of food insecurity.”

In comparison to last year, the Pacific Rim School District has recorded a significant 30% increase in the number of students accessing food programs in Port Alberni and Ucluelet. Students in the Tofino and Bamfield communities continue to benefit from existing school meal programs.

The Nourish Cowichan program, providing meals for students in Port Alberni and Ucluelet, aims to reach as many students as possible, with support from the community. “Families can access the program through our schools and, if able, can also support others on the program,” said Kirsten Nesbitt, Healthy Schools Manager at Pacific Rim School District. “Our School Meal Program operates on the principle that everyone is welcome, and nobody will be turned away.”



“Nourish Cowichan is proud to leverage our years of experience to support the students, families and dedicated staff of Pacific Rim School District in developing an enhanced School Meal Program,” said Rod Allen, Board President of Nourish Cowichan. “The strength of our organization comes from community support and our committed volunteers, and we look forward to collaborating with the Port Alberni and Ucluelet communities to help this initiative grow.”

A donation of \$1,000 provides a student with meals for the entire school year. “Every child deserves access to nutritious food for a healthy life and academic success. Nutritious school meals help all families, regardless of barriers or income,” explained Fatima Da Silva, executive director of Nourish Cowichan. “At Nourish, we believe that when a community comes together, incredible things can happen, and more children have the same opportunities to learn and thrive.”

To access the program, parents and caregivers can get in touch with their school. Information about volunteering or how to donate to the program is available at <https://nourishcowichan.ca/>

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About Pacific Rim School District

The Pacific Rim School District, situated on the ḥaḥuuli of the ḥiṣaaḥaḥ, Hupačasath, Tla-o-qui-aht, Yuuḥuḥiḥḥaḥ and Huu-ay-aht First Nations, serves a regional population of approximately 31,000 people, including 4,000 students from across Port Alberni, Tofino, Ucluelet, Bamfield and other remote communities. www.sd70.bc.ca

About Nourish Cowichan

Nourish Cowichan is a food charity that provides nutritious food programs for individuals and schools within the Cowichan Valley and Pacific Rim School Districts. Nourish advocates for food equity, sharing knowledge with other school food programs across BC and Canada, building food sources sustainability and mapping a way to create universal food programs for all children. More information is available at <https://nourishcowichan.ca/>

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