



TCSA POLICY	
TITLE	Traditional Foods in Schools
POLICY NUMBER	21-02-V2
PROGRAM NAME	JK-Grade 12
DOMAIN NAME	Education
EFFECTIVE DATE	6-July-2021
NEXT REVIEW DATE	6-July-2027
APPROVAL DATE	6-July-2024
ISSUING AUTHORITY	Tłchq Community Services Agency
ACCREDITATION STANDARD	N/A

POLICY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Traditional foods are an important part of the daily lives of many Tłchq people. It is essential for their health, culture, and identity. Food and the way it is prepared carries significant meaning for all people as it acknowledges traditions, and appreciates the experiences and diverse preferences of a group of people.

Tłchq Community Services Agency (TCSA) believes that incorporating the preparation and the serving of traditional foods during or part of on-the-land camp programs, cultural programs, school menus and/or offered on special occasions and celebrations presents an opportunity to:

- increase participation by serving foods with flavour and appearance familiar to foods students see in their homes and communities;
- increase students' likelihood to select and eat school meals when foods meet students' taste and are served in a supportive, comfortable, and social environment;
- support students' understanding and appreciation of their worlds and that of others.

PURPOSE/RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide guidelines when traditional foods are prepared and served to TCSA students; and



- ensure traditional foods are stored, examined, prepared, and served safely by TCSA staff as a part of cultural and/or on-the-land program(s) for students.

DEFINITION

Traditional food refers to meals that are offered to TCSA students and prepared according to traditional recipes and methods while meeting nutritional guidelines according to Canada's Food Guide and Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide-First Nations, Inuit, and Metis.

Parent or Guardian is the legal custodian of a student.

Student is an individual currently enrolled at any school within Tłıchǫ Region. In accordance with the 2.3.1 NWT School Handbook, a mature student refers to those 18+ years of age. For the purposes of the *Traditional Meal Student Info and Opt-out Waiver*, a mature student can sign themselves, otherwise it is a parent/guardian.

SCOPE/APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to:

- TCSA staff who are involved and responsible for traditional food handling at TCSA;
- A student who is participating in the programs and who (or their parent/guardian) **has not provided** a signed opt-out waiver; and
- A parent/guardian of a student participating in the programs.

PROCEDURE

Common Responsibilities When Offering Traditional Foods to Students

Donations

TCSA school facilities, and on-the-land program activities organized by TCSA, will accept donations of meat, fish, and other harvested foods in the Northwest Territories in accordance with the NWT *Wildlife Act* and Regulations. Meat and fish must be obtained and donated legally by a donor, who may be a local, licensed hunter, and/or outfitter. All donors must have an appropriate hunting license or aboriginal hunting rights and must provide



this documentation upon request.

All donated foods shall be inspected on delivery or as soon as possible by authorized kitchen or camp staff and handled according to the *NWT Public Health Act Food Establishment Safety Regulations*. These foods shall be served only if there is no reason to doubt their safety. Where and when applicable, food items received as gifts and donations shall be labelled, dated and stored immediately by the kitchen staff.

TCSA staff identified as responsible for serving traditional foods to TCSA students, will receive training that will include the examination, preparation, and serving of traditional foods. TCSA will ensure staff identified maintain current certification and provide re-training if appropriate.

Food Preparation and Storage

Traditional foods may be prepared and served in school kitchen spaces. Food safety and handling procedures will be observed.

Students Opting Out of Traditional Foods

Students who **wish not to receive** traditional foods are required to complete the *Traditional Meal Student Info and Opt-out Waiver* (Appendix A). The form is completed either by a student, or by student's parent/guardian. The form must be completed on an annual basis at the beginning of a school year as part of the registration process.

Exception: If a new student is admitted to the TCSA School at a later time (i.e. during a school year), and wishes **not to participate** in the traditional foods servings when offered by TCSA, then the form must be completed.

All completed Opt-out Waivers will be monitored by the School Administrative Assistant.

All TCSA students' Opt-out Waivers and documentation are kept in a secure file identified at each TCSA school. Waivers will be kept on file for two (2) school years unless a student (or their parent/guardian) requests a change/cancellation of the Opt-out Waiver. Cancellation of the Opt-out Waiver can be received in writing at any time.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

N/A



CROSS-REFERENCES:

21-19-V2 Healthy Food in Schools Policy

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Traditional Foods Student Info and Opt-out Waiver

REFERENCES:

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide-First Nations, Inuit and Metis; Health Canada, 2007

GNWT Ministerial Directive: *Serving Traditional Foods in NWT Health and Social Services Facilities*; MD 2020-07, July 1, 2020

GNWT *Serving Traditional Foods in NWT Health and Social Services Facilities: Guidelines for the Development of Operational Policies and Procedures*; August 2019

Northwest Territories *Education Act* s. 117; 1996

Northwest Territories *Tłı̄chǫ Community Services Agency Act* s. 13; 2005

Northwest Territories *Wildlife Act*; 2017

Serving up tradition: A Guide for School Food in Culturally Diverse Communities, FoodCorps and Massachusetts Farm to School, December 2016

Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre, Ontario, *Policy and Procedure Manual: Miichim/Traditional Food*; November 2017





APPROVAL

Reviewed and Approved By:

Kevin Armstrong
Chief Executive Officer
6-July-2024

Reviewed and Approved By:

Linsey Hope
Director of Education
6-July-2024