

## **Nutrition Support Bursary 2024**

### **Final Report**

#### **Project Description**

The 'Oat Nutrition Support Bursary' aimed to support in-school nutrition programs at schools in need, while promoting oats as an affordable and nutritious food option. Schools received bursaries to purchase oats and oat-based foods for snacks and meals. Schools were also provided with a nutrition package, access to classroom resources, and recipe cards for students to take home. Ten classrooms across the province also received a hands-on experience led by AITC staff, where students made oat energy bites using all Saskatchewan ingredients. This activity allowed students to gain a deeper understanding of Saskatchewan agriculture, particularly the oats grown in the province.

*"As a recipient of the oat bursary, our school is incredibly grateful for the support it has provided in nourishing our students. This bursary has provided funds for our school to support our students in healthy eating and learning about products grown in Saskatchewan. It is heartening to know that there are organizations like yours that value education and invest in the future of students. Thank you for your generous support."*

Teacher, Indian Head Elementary

*"Students were excited to have a hot breakfast option provided by the bursary, we often are only able to serve cold cereal so the hot option was much appreciated. The oatmeal cookie snack was also a welcome treat for students as we aren't able to provide a snack to students very often." – Teacher, John Diefenbaker School*

#### **Project Reach**

A total of 5507 students from 17 schools across Saskatchewan benefitted from the Oat Bursary. The bursary was given to large and small schools, both rural and urban. The breakdown is as follows:

\$400 bursary

- 10 schools (6 urban and 4 rural)
- 1354 students

\$300 bursary

- 7 schools (1 urban and 6 rural)
- 4173 students

Understanding that nutrition programs might not be available at every school and are often not extensively advertised, we adopted a different approach to promote the bursaries. We collaborated with superintendents from various school divisions, who shared the bursary application with schools in need. Additionally, we included the bursary information in our newsletter. By leveraging the networks of superintendents and utilizing our newsletter, we aimed to increase awareness and accessibility of the bursaries. Our goal was to ensure that schools that could benefit from the program were well-informed and had the opportunity to apply.

We received 62 applications, most of which met the criteria. To accommodate as many applicants as possible, we distributed the funds across various school divisions, covering both rural and urban areas. To ensure accountability and effective fund utilization, each recipient signed a Memorandum of Understanding. This agreement required that the funds were used within the current school year and mandated recipients to provide feedback and submit photos documenting their activities.

We distributed recipe cards featuring Oatmeal Breakfast Cookies and Oatmeal Energy Bites to promote oats as a healthy food choice for families. These cards were intended for students to take home and prepare these oats-based treats with their families. Educational posters about the nutritional benefits of oats were sent to each school along with the recipe cards.

**Teachers shared the following:**

Buena Vista School in Saskatoon – We purchased a number of oat products including porridge, oats, cheerios, and a number of different types of protein bars (Made Good, Fibre One, etc). Oats were used to provide students with breakfast, snacks, and baked goods. Teachers were each given a container of oat products to distribute to their students as needed.

Norquay School - A small group of students went to the local grocery store with an educational assistant and purchased granola bars, fruit bars, and cereal to distribute before school. They also purchased the ingredients for the cookies and energy bites. The PAA 7 class made the cookies and the energy bites for our breakfast program. The students loved the energy bites and we kept sneaking in really healthy things into them without them noticing. The recipes are great!

Balcarres School - The Grade 2-3 students used the funds to buy groceries to make two kinds of overnight oats (Oreo Cookie Overnight Oats, Apple Pie Overnight Oats) that approximately 220 students in our school enjoyed at breakfast time. They also made Healthy Chocolate Haystack Cookies to compliment our school's hot lunch during the final week of school.

Kennedy Langbank School - We purchased a variety of items to make some small easy snacks that students could try making at home that involve oats. Here are the following different snacks that we served school-wide. We wanted to show the students a wide variety of what they could make from things that require making to things that don't.

- Oatmeal Monster Cookie Energy Balls
- Toasted Oats and Yogurt Parfait
- Raspberry Oatmeal Banana Muffins
- Oat Bread with locally made jam
- Granola Bars with main ingredient as oats
- Quaker Dinosaur Oatmeal.

Sacred Heart Community School - We used the funds to buy individual oatmeal packages (around 200 packages), granola bars (approx 300) and oatmeal cookies (approx 500) for our breakfast and snack program as well as our year end BBQ.

Indian Head Elementary School - We do not have a cafeteria or serverly and we feed many students daily by either giving them snacks or lunch. One lunch item that is very popular as it fills bellies is instant oatmeal. We purchased oatmeal to have to feed students, as well as some oat granola bars.



*“This bursary allowed us to give our students an opportunity for a healthy and full filling breakfast. It also provided an opportunity for them to understand the positive outcome that helping your school and community can have. Sometimes the smallest of things can have the biggest impact.” – Teacher, Hafford Central School*

*“Students learned about healthy treats that taste great! They actually chose our treats over junk food from the concession. Students in Health Science 20 also learned about nutrition, reading food labels, food safety and packaging, as well as learning to analyze the current diet of most high school students.” – Teacher, Walter W. Brown High School*

### Recipients

School	City	# students
North West Central School	Plenty	188
Hafford Central School	Hafford	150
Cut Knife High School	Cut Knife	209
Walter W. Brown High School	Langham	235
John Diefenbaker School	Prince Albert	330
Balcarres School	Balcarres	283
Buena Vista School	Saskatoon	350
Sacred Heart Community School	Regina	365
St. Louis School	St Louis	130
North Battleford Comprehensive	North Battleford	1183
Wawota Parkland School	Wawota	202
Norquay School	Norquay	270
Kennedy Langbank School	Kennedy	47
St. Mark School	Saskatoon	480
Indian Head Elementary School	Indian Head	280
Jack Kemp School	Lloydminster	385
St. Frances School	Saskatoon	420
		<b>5507</b>

*“My elementary students were thrilled to learn how oats can be incorporated into their diets. They had no idea how versatile oats are and how they can be added to many recipes to increase nutritional value. They absolutely loved preparing oat-based foods to share with the school’s population! Thank you so much!” – Teacher, Balcarres School*

*“The impact this bursary had on our school community was immense. We were able to provide students and their families with nutritious snacks and breakfasts during school time and into the summer months. Without this bursary, many of our children would be without these snacks as our nutrition program can only provide lunch meals and small breakfast items (toast, cereal, fruit). The bursary allowed us to provide more nutritious food to our students and their families.” – Teacher, Sacred Heart Community School*

### **Benefit to Students**

All recipients highly appreciated the bursary funds to provide healthy meals and snacks. This support enabled students to begin their day with nutritious meals, facilitating their ability to learn effectively. The program also offered an opportunity for students to learn about locally grown oats and explore the wide range of products that incorporate oats. Many students were excited about taking the oat-based recipes home and involving their families in preparing them. Some home economics classes prepared snacks for the student body. Overall, the bursary’s contribution not only fulfilled immediate nutritional needs but also fostered knowledge, excitement, and creativity around healthy eating habits and the versatile uses of oats.

*“A number of our students arrive to school without having had breakfast and without nutritious filling snacks. We were able to provide students with food and nutrients to fill their bellies and allow them to focus on learning and navigating throughout the school day. Students enjoyed trying different types of oat products and were very grateful for the items.” – Teacher, Buena Vista School*

*“The students were very excited about the introduction of new, filling snacks for our breakfast program. They loved them so much, they regularly returned for the new snacks. The nutritious snacks were beneficial to their academic success, especially going into final exams.” – Teacher, North Battleford Comprehensive*

**Impact on Appreciation of Agriculture**

In addition to the bursary funds and recipe cards, schools received valuable educational resources to amplify the program's overall impact. All recipients reported a noticeable increase in students' appreciation for agriculture as a result of these resources. One teacher mentioned they recognized their students connecting their food to the fields around them.

Several teachers emphasized the positive effect of combining oat-based recipes with the provided educational information. This combination effectively enhanced students' learning of the role played by Saskatchewan agriculture. Students were able to understand the significance of local agricultural practices and their connection to the food they consume.

*"Our students were so happy and grateful to have extra snacks the last few weeks of school. The smile on many of their faces lit up and they were so excited to see our surprise snack of the day. Many of the snacks were new to our students and we hope they now have some new ideas of how they can make oat snacks on their own at home. I have had many students point out other snacks they bring to school that have oats! It's something so simple, but that clearly shows that the impact sticks with the students!" -*  
Teacher, Kennedy Langbank School

A big Thank You to Bob's Red Mill and SaskOats for, once again, supporting the Oat Bursary Program. Thanks to your support thousands of Saskatchewan students received nutritious food that energized their bodies allowing them to focus on their education.



