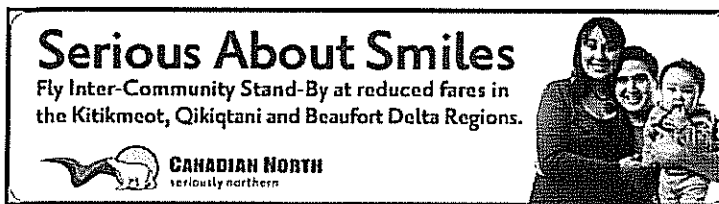


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Breakfast program gets a boost NorthMart donates \$10,000 to SAMS breakfast program after funding cut

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INUVIK
 As the clock hand moves toward 8:25 a.m., the shuffle of feet and laughter of children echo down the hall of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School (SAMS) while students make their way to fill up on breakfast.

SAMS has offered the breakfast program for about 10 years and it can continue at the same activity level due to a large donation from NorthMart.

Last Tuesday morning, store manager Cliff Stringer visited the school for its daily breakfast program and donated a gift card of \$5,000 for this term. An additional \$5,000 was given to the program in September, spreading out a total of \$10,000 for the year.

In the 2010-11 fiscal year, the school received \$25,000 for the breakfast program through the Inuvik Community Corporation's Brighter Futures Program.

This year, the school received \$13,340 – leaving a void for the program to continue at the same level as it has previously.

"It'll make a difference for the kids," said Stringer.

The program offers nutritious items for growing students: from milk, juice, toast and yogurt to cereal, granola bars, fruit and waffles.

"I get to eat yummy stuff. My favourite is waffles," said Katy Legge, 7, as she reached for a yogurt.

Vice-principal Jason Dayman said between 25 and 50 children use the breakfast program on average and said the program provides a much-needed service to the community.

"We've been working with the nutritionist and staff to try to get as much nutritious food to the children as we can, trying to feed the body which feeds the mind," said Dayman.



Seven-year-old Katy Legge grabs a yogurt at Sir Alexander Mackenzie School's breakfast program last Tuesday morning. - Katherine Hudson/NNSL photos

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Grade 1 teacher Cathi Ross has been volunteering with the breakfast program since it began a decade ago. She said for a few children, the program might be a social time with friends, but for many, it's their first meal of the day.

"They come to school knowing that they are going to be fed. They're going to start their day on a really positive note," she said.

~~"People in the breakfast room are pleasant to them. We treat them with respect. We say 'Good morning,' because you never know what kind of start these kids have come from. You want to provide the most positive atmosphere that you can and then you provide the food that they need."~~

She said the items offered at the breakfast program such as fresh fruit are a real luxury for many in Inuvik, due to the expense.

"It teaches them about good nutrition, manners and social skills," said Ross.

The school serves approximately 4,000 meals per year and teachers believe it does help students with their learning.

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