



The Public Health Association of BC is Now Hiring!

BC Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food – Indigenous Lead

This project takes place across what is colonially known as British Columbia (BC).

This position is open to any location in BC with stable Internet connection

0.75 FTE

Acknowledgement

Western colonial food and education systems have long been a source of harm to Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge the trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples and communities who were forcibly exposed to inadequate, inappropriate and harmful foods while at residential schools, as well as those forced to provide agricultural labour at schools. We recognize the need and role for future federally- and provincially-funded school food programs to reconcile this colonial history. The resiliency of Indigenous communities is evident through the retention and teaching of traditional food practices and cultures, including in schools and in community; this position seeks to ensure that Indigenous communities are not again left behind and instead centered in the discussion and planning for school food and educational programming for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Position Summary

Throughout what is colonially known as British Columbia (BC) and Canada, Indigenous Nations, communities and their schools - as well as communities and schools that include Indigenous people - are engaging students in eating, preparing, harvesting, growing, and embracing traditional and other healthy foods. There is also momentum building across the country in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to secure public investment in a universal, healthy, national school food program.

This position will support leadership in and engagement of Indigenous school communities within the Coalition for Healthy School Food's ("CHSF" or "National Coalition") provincial and federal advocacy efforts for a national school food program; raising voices from Indigenous communities across BC to the provincial and national levels. The lead will also inform the National Coalition's recommendations for the development of culturally appropriate, locally adapted school food programs for Indigenous K-12 students in BC and Canada. Working with the Provincial Coordinator of the BC Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food ("BC-CHSF" or "BC Chapter") and staff teams in BC and across Canada, the BC Indigenous Lead will support embedding Indigenous food sovereignty principles and leadership across all aspects of the BC-CHSF's work.

The BC Chapter's Indigenous Lead will be connected to and supported by a number of Indigenous partners in their work, including the National Coalition's Indigenous School Food Working Group (hosted by Canadian Feed the Children with involvement from Indigenous partners across the country), Farm to Cafeteria Canada's National Indigenous Lead, and the Public Health Association of BC's ("PHABC") Elder-in-Residence, Angie Todd-Dennis, from the Frog clan of the Nak'azdli of the Dene Nations. This position will report to the Provincial Coordinator of BC-CHSF (and may be asked to report to the BC Chapter Steering Committee) and will be accountable to both PHABC and CHSF. This position will be invited to join additional provincial and national Communities of Practice and other professional development opportunities.

About the BC Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food (BC-CHSF)

The [BC Chapter](#) of the Coalition for Healthy School Food is a provincial chapter of the National [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#): a network of over 175 member organizations seeking public investment in a universal, cost-shared, healthy school food program for all children and youth in Canada. The Coalition is advocating for a program that meets certain [guiding principles](#), including being locally adapted and ensuring Indigenous control over Indigenous school food programs.

The BC Chapter brings together stakeholders from diverse regions and sectors across BC to engage in dialogue, share resources, and collaborate on collective advocacy and research to support the development of a universal school food program that meets the diverse needs of BC communities. The BC Chapter currently has one staff person that is accountable to the Public Health Association of BC, the National Coalition for Healthy School Food, and a provincial Steering Committee elected by the membership. The National Coalition is administered and hosted by Food Secure Canada.

Through their advocacy and organizing work, the National Coalition and the BC Chapter are committed to supporting Indigenous food sovereignty and addressing inequities and injustices in Canada's school food systems. Their decisions and way of working together are guided by collective principles of equity, Indigenous reconciliation, and collaboration. While they hold relationships with Indigenous-led organizations who are members and partners of the National Coalition, they recognize the need to further decolonize their activities and build safe and inclusive spaces for Indigenous school and community members in this work.

About the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC)

PHABC is a non-profit charity organization whose mission is to promote population health and support capacity building for public health professionals in the province. PHABC fulfills its mission through advocacy, collaboration and engagement activities, education and research throughout the spectrum of public health practice including prevention, promotion, protection and policy. Their priorities include eliminating poverty; reducing health/socio-economic inequities; addressing climate change & healthy environments; contributing to a sustainable, equitable economy; and preventing violence. PHABC champions a number of public health programs including Farm to School BC (F2SBC), a healthy eating program for K-12 students with an expanding provincial network, supporting 200+ school food and garden projects in urban, rural, remote, and Indigenous communities throughout the province.

PHABC is a culturally sensitive organization and has applied the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) principles to their programs. PHABC has Indigenous representation on their Board of Directors and has had an Elder-in-Residence for over a decade who supports their public health programming and Indigenous partnerships. PHABC celebrates the work accomplished in partnership with Indigenous communities, while acknowledging the need both organizationally and in their programming for deeper decolonizing and reconciliation work to address anti-Indigenous racism and to build Indigenous food sovereignty, and PHABC dedicates themselves to this purpose.

Background to BC Indigenous Lead position

Across the province 75% of school districts report having a school meal program in at least one school; however, the current patchwork of school food programming is underfunded and does not reach or meet the needs of all children and youth. Similarly, although some First Nations schools (which are independently operated) are able to run a school meal program to address food insecurity and other social needs, the funding used for these programs is often year-to-year and requires regular grant applications. Grant funding models have many limitations that may result in inconsistent program delivery. Funding and investment in a Universal School Food Program that is culturally appropriate (i.e., Nation-led) and adapted to local communities would improve the health outcomes of Indigenous children, youth and families.

In autumn of 2020, the newly elected provincial government committed to “create local school meal programs” in partnership with school districts. This is an unprecedented opportunity to secure public investment for the development of healthy, universal, culturally appropriate and locally adapted school food programs in BC. First Nation participation in the Coalition’s advocacy and research activities is therefore essential in ensuring that Indigenous food sovereignty is prioritized during the development of a province- or nation-wide school food program.

This Indigenous Lead role will ensure that diverse voices of Indigenous peoples across British Columbia are embedded in the National Coalition’s work to inform the development of a Universal, Canada-wide school food program.

Duties and Responsibilities

The portfolio of duties is flexible and iterative, and will incorporate input and feedback from the successful applicant. Responsibilities and deliverables may include:

1. Engagement with Indigenous organizations and school communities:

- Engage and build relationships with First Nations elders, school communities, harvesters and hunters, and relevant Indigenous organizations and networks across the province (e.g. Friendship centers, elders’ programs, Indigenous health, education and food organizations) to learn about cultural protocols and Indigenous perspectives on school food programs.
 - This might involve: visiting schools and communities, joining community events, organizing meetings online or in-person, giving presentations, and more.
- Identify and support opportunities for Indigenous organizations, schools and Nations to engage with and benefit from the work of the Coalition for Healthy School Food (e.g. becoming members and endorsers, engaging in or developing advocacy campaigns, joining or developing committees or working groups, and more).
- Support inclusion of Indigenous school food programs and communities in National Coalition networking and engagement activities.

**Note: There is an honorarium budget to support engagement with Indigenous communities.*

2. Support of National Coalition advocacy and knowledge sharing activities:

- Join the National Coalition team at meetings with provincial and federal government officials and bring forward the needs and perspectives of Indigenous school communities when possible.
- Coordinate projects or working groups with Indigenous school community partners to explore or work on specific knowledge sharing or advocacy activities (e.g., highlighting best practices of Indigenous school food programs across the province).
- Join the National Indigenous School Food Working Group to connect with national initiatives and activities.
- Advise the National Coalition about how to better integrate Indigenous food sovereignty principles and ways of being into activities and advocacy efforts.

3. Administration

- Attend and contribute to regular National Coalition and BC Chapter team meetings.
- Inform the BC Chapter in its work to ensure that its structures and activities support Indigenous food sovereignty are inclusive of Indigenous values and ways of knowing.
- Support with grant writing and/or fundraising to extend or expand this role, and to build capacity within the National Coalition.
- Report on activities.
- Other duties as required.

Skills & Qualifications

- Demonstrated understanding of the intersections between health, education and agriculture including, but not limited to, knowledge of food security, Indigenous food sovereignty/community-based food programming, health equity, and land-based learning.
- Understanding of Indigenous education, health & food systems in local/regional settings.
- Experience coordinating and facilitating community outreach (in-person and/or virtual).
- Minimum 2 years of experience in community development, or food security/educational programming.
- Strong interpersonal, organizational, and relationship building skills.
- Excellent communicator—both oral and written (in English).
- Familiarity and comfort using digital communication tools (i.e., emails, social media, etc.)
- Self-motivated and able to work from home with stable internet access.
- Understanding of Indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing, and decolonization practices.
- Indigenous lived experience is preferred (self-identify as an Indigenous person and/or having experience working with Indigenous people, communities, and organizations).

Assets

- Existing relationships with Indigenous school communities and/or educational or food organizations.
- Knowledgeable of the [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#) and its activities.
- Understanding of the [local food to school approach](#) & experience advancing aspects of it.
- Understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- Experience working in a non-profit environment.
- Experience working or volunteering in an advocacy role.

This is a **0.75 FTE position**, valued at 30 hours per week at a rate of **\$28.61 per hour** with 6% vacation pay. The selected candidate will be offered employment including benefits, sick leave, and access to the association's pension plan following a successful probationary period of ninety (90) days.

This position will begin in January 2022.

Interested candidates who want to know more about the role can email bcschoolfood@phabc.org.

To Apply

Please send your resume (including 3 references) and a one-page cover letter to Sam Gambling, provincial coordinator of the BC Chapter, at bcschoolfood@phabc.org.

Application Deadline: November 26, 2021

We thank all applicants for their interest, however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

PHABC is an equal opportunity organization. While preference for this position may be given to Indigenous applicants, all qualified applicants will receive consideration for this position.