

The Nourishing Hawke's Bay: He wairua tō te kai project reported on the healthiness of food environment policies and practices in primary and secondary schools across Hawke's Bay between June and November 2023

Aiming to improve food environments for children in Hawke's Bay

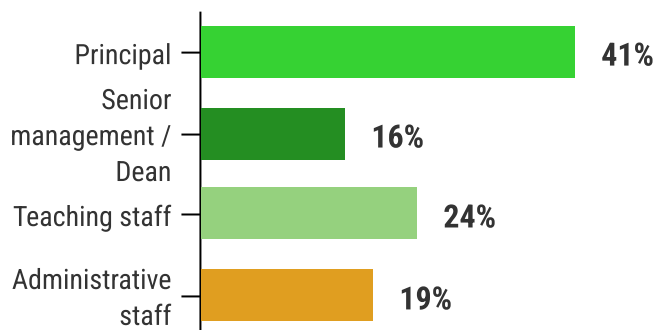
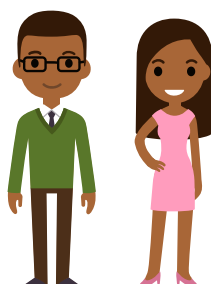
The School-Food Environment Review and Support Tool (School-FERST) was used to assess the healthiness of the foods and beverages provided

Who completed the survey?

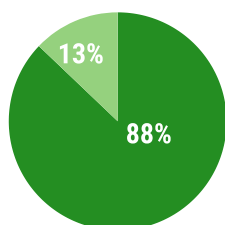
40 responses*



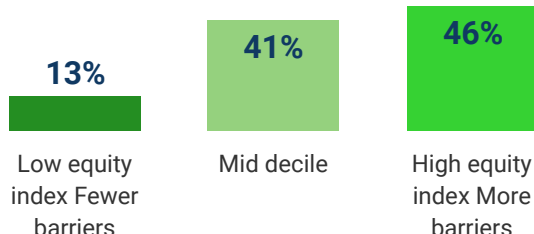
33% response rate



Secondary schools
Median school roll size: 342



Primary Schools
Median school roll size: 197



For analyses, intermediate schools (3%) were combined with primary schools and composite schools (3%) with secondary

Key Findings



There is often **uncertainty** within teaching and school management staff **about the existence, content and availability of nutritional policies.**



Almost all schools use the generic template available from SchoolDocs rather than establishing their own policies.



Policies do not use strongly prescriptive wording, rather focusing on encouraging and recommending.



The majority of secondary schools do not meet the Ministry of Education guidelines regarding the number of water fountains for their student population.



A large proportion of schools use unhealthy foods in their fundraising.



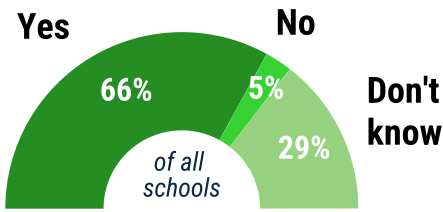
NOURISHING HAWKE'S BAY
HE WAIRUA TŌ TE KAI



Policies on food and nutrition



Does your school have a **written food or nutrition policy**?



Over 3/4 of schools said their policy was **available to the public**
12% said it wasn't available

21 schools provided their policies for analysis



Only 2 of these schools had their own policies



All others used the policy supplied by SchoolDocs



Policy-FANS scores*

Policy comprehensiveness

7.8/10

Policy strength

1.3/10

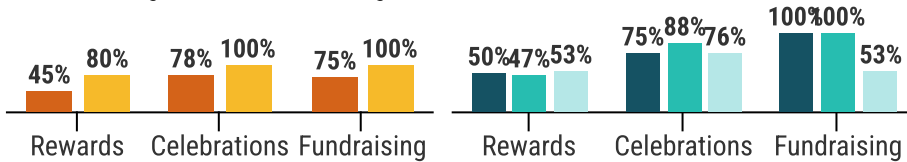
Most policies did not use prescriptive wording, rather focusing on encouragement and recommendations

*Policy-FANS - Shortened version of the Well-SAT Wellness School Assessment Tool

Food in schools and water fountains

Rewards, celebrations and fundraising

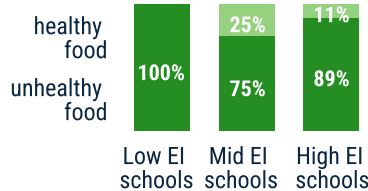
Schools using food and / or beverages in class and school activities



When schools used foods in fundraising, they were mostly unhealthy

Almost 1/2 of schools met recommendations for having at least 75% healthy foods for sale

Unhealthy food in fundraising was more frequently used in mid/high decile schools



Water Fountains

Schools meeting guidelines for at least one fountain per 60 students: **74%** (dark green bar) vs **20%** (light green bar)

Mean number of students per water fountain: **46** (dark green circle) vs **87** (light green circle)

Buying food off-site

3% of primary schools and about **all secondary schools** allowed students to leave school grounds to purchase food

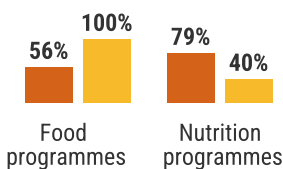


All secondary schools sold food to students
41% of school canteens were run by the school
59% of school canteens outsourced food sold

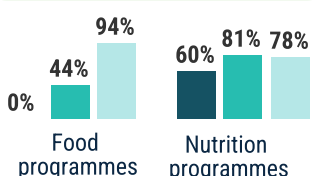
Participation in food and nutrition programmes

Schools participating in food / nutrition programmes

School type

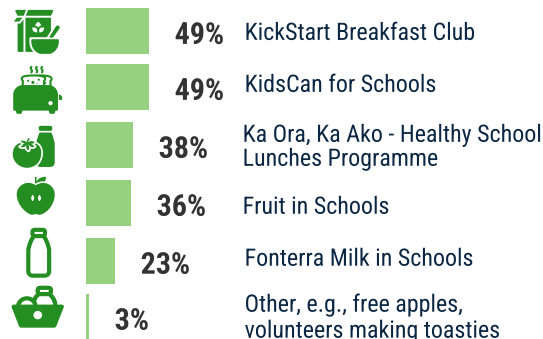


School deprivation / school decile



Food programmes

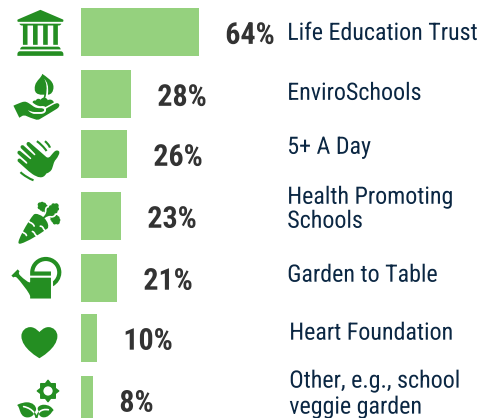
Food security focus



1/5 of least advantaged schools participate in all five named food programmes

Nutrition programmes

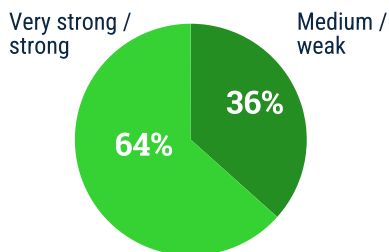
Educational focus



Culture, barriers and best practice

Culture around healthy eating

Respondents were asked to rate the culture of healthy eating at their school from very strong to very weak



Very strong = policies in place, strong healthy food practices, students and parents strongly support the kaupapa of healthy food in school, nutrition is integrated across the curriculum

Best practice examples



"We are redesigning our garden area, linked to our Food Tech, so that we can have a Garden to Table concept, a community garden and an Enviro group"

Principal



"Reducing food security issues is our key focus. We have multiple food programmes operating for all students"

Principal



"We have healthy kai at shared lunches, culturally responsive, and health programmes around nutrition"

Senior Management



"We encourage students and whānau to bring healthy choices in their lunchboxes. Notices to parents include healthy options they can try"

Senior Management

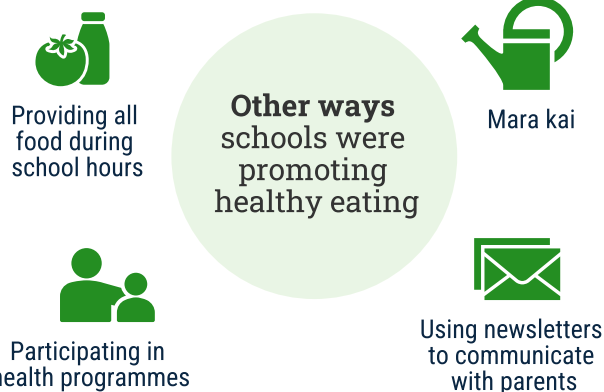
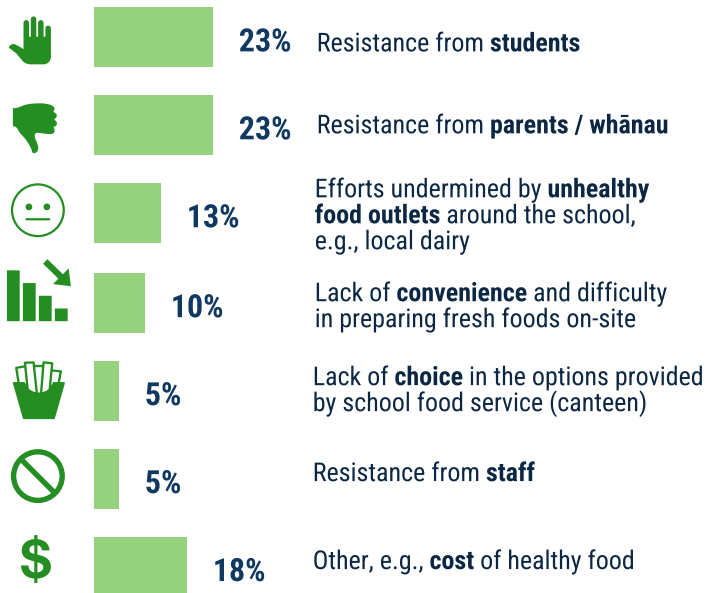


"We provide breakfast, fruit, snack and lunches. We are a strict water only school"

Teacher

Barriers to a healthy food environment

50% of schools reported barriers to a healthy food environment



Nourishing HB: He wairua tō te kai recommendations



Consider **fundraising activities and rewards** that do not involve unhealthy food options



Consider stronger **prescriptive wording** in school nutrition policies



Communicate nutrition policy with parents / whānau and maintain staff awareness of these policies



Provide healthier options in canteens



Incorporate **nutrition education in the curriculum** across all levels

Convey study's findings with the Board or PTA (if involved in fundraising)

Full results available at: <https://nourishinghawkesbay.org/regional-survey-of-student-health-and-wellbeing/>

For more information, please contact: nourishinghb@eit.ac.nz

Nourishing HB: He wairua tō te kai has ethic approval from the EIT Research Ethics and Approvals committee (EA03230123).