

Vancouver & District Labour Council



Media advisory

For immediate release

Thursday, November 21, 2019

VDLC Opposes Plan to Cut Culinary Arts Program in Vancouver

VANCOUVER The Vancouver and District Labour Council is calling upon the Vancouver School Board to reject a proposal by the Food Services Working Group which would cut, contract-out, or privatize existing programs and services.

“These cuts would harm students, destroy jobs, and damage the local economy,” said VDLC President Stephen von Sychowski.

The cuts in question include the VSB cafeteria services in schools, teaching cafeterias, and hot meals for students. They would eliminate important learning opportunities for students who may be interested in a career in the food service and hospitality industry, which is currently experiencing a severe labour shortage.

They would also potentially leave students without access to nutritious meal options, and cause stigmatization by distributing hot meals only to those students identified as in need. In addition, the changes would eliminate good jobs held by members of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 963, and the Vancouver Secondary Teachers’ Association.

“We are calling on the Trustees to reject this plan and instead chart a bold new course for the Culinary Arts Program, one which will see the program expand and serve more students better while also protecting jobs and supporting the economy,” said von Sychowski.

“Most of all, we are looking to our endorsed Trustees, to see their stated commitments and values reflect now in action so that our faith and support in these elected representatives can continue. Included in that would be their commitments to supporting public education and opposing contracting-out and privatization.”

The VDLC represents nearly 100 affiliates unions and 60,000 workers in the Vancouver area.

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