



# Nourished and Ready to Learn!

**What are the educational benefits of farm to school for students, teachers and the whole school community?**

## Academic Success

Well nourished **students are ready to learn!**

Multiple published studies, journals, and medical reports have all directly linked the academic success of students to the quality of their nutrition, including

- Increased fruit and vegetable consumption linked to academic improvements.
- Participation in school breakfast connected to improved math and reading test scores, daily attendance, and class participation
- Improved school meals can make immediate difference in students' academic achievement
- Cognitive function linked to adequate intake of vitamins, minerals, fats, and proteins.

One principal credits their high teacher satisfaction and school-community commitment to their integrated farm to school curriculum. Money and time are saved by retaining quality teachers and their school budget passes every year!

## Engagement

**farm to school makes for engaged learners and educators** who feel connected and motivated.

The real world application of food systems education, such as gardening, cooking, advocacy/policy work, and composting makes classroom learning relevant and integrates into core competencies.

- Connects the whole school to the community and crosses cultural/social barriers making meaningful personal connections while discovering how food impacts their neighbors.
- Schools with farm to school programs report higher teacher retention rates.



## **Social, Emotional and Behavioral Implications**

**School meals support the whole child!** There is a growing understanding of the link between the quality of food a student consumes with student behavior and social engagement. Students who eat school meals and participate in farm to school activities experience

- Less absenteeism and tardiness
- A decrease in reported behavioral incidences
- Growth in self-confidence and life skills

Undernourished students are more likely to repeat a grade, experience hyperactivity, have behavior issues, and require mental health and special education services. These same children tend to do poorly on vocabulary, reading, and on other tests. Nutrient deficiencies cause increase of fatigue, short attention span, decreased work capacity, reduce resistance to infection, and impair intellectual performance.



**When we link classroom and cafeteria learning experiences students are nourished and ready to learn!**  
**Creating a Culture of Wellness**



Data compiled from multiple research, resources, and studies including:

- Center for Ecoliteracy, Making the Case 2014
- Vermont Dept of Health, Integrated Food, Farm, and Nutrition Programming Data Harvest 2018
- National Farm to School Network, Benefits of Farm to School 2017
- American Federation of Teachers, The Child in the Garden: Evaluative Review of Benefits of School Gardening 2009