

<b>City</b> Washington, DC	
<b>Country</b>	United States of America
<b>Population</b>	702,000
<b>Title of policy or practice</b>	Good Food Purchasing in Washington, DC
<b>Subtitle (optional)</b>	Catalysing good food procurement practices in Washington, DC's schools and other public institutions
<b>URL video</b>	
<b>Category</b>	Social and Economic Equity
<b>SDGs</b>	SDGs: 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 13.
<b>Brief description</b>	<p>The District has leveraged the power of procurement to improve meals in schools and invest public dollars in healthier, sustainable and high-quality food for the most vulnerable populations in Washington, DC. Recently through local legislation, the District adopted the Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) in DC Public Schools (DCPS). A program first championed in Los Angeles, GFPP works to transform the way public institutions purchase food by making procurement decisions based on five core values: local economies, health, valued workforce, animal welfare and sustainability. DCPS will work to implement the program in its school meals beginning in fall 2019.</p> <p>While the GFPP adoption is a recent success, the District has long been a leader in improving institutional meals and leveraging its food procurement to advance the health of school-aged students. In 2010, the Council of the District of Columbia (DC Council) passed the landmark Healthy Schools Act (HSA) that set nutrition standards for school meals in public schools and charters schools, incentivized local purchasing and promoted overall school wellness. The legislation was a model for the federal Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act that improved school meals in public schools across the country. In 2014, the DC Council passed the Healthy Tots Act (HTA) to apply these same provisions to meals served in early learning centres for young children.</p> <p>The District is currently considering how to procure healthier food in other public contracts. DC Health is finalizing regulations to implement the Workplace Wellness Act of 2014, which will establish nutrition and procurement standards for all District agencies, including at meetings, events, and through on-site vendors and vending machines. In addition, the DC Food Policy Council (FPC) has identified as a 2019 Policy Priority steps to improve institutional food procurement in the District's schools, correctional facilities, homeless shelters and senior centres.</p>
<b>Date of start and state (ongoing/completed)</b>	01/2010 Ongoing
<b>Actors and stakeholders involvement</b>	DCPS and the District's public charter schools updated their procurement contracts to meet improved nutrition standards. The Office of the State Superintendent for Education distributes grants for kitchen equipment, nutrition education and school gardens. DC Health is finalizing nutrition standards for all government buildings, and the FPC is working to streamline institutional food procurement contracts. Lastly, a cross-sector coalition with 30+ advocacy groups advocated for GFPP in schools.
<b>Approach</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Analyse current practices and evaluate opportunities to improve procurement;</li> <li>2) Build a broad-based coalition of local agencies, food justice advocates and school meal providers;</li> <li>3) Identify the infrastructure, policies and relationships needed to support improved food procurement;</li> <li>4) Codify these practices into law and practice through local legislation;</li> </ol>

	5) Invest local funding into healthy food procurement.
<b>Innovation</b>	<p>Washington, DC has a demonstrated history of innovation in its school food procurement policies. The District was among the first local governments to enact a broad sweeping school meal policy with passage of the HSA in 2010. The District then expanded the reach of these standards to early learning centres through the HTA in 2014. These policies spurred the expansion of school meal participation and encouraged increased procurement of locally grown food.</p> <p>With the GFPP adoption through the Healthy Students Amendment Act of 2018 (HSAA), the District reinforced its leadership in institutional procurement and became the first city on the East Coast and the fifth school district in the nation to adopt this commitment.</p> <p>In spring 2019, the Food Policy Council conducted an analysis of the District's institutional meals and found that nutrition standards could be strengthened for meals served at homeless shelters, correctional facilities and senior centres. The FPC plans to host an interagency working group to begin addressing these findings. The District would be one of the first cities in the country to align government agencies around shared food procurement goals and practices.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<p>Improved standards in District school meals has increased access to healthy food and spurred spending on local food. Since the implementation of the HSA, participation in school meals served in the District's schools has increased. Among all 50 states for participation among low-income students, the District has ranked 3rd for breakfast, 1st for afterschool meals and between 1st and 3rd for summer meals for several years. In the 2017-2018 school year, the District served healthy breakfasts to more than 37,500 low-income students, doubling from 18,000 in the 2009-2010 school year before the legislation was implemented.</p> <p>The District has also increased the amount of locally sourced food in school meals. In the 2017-2018 school year, 2.3 million pounds of locally grown food were served in public and public charter schools and more than 95% of schools reported serving locally grown and/or locally processed foods to students in 2016. With technical support provided by District agencies, public and public charter schools currently have an impressive 99.5% compliance rate with nutrition and local sourcing standards.</p> <p>This success has catalysed a broader impact across other District meal programs like meals served at shelters, correctional facilities and senior centres. The District's proven record of improving school meals has fostered a commitment to systematic policy changes to improving the quality of meals in other public institutions.</p>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<p>The District's commitment to improving institutional meals is integrated across several agencies and cross-sectoral coalitions. While DCPS and public charter schools implement the school meal policies, the OSSE monitors compliance, evaluates progress and provides technical assistance for effective practices in schools and early learning centres. The Food Policy Council convenes a monthly Sustainable Procurement working group and conducts analysis on existing procurement practices across different agencies. In addition, coalition partners like local labour unions, food justice organizations, private meal providers and national and regional research entities support the implementation of these policies, identify gaps and areas for future improvement and work to ensure agencies are accountable for following established guidelines. The District's decision to improve meals in public institutions highlights its commitment to equity and inclusion of low-income and vulnerable residents. Meals served in schools, homeless shelters, senior centres and correctional facilities disproportionately benefit low-income and other marginalized residents. Providing nutritious, high-quality meals in these settings reinforces the District's commitment to providing all residents, regardless of social or economic status, access to healthy food as a human right.</p>
<b>Adversity coefficient</b>	