

FAMILIES IN STATE OF EMERGENCY, LEARNING FOUNDATION SAYS

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With the price of food and other necessities rising beyond many people's ability to afford them, the Halton Learning Foundation (HLF) is sounding the alarm on students who need some financial support this winter.

Since the beginning of September, HLF has provided emergency financial support for a record number of students of the Halton District School Board (HDSB) — 30 per cent more than last year at this time — and the charity's busiest weeks still lie ahead.

"We need ongoing funding to continue to support kids' basic needs for food,

winter clothing and school supplies, and to help ensure all students are included in learning opportunities," said Lesley Mansfield, CEO of HLF.

"Every day we hear from teachers and principals about families who are barely getting by this fall. Parents' financial struggles can have a direct impact on students' ability to learn — whether it's due to a lack of nutrition, a lack of technology to complete school work, or perhaps because they need prescription glasses that the parents can't afford."

HLF takes requests from educators in the HDSB on behalf of students in need. Teachers and principals are sharing that many more families this

year are spending a disproportionate amount of their income on housing and utilities, leaving little left for food, clothing, school supplies and other necessities.

One man, recently immigrated with his family from South America, shared with HLF that 85 per cent of his salary is used to pay rent and utilities.

"We are participating in some food banks and church to get food and other supplies," he said. "Unfortunately (it) is not enough. Two of my children have nutrition problems."

This season, HLF is asking the community to consider making a No Student Left Behind gift to help a



HLF image

The Halton Learning Foundation is seeking donations for families in need.

student in need in our community. Donations in tribute to a favourite teacher, friend or family member are welcomed and an e-card may be sent to the recipient to let them know about the generous gift made in their name.

"We believe that if we improve the health and well-being of students, they will do better in school," said Mansfield. "If kids do better in school, it can lead them to a better future."

For more information or to donate, please visit nostudentleftbehind.ca.

Source: Halton Learning Foundation

VIRTUAL KINDERGARTEN EXPERIENCE AVAILABLE

The Halton District School Board is welcoming future students and their families to a virtual kindergarten experience.

Visit kindergarten.hdsb.ca to learn more about making the first school experience a happy one. At this site, three-year-olds can explore a kindergarten classroom to see what their future classroom might look like next September. There are videos to watch, pictures to view and fun activities for kids.

Parents/guardians can learn about the kindergarten program at the HDSB, play-based learning, community resources in Halton



Graham Paine/Metroland Kindergarten registration will be held in January.

and before-and-after school care. Families can also sign-up to receive a welcome package from the HDSB including a free children's book.

Registration for kindergarten begins in January 2023 and will be by appointment only (in-person and/or virtual) through the school your child will attend. Further information will be shared in the new year.

To begin kindergarten in September 2023, children must be four years old by Dec. 31, 2023 for Year 1 Kindergarten and must be five years old by Dec. 31, 2023 for Year 2 Kindergarten.

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