



Halton
Learning
Foundation



Community in Action

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT
2024 - 2025



Our year in pictures



This past year showed us what the power of our Halton community and the responsibility we share to show up for our students when they need it the most.

On behalf of Halton Learning Foundation and its Board of Directors, we are deeply grateful for our donors, partners, volunteers, and HDSB staff whose commitment made it all possible. Because of your generosity and support, HLF was able to help students like Maddison.

“

Maddison’s mom passed away two years ago, and her dad hasn’t been able to work since. Her family has food insecurity, and they lean on the school for daily/weekly food support.



Marc Clare
CEO | HLF



Bob Elliot
Board Chair | HLF

Together, we made an impact and were able to continue to say yes to a record **3,672 requests** from HDSB school staff in **2024-2025**, an increase of nearly **22%** compared to the previous year.

Our donors, our community of changemakers, always remain at the heart of HLF. Your kindness inspires us every day. Every dollar you donated reflected your belief in equity, education, and the potential of our students to thrive when given the right support.

As we look ahead, HLF remains strategically committed to reaching out to every student in need, raising awareness, strengthening our impact, deepening our partnerships, and stewarding your trust with care and transparency. Thank you for standing with us and for believing in a future where every student has the opportunity to succeed.



OUR MISSION



To provide HDSB students with opportunities to reach their potential through financial support that removes educational barriers and increases equity.



OUR VISION

All HDSB students have financial support to realize their potential.



Compassion



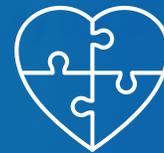
OUR VALUES



Integrity



Respect



Adaptability

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bob Elliot, Chair
Cecil Arnold
Curtis Ennis, ex-officio
Marie-Therese Houde
Melissa Davis

Nick Klip, Treasurer
Richard McAuliffe
Rob Smith, Vice Chair
Saud Juman
Sonia Dayal

2024 - 2025

WHY IT MATTERS

When Crystal thinks back on that winter, what she remembers most is the constant pressure.

She was raising six children on her own, working hard but still falling behind as food prices climbed and bills piled up. Every week came with difficult trade-offs. Some nights she skipped meals so her children could eat. Winter clothing was another worry, as her growing kids outgrew it faster than she could afford.

“It lightened the stress in our home and helped my children feel secure again.”

“It lightened the stress in our home,” Crystal said. “Knowing my children had what they needed made all the difference.”

For families like Crystal’s, Eliminating Barriers is more than assistance. It meant stability in the middle of uncertainty, and the reassurance that they don’t have to face it alone.

I could finally breathe again



“I didn’t know where the next meal would come from most weeks,” she shared. “School lunches and winter clothes felt completely out of reach.”

Support from HLF arrived at a moment when she was close to giving up hope.

With help covering groceries and essential needs, something shifted. The immediate pressure eased. Her children could go to school with full lunches and warm clothes.



“

Supporting the community has been a passion throughout my career, and having the opportunity to help young people full-time through my role at HLF has been an honour and a privilege.

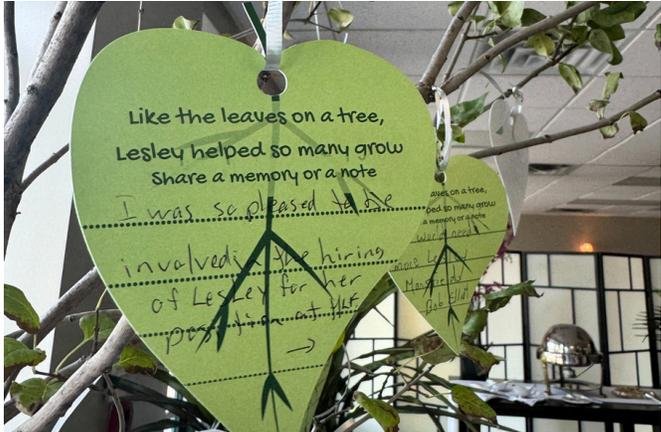
I'm incredibly grateful to everyone who cared enough to make a difference for a student in need.

**LESLEY
MANSFIELD**
SEEDS OF GROWTH

On September 21, 2025, the Halton Learning Foundation (HLF) launched the Lesley Mansfield Seeds of Growth Fund. The launch took place at Granite Ridge Golf Club in Milton, where family, friends, and colleagues gathered to honour Lesley's life and legacy.

Lesley Mansfield, retired HLF CEO, beloved colleague, and passionate advocate for students in need, tragically passed away in February 2025. Known for her warmth, dedication, and love of gardening, Lesley devoted her career to ensuring that every student had the opportunity to grow and flourish.

The Seeds of Growth Fund honours Lesley's legacy by continuing her mission: supporting HDSB students facing emergency needs such as food, clothing, school supplies, and other essentials.





Imagine, if you will, not being able to go to school. You're a little girl, and you can't go to school.

You live with your mother and only have one pair of shoes between the two of you, so if mom gets called in to work in the afternoon, the child can't go to school.

Imagine poverty at that level in Halton: one of the richest areas in the country.

A LEGACY OF LEARNING: HONOURING COLIN BAIN

Colin Bain was a man who deeply believed in the power of education to change lives.

A lifelong educator and passionate advocate for students, Colin dedicated more than 30 years to teaching with the Halton District School Board, serving at schools including Nelson High School and Thomas A. Blakelock High School.

Even after his retirement in 2000, his belief in what education can do for a person hasn't faltered, and he's made plans to ensure he can continue supporting local students long after he's gone.

In keeping with this belief, Colin named the **Halton Learning Foundation** in his will, creating a lasting impact that will support students long after his lifetime. His thoughtful decision reflects the power of legacy giving—a way to ensure future generations have access to education, dignity, and opportunity.

Colin passed away on November 21, 2025, in Guelph. Colin's family has recommended donations to the **Colin M. Bain Social Sciences Scholarship** in his memory.



**COLIN M. BAIN
SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOLARSHIP**



“I came from not a poor background, but a background where there wasn't a lot of money to throw around, and I found the most valuable thing to me in getting out of that system was education,” said Bain.

“I know there are lots of children in Halton who don't have much disposable income at home, and there are barriers to their education.”



ELIMINATING BARRIERS

Eliminating Financial Barriers is an ongoing annual program designed to provide students experiencing emergency need with access to basic necessities. The support could be either given in the form of grocery gift cards - giving families the flexibility to purchase what they need - or by covering extra school-related fees.

By removing financial barriers to education, students are empowered to thrive in school, building confidence, a sense of belonging, better health, and enhanced opportunities for success in life and the workforce.

These funds help students across the HDSB access:

Groceries and hygiene items

Clothing, footwear, and winter wear

School supplies

Extracurriculars (field trips and school teams or clubs)

Safety shoes, uniforms and tools for co-op placements

College application fees

We said YES to 100% of student requests

“
One in eight students in Halton Region lives at or below the poverty line.

Requests to support students through our eliminating barriers fund

2022-2023

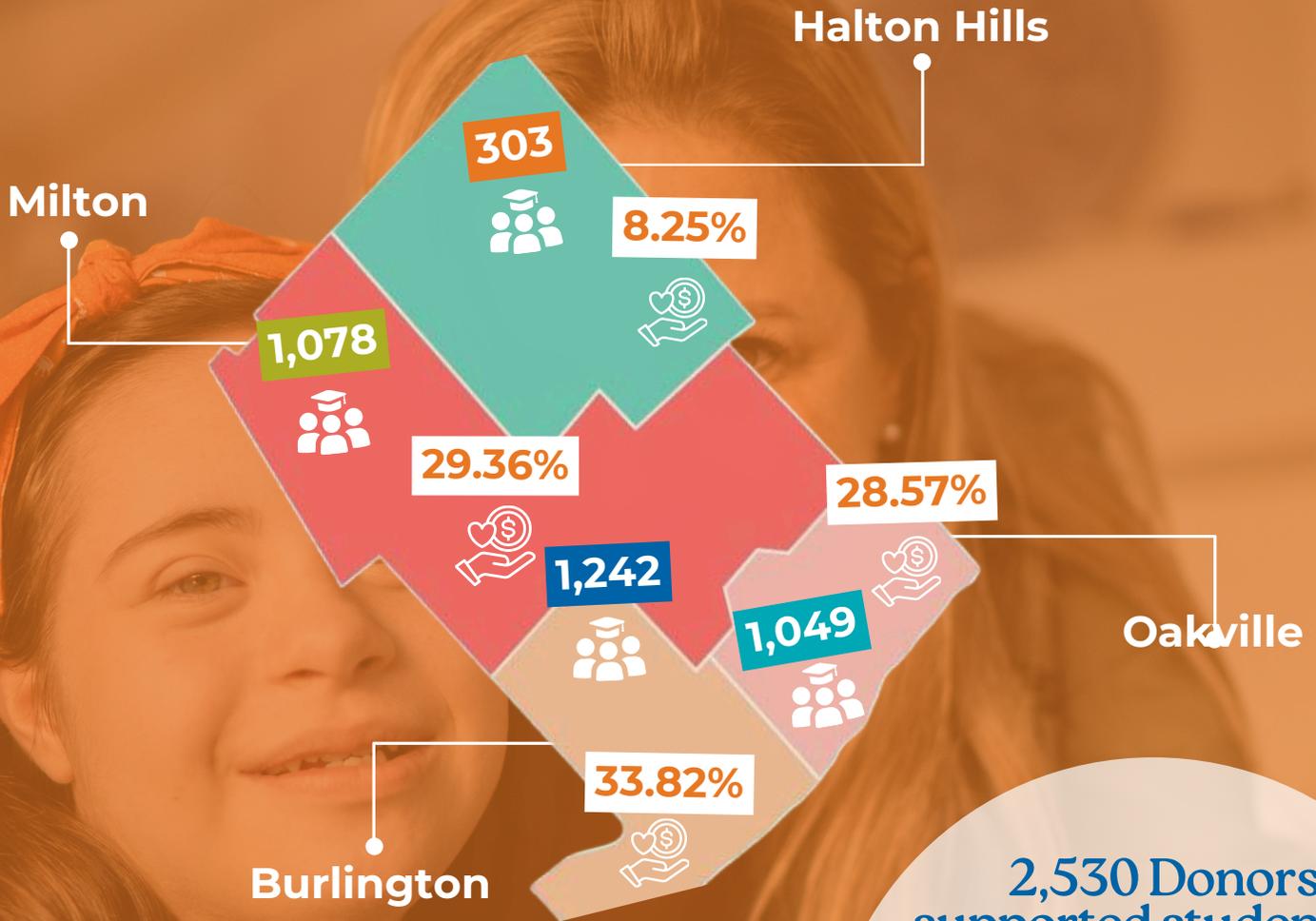
2,015

2023-2024

3,003

2024-2025

3,672



2,530 Donors supported students in 2024/2025

How funds addressed student needs in 2024/2025

91.8%



Basic Needs
(Food, Clothing, Hygiene)

8%



Extracurricular Activities
(Field Trips, Sports, Transportation)

0.2%



Post Secondary Applications

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Post-secondary education is expensive for everyone, and it can be a barrier to higher learning for students from low-income families. Thanks to our donors, \$218,350 were awarded in scholarships, supporting 75 new recipients and continuing to support 33 students through multi-year commitments in 2024–2025.

These scholarships provide financial relief and open doors to better career opportunities, increased civic engagement, and community involvement. They foster problem-solving skills and creative thinking, which all lead to personal success and the development of responsible, engaged citizens who contribute positively to their communities.

75
new recipients

+

33
multi-year
scholarships

\$218,350
awarded in
scholarships

ADAM MALKI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Adam Malki Memorial Fund was created in partnership with the Halton Learning Foundation to honour the legacy of Adam Malki.

Adam tragically passed away in December 2024. In Adam's 17 years on earth, he made a positive impact on those around him through uplifting kindness and being a natural connector with people.

Adam was a young man whose kindness, inclusivity, and love for his community touched countless lives. He had a rare gift for making others feel valued, always seeing the good in people, and bringing them together.

Whether coaching, helping others, or offering a kind word, his impact was immeasurable. His legacy of compassion and selflessness will never be forgotten.

The fund supports students in financial need, which reflects Adam's enduring legacy of kindness, leadership, resilience and giving back to their community.



The Difference Maker Award

Recognizing those who go above and beyond to lift others and leave a lasting impact in their communities



The Built to Lead Award

Celebrating students who demonstrate strength, integrity, and dedication in the trades and community service



Sportsmanship Scholarship

Honouring students whose spirit, character, and heart stand out on and off the field



**WATCH THIS
INTERVIEW
WITH HEBA
MALKI**



SCHOOL GRANTS

47 SCHOOLS
funded in 2024/2025

70 PROJECTS
funded in 2024/2025

\$88,202
provided for school projects in 2024/2025

Within Halton, there is economic diversity across communities. Some school communities and school councils face greater challenges than others in raising funds to cover additional purchases beyond core education funding.

School grants available through HLF enable schools in the HDSB to purchase needed resources and fund educational programs and experiences. This ensures all students have equitable opportunities to develop critical 21st-century skills.

Annually, HLF supports programs in schools across HDSB in the following key areas:

Learning and Achievement



Equity and Inclusion

Indigenous Awareness



Mental Health & Well-being

Schools can apply for up to \$1,200 per project in late fall of each year.



“I love being in nature, I feel so connected to our land” - Student

LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The Learning Garden at Montclair Public School



“I love finding worms in the garden” - Student

Montclair Public School has transformed a green space in the centre of its concourse into a vibrant outdoor learning classroom, known as **the Learning Garden**. This space extends learning beyond the classroom while encouraging mindfulness, student-led exploration, and respect for the land, including Indigenous perspectives.

The Learning Garden offers hands-on opportunities for students to learn about environmental sustainability and stewardship. With the addition of enriched soil, mulch, native plants, and creating a raised vegetable garden including squash, beans and corn a.k.a. **The Three Sisters Garden**, students gain a deeper understanding of how plants grow and thrive.

Students across all grades actively participate in caring for the garden. They plant pollinator-friendly seeds, observe the bee house, track sunlight patterns, release butterflies, and maintain bird feeders.

Students even designed and built a Squirrel House for Jerry, the school’s resident squirrel.

With grant support from the Halton Learning Foundation, students and staff revitalized the Learning Garden together, creating an inclusive learning space for all.

“It is a nice place for staff to go to reset their minds, feel calm, and centred ” - Staff Member

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Sunrise Yoga



As the sun rose over Spencer Smith Park in Burlington, more than 100 early risers joined us to greet the sun and create opportunities for students needing food, school supplies, and clothes to be fully engaged in class.



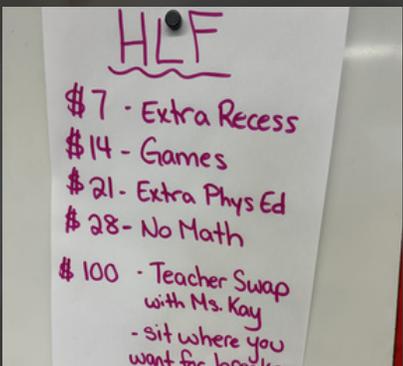
Sunrise Yoga is hosted by Adam Doering, and proceeds go to the Mark Doering Thoughtful Fund, which helps HDSB students and families with emergency needs for food, clothing, school supplies and other necessities.

HLF Month



April is HLF Month – our favourite time of the year and the busiest!

It is an opportunity for HDSB schools and the community to raise awareness and funds to eliminate the financial challenges that prevent students from accessing a complete education.



42 school & community teams participated. The energy was inspiring.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED



CATCH THE RECAP!



Students in the Spotlight

18 incredible performances from across HDSB schools took the stage at **Students in the Spotlight**, a fundraiser presented by CN, to share student talents, from musical ensembles and choir renditions to solo vocalists and cultural performances, and more.

“I think it's really meaningful and important to share art and performances on stage while also being able to raise awareness about student needs in Halton” - Student Performer

Open Cottage

We love to meet our friends and partners during the holiday season in our lovely office, **“The Cottage”**, to enjoy some hot beverages and light snacks.

Annual General Meeting

This is the time when we meet with our donors, partners, staff and board members to celebrate what we have accomplished, and dream about what's next.

We take time to reflect on the lives we've touched, the stories that moved us, and the impact made possible by our community.





I was trying to be strong for everyone.

When Amina's husband became seriously ill, everything changed at once.

Hospital visits became part of her daily routine as she tried to hold their family together. With her husband unable to work and disability benefits delayed, Amina had no income and no way to cover the rising cost of food and basic needs for their children.

The pressure was relentless.

"I was exhausted," she shared. "I was trying to be strong for my husband and my kids, but I didn't know how we were going to get through. I did everything I could to keep our lives normal, especially at school."

Support through the Halton Learning Foundation arrived during one of the most overwhelming moments of her life.

With help covering groceries and essential items, Amina felt a small but powerful shift. The immediate worry eased. She could feed her children without panic. She could focus on her husband's care without the constant fear of what would happen next.

"This support lifted a huge burden. It helped me keep my children focused on school during the hardest time of our lives."

**HLF supported
students at 108
HDSB schools in
2024-2025**

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

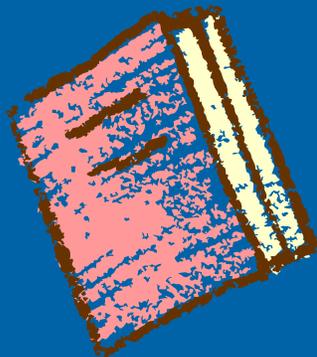
Revenue	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Donations and Fundraising	\$1,186,415	\$1,144,812	\$1,101,934
Investment Income	\$97,793	\$94,101	\$66,393
Total	\$1,284,208	\$1,238,913	\$1,168,327

Investing in Students	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Eliminating Barriers	\$462,405	\$642,877	\$742,564
School Grants*	\$189,053	\$125,719	\$88,202
Scholarships	\$161,724	\$188,393	\$218,350
Total	\$813,182	\$956,989	\$1,049,116

*(School support includes school grants plus other school support.)



THANK
YOU



STAY CONNECTED
TO US ON SOCIAL
MEDIA!



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