



HLF Month – New for 2024!

The team at HLF is thrilled to announce the first-ever “HLF Month” to be held April 2024! Our vision is that HLF Month becomes an annual event of activities, awareness, and funds in support of helping to remove financial barriers to education for all HDSB students who need some support.

The theme for HLF Month 2024 is the “Start of Potential”. Many students in the HDSB don’t have a chance to truly explore and take part in a holistic student experience because of the financial barriers they and their families face. HLF’s goal is to help students overcome those financial barriers so they can imagine possibilities for their future.

Potential could look like: starting a school sport with the proper equipment, having the right supplies for class, having the fees to register for post-secondary education, being well-nourished so students’ brains and bodies can learn better, and so much more.

We are asking our wonderful HDSB staff, teachers, and students to come together as a community in April to learn more about the financial challenges faced by many HDSB families, and to do something together about it in alignment with the aim of equity and inclusion.

[Register or join a team or donate!](#)

School Toolkit for HLF Month (April 2024)

HLF Month will run during April 2024 to help raise awareness and funds for HLF in support of breaking down financial barriers to education.

Activities for HLF Month

We encourage HDSB school communities to get involved and actively participate!

We invite you to do an **“HLF Challenge”**, where you invite your school/classroom/group to accomplish a challenge at some point during HLF Month. Some “HLF Challenge” ideas are an outdoor walk/run/bike, skipping or a 4 square challenge, a book reading challenge, a Give-something-up challenge, or a Personal Challenge, creating classroom teams and doing a challenge against each other or another class/school/group.

HLF will help to make the “HLF Challenge” fun and active for all by providing an HLF Month donation page, as well as a peer-to-peer online fundraising tool (similar to a Walk-a-thon) that helps to create a game-like friendly competition between students, classes, and/or schools! Through our “HLF Challenge” website portal, your school/classroom/group can:

- 1) Create a Team;**
- 2) Join a Team** - Invite students/staff/parents to join your team;
- 3) Ask for Donations** - Team members can then ask others to sponsor them for the challenge they are doing.

We can help you set up your Team Page – it’s easy to do and a fun way to help HDSB students in need.

Another fun idea to get everyone involved is to have an **“HLF Colour Day”** when the school wears HLF colours (green, orange and blue). More class and age specific fun activities are listed below!

All it takes is **\$250 to support one student**. We suggest each school set a goal to support between one and ten students. This will make a real impact on the lives of so many students in need in our communities!

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Ideas for Classroom Activities to Support HLF Month

We'd love it if you could support HLF Month in the classroom by incorporating one or more of the following ideas – or one of your own! – into the curriculum.

- **Themed Classroom Decorations:** decorate your classroom in HLF colours and/or with the theme of “starting something” new at the beginning of Spring (i.e. ask students what they'd like to start doing in the spring and post those on HLF coloured paper around the classroom; do an art project that visualizes something that starts in spring; discuss themes around starting fresh and positive mindsets with older kids). **Resources: HLF Month banners (one per school) and unlimited posters are available on request**
- **Guest Speakers:** organize guest speakers to visit classrooms and share insights and information on HLF and its impact in the community. For example, Grade 10 secondary students in Civics & Careers could learn about the needs in our community and the services that HLF provides and apply that to other social issues. **Resource: HLF's CEO, Marc Clare, is available to speak to schools virtually.**
- **Art Projects:** integrate art projects into lessons that reflect the theme “Start of potential”. This could involve creating banners or posters that will be displayed during the walk. The class could also create a donation tracker that showcases the dollars that class has collected together.
- **Physical Education:** to get ready for an HLF Walk or other physical activity, teachers could incorporate some outdoor activities like stretching exercises and routine, talk about the importance of good nutrition prior to the activity and do practice walks around the school space. OR, set up a ‘breaking down barriers’ obstacle course!
- **Science & Nature exploration:** science curriculum can be explored for the Walk by exploring flora and fauna in your community and recognizing the plants that are starting to bloom into their potential in April.
- **Start a School Garden:** many HDSB schools have gardens and April is a great time to get the garden ready to plant. Have students do an hour of outside work in the garden as part of HLF Month. Consider planting flowers or vegetables in HLF colours that will start their potential to become sources of nutrition and/or beauty into the summer months.

Ideas for Secondary student activities include:

- **Photography & Journalism:** Photography, Journalism, English, Civics and other students can document the month through photos, content and writing. They can do this through the lenses of social activism, poverty, advocacy/activism and community impact. Photography can be used for school social media and the yearbook.
- **Study of Social Issues:** HLF Month can be talked about in discussions around poverty, justice, social activism in relevant classes. **Resources:** HLF can provide statistics from our community to support those conversations and teaching.
- **Nutrition** Focus on an important aspect of student wellness: nutrition. Share information on how HLF, along with school breakfast programs and food banks, contributes to students receiving the nourishment they need to focus and excel in school.

Culminating Event:

If possible, plan a culminating event at the end of April to celebrate the success of the HLF Challenge or other school-wide activity and communicate to your community the donation amount raised from participation by your school. This could be a closing ceremony, presentations from each class showcasing what they've learned, or even a visit from the Principal and/or VP to classrooms to chat about the month.

Resource:

**Requests to HLF to Support Students in 2023-24 School Year
(as of February 23, 2024)**

