

## Back-to-School Giving

by Beth Cagle, KDS Development Director

Do you remember your first day of school each year? Were you excited or nervous? Did you have an awesome pair of shoes or a really cool book bag? In a few weeks, KDS will welcome more than 1,300 students to campus for the 2018-2019 school year. Currently, there is a flurry of activity going on at KDS to help prepare not only for the first day of school, but for the entire year!

With approximately 55% of the KDS student population living at or below the poverty line, many of the children who attend KDS do not have the basic items to make back-to-school a fun and exciting time. Some of these children have limited access to food at home and their most nourishing meals come from a school breakfast and lunch. Children in poverty often do not celebrate holidays, participate in extracurricular activities, or have hopes of furthering their education. This certainly impacts their academic achievement as well as their social and emotional development.



As bleak as this sounds, there is much hope! The KDS DAR School Administrative Office has numerous programs in place to help children at the beginning of a new school year. Every gift, large or small, does make a difference in the life of a child!

### Blessings Bags & Patriot Pantry

This valuable program provides food sacks for schoolchildren who have limited access to food on the weekends. There are currently more than 225 KDS students in grades Pre-K - 6 who receive the packs. These students must be sponsored each year at a cost of \$100 per student. Students in the elementary, middle, and high school also have access to a Patriot Pantry which is stocked with food, personal items, and school supplies that can be accessed discreetly.

### KDS Classroom Honor Roll

By supporting the KDS Classroom Honor Roll program, donors can provide the basic and essential materials and supplies needed by our classroom teachers. This is the best and most direct way for DAR Chapters and individuals to impact classroom learning at KDS. Donated funds are used to provide classroom supplies for teachers, library books, technology and business equipment, and sporting equipment and uniforms when funds are not available elsewhere.

### Dual Enrollment Scholarships

Dual Enrollment is a program that allows high school students (usually juniors and seniors) to enroll in college courses. Students who participate are earning college credit prior to high school graduation, and are receiving credit toward their high school diplomas as well. Dual enrollment is an attractive option for students, and the demand for these classes is increasing every year, but not every KDS student interested in pursuing this opportunity has the financial means to do so. On average, a single class at a local community college is \$450, and many KDS students cannot afford that.

### Children's Fund - Personal and Healthcare Needs

The Children's Fund can cover the cost of basic items like shoes, coats, and backpacks, and for healthcare needs such as dental visits and eye glasses. It can also pay the fees for students who wish to play sports or join clubs but cannot afford it. Requests for assistance originate with the school counselors and teachers who identify a child with a specific need. In 2017, more than 65 students received direct assistance throughout the school year. Contributions to this fund are needed as requests for student support continue to increase.

You can make the new school year memorable and stress-free for a child by supporting these or other valuable KDS programs. Contact Development Director Beth Cagle at 256-728-4236 or [bcagle@nehp.net](mailto:bcagle@nehp.net) for questions or to learn how to make your donation. Together with your help, we can assure that children have a 'great day' every day at KDS DAR School!