

Hamilton Community Foundation invites applications that support initiatives for children and youth from preschool to Grade 8. Grants will range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and will be for one year. The applicable focus areas are:

1. Literacy*
2. Basic Needs*
3. School Connectedness/Attachment*
4. Chronic Absenteeism and Suspensions*

**see below for more detail*

Application process:

- Grants will be made in accordance with the Canada Revenue Agency's guidelines – please see our website to confirm your eligibility
- Complete and submit your online application form by December 1, 2018
- ALL applicants will be contacted as to the disposition of their application within six to eight weeks of the application due date

We are looking for initiatives that:

- Serve youth who have been shown to experience more barriers to success in middle school, high school graduation and post-secondary access such as low-income students, first-generation post-secondary education attenders, Indigenous students, students from newcomer communities, etc.
- Incorporate strategies to engage parents
- Demonstrate a level of co-operation and collaboration with other groups that could contribute to improved results in the project, particularly schools and school boards
- Provide a clear rationale and local need identification
- Are evidence-informed and/or present the opportunity to pilot innovative new strategies

Background:

Reporting from our ABACUS grantees has identified a number of issues affecting a student's ability to learn and their journey through high school and onto post-secondary education. This *Call for Proposals* offers the opportunity for non-profit organizations to access resources to address these issues.

To learn more about our ABACUS initiative and the programs we have supported, please visit our website at www.hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca

Available funding:

Funding for this *Call for Proposals*, is made possible through various Field of Interest (FOI) Funds held at HCF. FOI funds are established by donors to support a specific area of interest to them (e.g. the environment, children's needs, the arts, etc.).

Focus areas explained:

1. Literacy

Reading proficiently by the end of Grade 3 can be a *make-or-break* benchmark in a child's educational development. Low achievement in reading has important long-term consequences in terms of individual earning potential, global competitiveness, and general productivity. A Canadian study of life-path differences associated with levels of reading found that young people who had higher levels of proficiency in reading at the age of 15 had higher levels of educational attainment and income by the time they were 25 than youth with lower proficiency in reading.

2. Basic needs

In addition to having a significant impact on a child's ability to focus and learn, lack of access to basic needs (such as food, clothing, school supplies, transportation, or hygiene products) is one of the top reasons for absenteeism.

3. School connectedness/attachment

Research has demonstrated a strong relationship between school connectedness and educational outcomes (including school attendance, staying in school longer, and higher grades and classroom test scores). Improving students' health and education outcomes by improving connectedness to school is a large undertaking that requires efforts of not only those within school buildings, but also people and organizations outside of schools. Activities that can promote school attachment include: mentoring and modeling the importance and belonging to school life; anti-bullying strategies and programs; school-based recreational sports, arts and cultural programs; an inviting, warm, supportive and child-friendly school environments; parental involvement and interaction with the school and the child's education.

4. Addressing chronic absenteeism and suspensions

The reasons for which students miss school can vary, requiring different, and sometimes complex responses. We also know from research that poverty and the factors related to it are correlated with low attendance starting in the early elementary years. Recent research across the United States identifies a range of strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism. These include recognizing good and improved attendance, engaging students and parents, providing personalized early outreach, monitoring attendance data and practice, and developing programs and services to respond.

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