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HPI HELPS LOCAL STUDENTS PREPARE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL



With the dog days of summer quickly fading in the U.S., children are preparing to go back to school. But while many students look forward to reuniting with their classmates and even getting back to their routines, students at Houston's local Calvert Elementary School have come to regard back to school time as a crash course in economics.

Ranging from kindergarten to the fourth grade, a recent Aldine Independent School District survey showed that 84 percent of students that attend Calvert Elementary come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, a statistic that doesn't bode well for families in light of recent news concerning the rising costs of school supplies.

According to Huntington National Bank's annual Backpack Index, school supply prices have jumped an average of 7.3 percent, significantly outpacing inflation at 1.8 percent. This year parents of elementary school children can expect to spend an average of \$161.27, a 33 percent increase over last year, when average spending was \$120.87. While the increase may appear minimal, the extra dollars only add pressure to budgets already stretched

too thin.

Leveraging its new corporate citizenship program, HPI Cares, and generous donations from HPI employees, the Company has taken an interest in Calvert Elementary, and is doing its part to make sure that students have a successful academic year.



From August 1-15, HPI Cares hosted a school supply drive to help provide Calvert students with much needed school supplies, a move that Director of Marketing and Communications, Erica Evans-Waller, says is simply paying it forward.

"We couldn't do what we do without a skilled, educated employee base. By ensuring that students in our local community have the tools that they need to be successful in the classroom, we are potentially helping to cultivate the next generation of HPI employees," Evans-Waller explains.

Through HPI Cares funds and monetary donations from employees, the Company was able to purchase much needed school supplies for Calvert students including: crayons, #2 pencils, construction paper, spiral notebooks, pocket folders, colored pencils, washable markers, Kleenex, typing paper, rulers, erasers, glue, and 5" scissors.

Supplies were delivered to Calvert Elementary during the week of August 18. Calvert Elementary School Principal, Cheryl LaFleur was grateful for HPI's efforts.

"The supplies were separated and distributed to the students that arrived on the first day of school without any supplies. We were so excited to see the smiles on the faces of those students whose parents were not able to provide school supplies for them. We are truly grateful to HPI for their generosity."

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