



Family Giving Tree™

Community Connection Chronicle

Back-to-School Drive 2025

Empowering Students for Growth
in the Classroom and Beyond

fgt.org



Our Mission

Our work is all about giving every student a fair chance. The truth is, not all students have what they need to learn properly.

Family Giving Tree is dedicated to creating a more equitable learning environment for Bay Area K-12 students through our annual Back-to-School Drive. We distribute thousands of new backpacks filled with grade-appropriate supplies to students through a network of partner schools and agencies. In the program's 30-year history, it has prepared over 500,000 local students for the school year, ensuring they feel confident and ready.

From the moment they enter the classroom, the Back-to-School Drive substantially supports the academic experience of every student recipient. While a backpack might seem like a small contribution, it can mean everything to a student. Having these necessary items for the school year promotes a sense of opportunity. Students who are prepared to actively participate in their learning tend to achieve greater academic success, and we believe the right resources can help every student reach their full potential.

Bay Area Classrooms Are Changing

In this upcoming school year in particular, it is especially important to ensure students are fully prepared and supported as they enter the classroom.

Several Bay Area school districts have announced closures, consolidations, and staffing reductions due to budget deficits and declining enrollment. These looming changes will impact students across the region, including within San Jose¹, San Francisco², Fremont³, and Santa Rosa⁴.

As a result, many students will attend newly consolidated schools with nearly doubled student populations and classrooms filled to capacity. To prepare for the expected changes in the classroom atmosphere, our partner schools have reported an increased need for supply-filled backpacks. Within days of opening our 2025 Back-to-School Drive registration, partner schools requested 55% more backpacks than they received in 2024, highlighting the importance of having supplies for learning from day one.

Educators have emphasized that while the types of supplies haven't drastically changed, the importance of having those supplies from day one has dramatically increased. With larger student populations, students will have less access to individualized attention from teachers. This demands a greater degree of independence and engagement from our students.

The rising number of students this year has also created an increased financial strain on educators, who commonly spend their earnings on classroom supplies so that all students can participate; this year's increase in student volume is anticipated to be far more expensive than they can manage. Last year, 29% of our educators at our partner schools expressed that the number of backpacks they received did not fulfill the need of every student at the school.

1. Franklin-McKinley Unified School District, "School Consolidation," accessed April 18, 2025, <https://www.fmsd.org/our-district1/school-consolidation>.
2. San Francisco Unified School District, "SF Board of Education Vote on Preliminary Layoff Notices for Certain Positions," accessed April 18, 2025, <https://www.sfusd.edu/about-sfusd/sfusd-news/press-releases/2025-02-21-sf-board-education-vote-preliminary-layoff-notices-certain-positions>.
3. Fremont Unified School District, "Balanced Budget Process," accessed April 18, 2025, <https://fremontunified.org/about/superintendent/balanced-budget/>.
4. Santa Rosa City Schools, "Stabilization and Consolidation," accessed April 18, 2025, <https://www.srscschools.org/departments/business-services/fiscal-services/budget/stabilization-and-consolidation>.

DONATE
A
BACKPACK

- Help a Student
1. Take a backpack to
 2. Buy backpack and
 3. Return all items by

DONATE
A
BACKPACK

Equipping Students to Write Their Own Story



Statement of Need



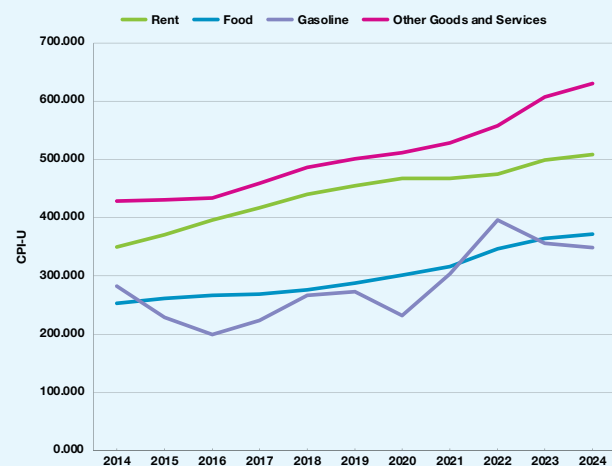
It's not uncommon for students from households considered "low-income" to step into a new academic year with an empty backpack.

While households are making every effort to meet the mounting needs of their students, they are also juggling rising costs⁵ for the bare necessities. Having one less expense to balance can bring a huge sigh of relief for these caregivers. The immediate pressures of today's economy can require them to prioritize meeting daily needs, and even a few unexpected supplies —like when a child comes home with a broken backpack— can feel blindsiding.

Our partner schools report that 98,327 students qualify for California's Free or Reduced Meal Program (FRMP) in their schools alone. This figure demonstrates the significant population of students whose households meet the qualifications for governmental assistance.

The provision of a backpack with the tools they need can give students the opportunity to overcome some barriers that are beyond their control.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index



\$59,478

2025 Maximum Annual Income
for FRMP Eligibility
for a Family of Four⁶

\$60,250

2025 "Extremely Low" Income
for a Family of Four
in San Jose⁷

\$159,450

2025 "Low" Income
for a Family of Four
in San Jose⁸

5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Consumer Price Index, San Francisco Area — February 2025," accessed April 18, 2025, https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/consumerpriceindex_sanfrancisco.htm.
6. California Department of Education, "2024–25 School District Fiscal Data Reporting: Salary and Benefit Cost Scales," accessed April 18, 2025, <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/scales2425.asp>.
7. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "FY 2025 Income Limits Summary: Santa Clara County, California," accessed April 18, 2025, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2025/2025summary.odn?STATES=6.0&INPUTNAME=METRO41940M41940*0608599999%2BSanta+Clara+County&statelist=&stname=California&wherefrom=&statefp=06&year=2025&ne_flag=&selection_type=county&incpath=&data=2025&SubmitButton=View+County+Calculations.
8. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "FY 2025 Income Limits Summary: Santa Clara County, California," accessed April 18, 2025, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2025/2025summary.odn?STATES=6.0&INPUTNAME=METRO41940M41940*0608599999%2BSanta+Clara+County&statelist=&stname=California&wherefrom=&statefp=06&year=2025&ne_flag=&selection_type=county&incpath=&data=2025&SubmitButton=View+County+Calculations.

FGT Solution



We recognize that addressing the resource gap is one of many necessary requirements to the complex issue of equal access to education.

Our work directly supports students' ability to access and utilize the curriculum, allowing teachers to direct their focus on instruction. It also offers a sense of security by keeping away any unease of not being able to take part in class activities as their peers do, or having to ask to borrow supplies.

"One of our students' backpacks had broken on the first day of school - what excitement they had when I was able to give them a brand-new backpack!"

Family Giving Tree remains informed about the evolving needs of students through our annual Teacher Feedback Survey.

At the close of the 2023 academic year, educators expressed the significance of providing supplies that support overall student well-being. Our backpacks are

frequently improved to meet the relevant needs of recipients based on their learning stage.

To promote healthier habits, backpacks now include BPA-free water bottles and tissue packs in addition to our signature toothbrush, toothpaste, and roll of floss, accompanied by a dental hygiene flyer.

"Every year when parents start to register their students for the new school year, they ask if we sell backpacks and we say, 'No, we have this amazing non-profit organization called Family Giving Tree, that provides our backpacks for free, full of school supplies.' Oh my god, the smile on the faces of the family and the relief you see in them, knowing they don't have to spend the money that they have assigned for food. This always makes my heart jump [with] happiness"

– A Bay Area Educator



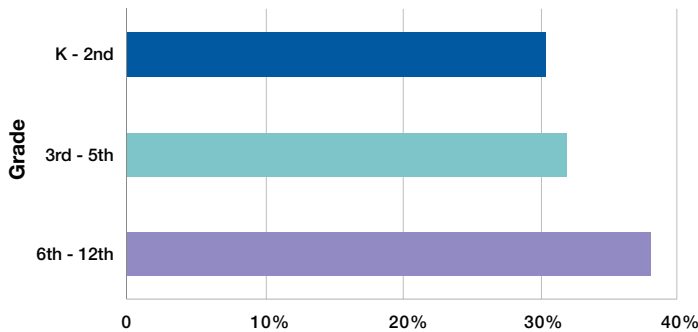
Impact and Demographics



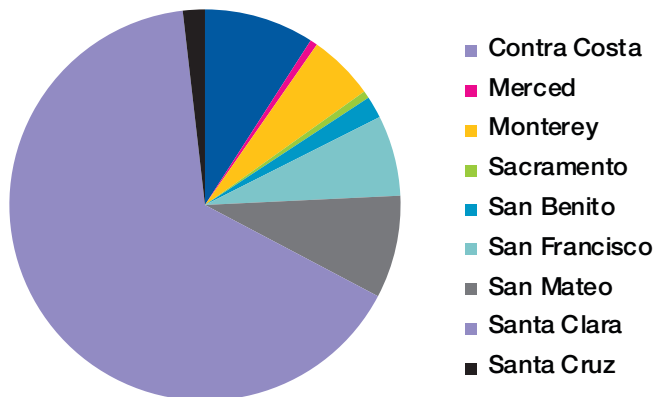
Our organization is proud to serve this diverse sector of our community. Together, we strive to uphold the promise of opportunity and watch every one of our students excel.



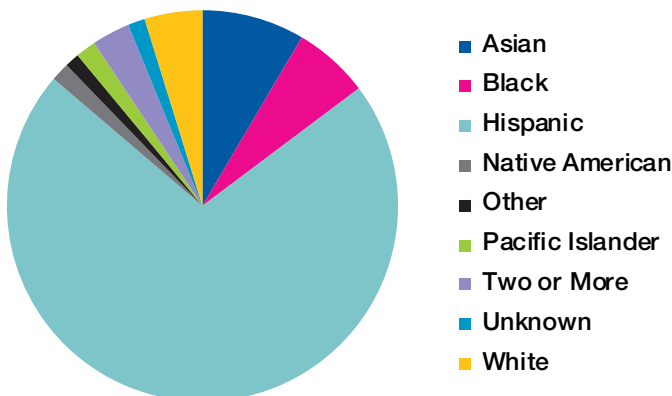
Grade Levels Served



Agencies Served



Ethnicities Served



"Nobody really shines a light on the low-income community as much as the (Family) Giving Tree has. Within the past two years of school years, they have donated backpacks to us, and it's the only program in Santa Clara County that really takes a look at our population that needs it the most."

- Natali Zepeda, Dean of Success at San Jose Conservation Corps



"We have a family who just arrived in the U.S., and the parent needed support with uniforms, school materials, and supplies. We were able to provide two sets of uniforms along with a backpack filled with classroom supplies. The student loved the backpack; she was so excited to have her very first backpack ever! The way her face lit up with joy made our day."

- A Partner School Administrator

Invest in Growing Hope



You, too, can send a student off knowing they have the tools to build a brighter tomorrow.

Family Giving Tree effectively sources supplies at significantly reduced rates from our trusted vendors. By supporting our cause directly, you can maximize the impact of your gift.

There are many ways individuals and organizations can support the Back-to-School Drive and partner with us to grow hope in our schools.

Make a secure **online donation** at fgt.org and double the impact of your contribution with **corporate matching**.

Lead your own drive to engage your community and spread the spirit of giving.

Allocate funds from your **Donor Advised Fund**.

Plant a Seed for the next generation through **Legacy Giving**.

Donate proceeds through the sale of **stock** shares.

Visit our Community Hub by signing up for a **volunteer** shift to build backpacks and witness the impact firsthand.

Donate **physical supplies** and backpacks. Check out our 2025 Back-to-School Supply List.

Become a **Corporate Sponsor** and help promote awareness of the Drive while gaining visibility for your company through opportunities for team-building and employee engagement.

Giving Opportunities to Make an Impact

"Receiving a backpack with school supplies was something that made me very happy, which I appreciate and value since many could be in need of a backpack or some school supplies. I hope you continue to donate more backpacks so that people who need them can have the same opportunity as me to receive one. Thank you."

- Natalia Salcido, 11th Grader



Support a student like Natalia with a backpack filled with the supplies she needs for just \$50.

DONATE



A contribution of \$150 would supply **Natalia and two friends** with the tools for success.

DONATE



Guarantee classroom equity by providing Natalia's entire class with a donation of \$1,500.

DONATE



Empower her **school's entire 11th-grade class** with a generous gift of \$16,000.

DONATE

DONATE

Bringing Joy. Growing Hope. Creating Community.

Leadership

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Chief Executive Officer

Jess Gutierrez
Chief Financial Officer

Evelyn Huynh
Director of Community
Resource Development

Charlotte Wood
Director of Marketing

Staff

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Agency Coordinator

Brianna Williams
Development Officer

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Programs Team Manager

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