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Freedom Federal Credit Union leadership presented classroom libraries to newly hired teachers at Old Post Road Elementary, the first to receive these book bundles for the second phase of this county-wide program. **Back (L to R): HCPS:** Mary Beth Stapleton, Manager of Family and Community Partnerships; RELA Teacher Specialists Gideon Twigg, Kristen Bard, and Vicky Jones; Ronald Wooden, Principal; Kristine Scarry, Supervisor of Reading, English, and Language Arts; **Freedom:** Mike MacPherson, President and CEO; Ronnie Teitler Davis, Board Director; Lisa Snodgrass, Director of Development; Carmen David Mirabile, SVP Growth Strategies **Front (L to R): Educators:** Michelle Alkire, Katelyn Dorsey, Lauren Hunter, Imani Hughes, Emily Pivec, and Carleigh Welch

FREEDOM FEDERAL CREDIT UNION DONATES CLASSROOM LIBRARIES TO NEW TEACHERS

***All new Harford County Public Schools third through fifth grade teachers to
receive new books to add to libraries for their classrooms***

Bel Air, MD – Freedom Federal Credit Union, in collaboration with Harford County Public Schools (HCPS), is gifting starter libraries to all newly hired classroom teachers in third through fifth grade. A

total of 47 teachers across 21 schools will benefit from this initiative, receiving over 500 grade-specific reading books aligned with their curriculum to be divided among the teachers.

Freedom continues to use this initiative to build awareness around the need to build classroom libraries for educators just starting their classroom careers. This is the second time where Freedom has partnered with HCPS to provide new teachers with classroom libraries to ensure no one is starting off without essential reading resources for their students, and has now provided more than 1,000 books to new elementary teachers at all grade-levels.

Mike MacPherson, President and CEO for Freedom Federal Credit Union, stated, "Freedom has been providing classroom grants for teachers for twelve years through our Golden Apple Awards program, and in that time we have learned that our educators are quite often personally funding the reading materials for their classrooms. Recognizing the requests we received were representative of a larger unmet need, we began this initiative towards better equipping our teachers with age-appropriate books to use in their classrooms."

"Freedom continues to stand out as an exceptional community partner." said Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent of HCPS. "They have demonstrated an unwavering dedication to enhancing education and to supporting our team of educators. Their support has been particularly impactful in our classrooms, and I wish to extend sincere appreciation for supporting our newest educators as they embark on their teaching careers, and for their work in putting books in the hands of our students."

Freedom leadership gathered with representatives from Harford County Public Schools on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at Old Post Road Elementary School to present the libraries. Kristine Scarry, Supervisor of Reading, English, and Language Arts Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment for HCPS, was integral in working with Freedom's liaison to the schools, Business Development Director, Lisa Snodgrass, on completing the project. Both are looking forward to continuing to expand the program over the next several years.

Teachers and school support staff within Harford or Baltimore County schools are also eligible for Freedom's Golden Apple Program, a special savings and rewards program for educators. This program includes access to their Annual Golden Apple Awards, which allows teachers to apply for classroom grants up to \$2000. Entries will be accepted for the current school year starting in February.

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About Freedom Federal Credit Union

Freedom Federal Credit Union is a community-chartered federal credit union offering consumer financial services to those who live, work, volunteer, worship, attend school, or have family in Harford and Baltimore Counties. Additionally, Freedom offers a full-line of banking services for all businesses, associations, and other organizations that are based in Harford or Baltimore Counties. Freedom has been in business since 1953 and has six locations throughout Harford and Baltimore County. To learn more, visit freedomfcu.org.

About Harford County Public Schools

The mission of Harford County Public Schools is that each student will attain academic and personal success in a safe and caring environment that honors the diversity of our students and staff. The vision of the Board of Education of Harford County is to inspire and prepare each student to achieve success in college and career.