



**United Way
of Northern New York, Inc.**

Dear Friend:

For the last two years, the Watertown City School District, in partnership with the City of Watertown and the United Way of NNY has implemented a backpack program to support children and their families with food. We started with Starbuck Elementary in 2015-2016, added Ohio Elementary in 2016-2017, and, this year, we managed to make last year's goal a reality: we will reach students in all eight schools this school year! But, continuing our effort to end child hunger in the City of Watertown requires the support of everyone in our community. And, we are counting on you to help!

Food 4 Families, formerly known as the Backpack Program, meets the needs of hungry children by providing them with nutritious and easy-to-prepare food to take home on weekends when other resources are not available. Every Friday, a bag filled with food by our high school students and community volunteers is sent home with each student enrolled in the program.

Good nutrition is important for establishing a good foundation that has implications for a child's future physical and mental health, academic achievement, and economic productivity. Unfortunately, food insecurity is an obstacle threatening that critical foundation. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), in 2014, 15.3 million children under age 18 in the United States lived in households where they were unable to consistently access enough nutritious food necessary for a healthy life. Throughout the Watertown City School District, more than 65% of students experience food insecurity at one time or another. Children cannot learn when they are hungry. Food 4 Families is an effective way to address child hunger in our community.

We are seeking the help of our local businesses to continue to grow and sustain this wonderful program. It costs approximately \$7.50 a week per bag. It costs \$300 per child for the school year (40 weeks). How many students would you like to help? To sponsor one child for 10 weeks is \$75. Please consider joining us as a sponsor: Platinum (\$1,200), Gold (\$900), Silver (\$600), or Bronze (\$300).

Please make a tax-deductible contribution by sending a check to the United Way of NNY, 200 Washington Street, Suite 402A, Watertown, NY 13601, and writing "WCSD Food 4 Families" on the memo line. The United Way partners with the Food Bank of Central New York to buy nutritious food at lower prices, thus stretching your donation to our program.

Our children, our community, deserve it! If you are interested in joining our Food 4 Families Program Team or have questions, please contact Stacey Eger at 785-3708 or Sharon Addison at 785-7730.

Warm regards,

Sharon Addison
Watertown City Manager

Stacey Eger
WCSD Assistant Superintendent

Bob Gorman
CEO, United Way of NNY