



Northmark Bank's Commitment to Education

Northmark Bank sponsors and participates actively in various community educational partnerships. They regard their sustained staff volunteer effort in the partnerships as an important part of its commitment to and investment in its host communities. Its current educational partnerships include the following:

- **St. Augustine's School (Andover, MA) Student Bank:** Northmark assisted the school in establishing this student bank in 1999 and during the following seventeen years has advised and assisted in its operation as a financial educational program. Participation in the student bank, which operates only during the academic year, is limited to students of grades four through eight. A Northmark Bank staff member participates in on-campus bank operations every two weeks. The school-based bank saving program helps students understand the importance of saving, understand how banks work and promotes financial literacy with hands-on learning.
- **James F. Hennessey School (Lawrence, MA) Reading Program:** Northmark staff members have read to Lawrence primary school students once a month for the past twenty years, first at the General Donovan School, and, after its closure, at the James F. Hennessey School. The monthly reader program for the Hennessey School in Lawrence is a building block in the promotion of literacy and financial knowledge in children. The reading program incorporates reading as well as basics in financial literacy including handouts age-appropriate for kindergarten, first and second grade students. Many of these handouts (coloring pages) or story ideas come from the U.S. Mint. The vast majority of the kindergarten students are coming to school for the first time and speak little English. By hearing the books read aloud, seeing the pictures in the book and handling the items passed around during class, the students get a multidimensional approach to learning.
- **The Lawrence (MA) Play and Read Floor Hockey League:** Lawrence Play and Read was founded four years ago by professional writer/professor/hockey coach Jay Atkinson, the pastor of St. Patrick's Parish and a member of the Northmark staff. The innovative program combines two elements, a strong encouragement to read more and an introduction to the game of floor hockey. The League, open to all Lawrence boys and girls, grades 2-8, introduces new players to the game of hockey, helps more experienced players sharpen their skills, and emphasizes reading as a fundamental skill for learning and recreation. The program has been embraced by the City of Lawrence as a way to promote reading and involvement in school, particularly by students considered reluctant readers or edging toward being at risk. The League is free of charge, but all participants are strongly encouraged to read two to four age appropriate books, identified by the "Play & Read" program. Two members of the bank serve as coaches.

Sustained **staff volunteer effort** in the partnerships is an important part of Northmark's commitment to and **investment in its host communities.**

Northmark Bank believes in the importance of literacy and financial education and strives to get the local communities to engage on these issues as well. This is particularly important for younger children as getting ahead in reading early can have a lasting impact.