



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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### ***Liberty Mutual Foundation Supports Catie's Closet at Charlestown High School***

*This grant allows Catie's Closet to provide Charlestown High School students free access to more than 10,000 articles of clothing and basic necessities.*

#### *Program Gives Students the Confidence to Come to School Ready to Learn*

BOSTON, MA - The 789 students who attend Charlestown High School, 95 percent of whom are categorized as high needs, now have the opportunity to shop – entirely for free – for clothing and other basic necessities inside their school, thanks to Liberty Mutual's sponsorship of the school's Catie's Closet.

Catie's Closet is a nonprofit organization providing children in need with life-changing access to clothing and basic necessities so they can thrive in school and life. Serving 100,000 children in 140 schools across Massachusetts and New Hampshire, the organization transforms unused spaces inside schools into free stores where students can access clothing, hygiene supplies, and other basic necessities.

By becoming a Catie's Closet School Success Sponsor for Charlestown High School, Liberty Mutual ensures the closet will operate at full inventory for the entire school year, allowing students to pick out clothing and other items as often as they need. Liberty Mutual has generously made a three-year commitment to funding the operation. Over this time period, more than 10,000 articles of clothing and basic necessities will be provided free of charge to Charlestown High School students.

"We are so tremendously thankful for Liberty Mutual's sponsorship of Charlestown High School, which allows us to align our missions of building security and resilience in our communities," said Mickey Cockrell, CEO and co-founder of Catie's Closet. "As we expand across new communities, support from businesses and foundations is critical to ensure we can serve more children in need, especially as poverty and homelessness rise significantly in Massachusetts, which impacts students' attendance and focus in school. Liberty Mutual's continued generosity helps establish foundations for students to build successful futures."

Chronic absenteeism is a national issue plaguing schools in nearly every community. By providing students with clothing and basic necessities they need, including winter coats, new shoes, and hygiene products, they can attend school confidently, focus on learning, engage

socially, and pursue their goals. There are many reasons for the chronic absenteeism crisis, but one significant factor is the rise in homelessness and economic hardship.

According to The US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Massachusetts has the fifth-highest homeless population in the country. The latest data by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shows over 24,000 homeless children are attending Massachusetts public schools, and 42 percent of students in the state are considered low-income.

Families in these situations are unlikely to be able to afford clothing and basic necessities for their children, which impacts their emotional, mental, and physical health and educational outcomes.

"Catie's Closet has been a great addition to the Charlestown High School community," said Danitza Acevedo, MS, LSWA, Family Liaison at Charlestown High School. "By meeting students' basic essential needs, it has opened the door to deeper conversations and built a sense of trust between students and staff. Ensuring that every student has access to clothing and hygiene essentials promotes equity and inclusion, allowing them to feel a sense of belonging and focus on their education without barriers. This trust and support have contributed to increased attendance, which ultimately enhances academic performance and overall student success—and it all begins with Catie's Closet."

In addition to their School Success Sponsorship, Liberty Mutual donated \$20,000 to support Catie's Closet's SOS Urgent Response Program, which provides children experiencing a transition to their stable living conditions with customized packages filled with clothing and other essentials that fill their immediate needs. In 2024, Catie's Closet filled over 5,000 SOS Urgent Response Orders.

"Catie's Closet is an essential partner in education at our school," said Ajay Trivedi, the principal of Charlestown High School. "With Catie's Closet, students feel empowered to attend school, knowing that this resource is available to support them, their learning, and their growth. We could not be more grateful to Liberty Mutual for making it possible for Catie's Closet to serve our students every day."

Charlestown High School is among 50 other Boston Public Schools with a Catie's Closet. The nonprofit relies heavily on community donations and School Success Sponsors to serve children needing support.

To learn more about Catie's Closet and ways to help, including becoming a School Success Sponsor, visit [catiescloset.org](https://catiescloset.org).



**Photo outline:** Catie's Closet presented Liberty Mutual with a plaque to celebrate and recognize Liberty Mutual's support for Charlestown High School's Catie's Closet. Pictured (left to right): Michael Kenney, Manager of Operations & Community Partnerships at Catie's Closet Boston; Melissa Herman, Catie's Closet Board Member;

Allison Anastasiadis, Program Manager at Catie's Closet Boston; Mickey Cockrell, CEO and Co-Founder of Catie's Closet; Kalina Philalom, Program Manager at Liberty Mutual Foundation; Emily Polston, Chief of Staff for Boston City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune; Heather Georgopoulos, Assistant Merchandise Manager at Catie's Closet Boston; Danitza Acevedo, Family Liaison at Charlestown High School; Elaine Donovan, Charlestown District Liaison for Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata.

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Established in 2010, Catie's Closet is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that gives students in need life-changing access to clothing and basic necessities so they can thrive in school and in life. Through its In-School Closet Program and SOS Urgent Response Program, the organization restores the dignity and confidence of more than 100,000 students. Catie's Closet is offered in more than 140 schools across 11 Massachusetts and New Hampshire school districts, with distribution centers in Merrimack Valley, Boston, and Western Massachusetts. More information is available at [catiescloset.org](http://catiescloset.org).