

# Record number of books donated for needy students

25,000 students benefit from FairPrice Share-A-Textbook initiative; many get to buy school essentials at discounts

**Rahimah Rashith**

Needy families received a helping hand in the form of used textbooks, discounted school essentials, vouchers and groceries at Our Tampines Hub yesterday.

About 25,000 students from low-income families were selected to choose donated textbooks at the annual FairPrice Share-A-Textbook initiative.

There were 550,000 donated books available for collection – the greatest number received in the project's 37-year history.

Apart from obtaining free textbooks, 30,000 NTUC-U Care Fund beneficiaries comprising NTUC union members and their schooling children were also able to buy school essentials at discounted rates as part of the NTUC Back to School initiative.

Beneficiaries could use their

Back to School vouchers at the fair, which offered exclusive deals and special promotions on products such as school bags and shoes.

The FairPrice Share-A-Textbook and NTUC Back to School initiatives will be open to the public today.

FairPrice chief executive Seah Kian Peng said: "We are encouraged by the community's continued support, which has helped us achieve our target of 550,000 textbooks this year.

"This result would not have been possible without the generosity of the community and our volunteers, who have given so much of their time and effort to this project. Together with NTUC-U Care's Back to School initiative, we are better able to reach out to the less fortunate among us to help defray the cost of school expenses."

Our Tampines Hub yesterday also saw 300 low-income families receive grocery and meal vouchers



Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat (third from right) and FairPrice chief executive Seah Kian Peng (left, in white) at the FairPrice Share-A-Textbook and NTUC Back to School events at Our Tampines Hub. The events will be open to the public today. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

each worth around \$170 in a collaboration between North East Community Development Council and **New Creation Church (Singapore).**

Community partners also lent their support, with NTUC FairPrice Foundation donating a \$30 "Festive Bag" of groceries.

Said North East District Mayor Desmond Choo: "We know this is the season where some families would appreciate some load off their shoulders. The families have a lot to fulfil, including making sure their children have enough

supplies for the new school year.

"We are heartened by the various generous contributions from all our partners. In line with our Singapore Together movement, we want to encourage more Singaporeans to come forward to support our communities in need."

Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat and Environment and Water Resources Minister Masagos Zulkifli, who are MPs for Tampines GRC, were at both events.

rahimahr@sph.com.sg

## 550,000

Number of donated books available for collection – the biggest number in the project's 37-year history.

## 30,000

Number of NTUC-U Care Fund beneficiaries who were also able to buy school essentials at discounted rates.