

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and the Noored Kooli Foundation call upon everyone to make a contribution to the promotion and diversification of Estonian schooling. Active young people, who have at least a bachelor's degree and are ready to be teachers for two years, can apply to the third class of the Noored Kooli program. All others can contribute to education on the Back-to-School Day on February 23rd, when schools throughout Estonia will welcome specialists, parents and graduates to come and conduct classes and share their knowledge with students.

According to Helo Meigas, the chairman of the Noored Kooli Foundation, one of the foundation's objectives is to increase recognition for the teaching profession, because the quality of education depends primarily on teachers. "We need talented and energetic young people in the schools, because our education is only as good as our teachers. In addition, the experiences of the participants in the Noored Kooli program have confirmed that teaching, even for just a few years, has a very developmental effect on young people—involving students in their studies, recognizing each student, and awakening his or her desire to learn is the greatest test of leadership," Helo Meigas said.

This year, the Noored Kooli Foundation along with President Ilves are appealing to all energetic people in order to promote teaching to talented and energetic young people and encourage them to contribute to the diversification of education. "There are no impersonal concerns in education. We can all have a role in directing and developing students. On the one hand, our schools need a functioning communications network and good contacts with the remaining society. On the other hand, our compatriots need a better understanding of how Estonian schools function today and how they can support our education," President Ilves said.

A good opportunity to strengthen ties with our schools will be available on the Back-to-School Day on February 23rd, the day before Independence Day, when the schools will welcome their graduates, parents and specialists from various fields to share their professional experiences within the framework of one subject class. "In order to know the needs and expectations of the schools, and to know how each of us could make a long-term contribution to education, contacts with schools must be created. The Back-to-School Day is a good opportunity to take a valuable first step, to have a look at what's going on in school, and to collect ideas for future activities," Helo Meigas said.

Additional information and registration: www.tagasikooli.ee .

The Noored Kooli Foundation has been initiated to create an environment for the creation of a new generation of leaders, who could introduce positive changes in Estonian education by working in various fields of activity. Until March 18th, energetic and capable young people can apply to enter the third class of the Noored Kooli program. During the first two years of the program, there were approximately 10 applicants for each position. This is also an internationally recognized ratio to strive for in the selection of teachers.

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