

Drive is on in Broomfield to supply kids for school

By Casey Kelly For the Enterprise
Broomfield Enterprise

Posted: 07/24/2011 12:00:00 AM MDT

WANT TO DONATE?

Fill A Backpack

Specific items needed include: backpacks, notebooks, large erasers, crayons, glue or glue sticks, loose leaf paper, pencils, folders, rulers, white socks, scissors and composition books.

Donations will be accepted through Aug. 7. They can be dropped off from 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. daily at North Metro Fire stations. In Broomfield, stations are at 1275 W. Midway Blvd., 13515 Lowell Blvd., 9900 W. 120th Ave., 1750 W. 160th Ave. and 13875 S. 96th St. Donations also will be accepted from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday through Friday at North Metro headquarters, at the corner of First Avenue and Lamar Street, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at A Precious Child, 557 Burbank St., Suite E.

For a list of Broomfield businesses accepting donations, go to apreciouschild.org/our-work/us-programs/fill-a-backpack

Fill a Backpack needs volunteers to help collect donations Friday and Saturday at the Walmart Supercenter. To volunteer, call Courtney Rogers at 303-466-4272.

Crayons To Calculators

Donations of backpacks, pencils, pens, erasers, markers, highlighters, glue sticks, rulers, blunt-tip scissors, notebooks, binders and more will be collected through Friday.

For a complete list of supplies broken down by grade, go to

crayonstocalculators.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/SupplyList.UPDATED3.pdf

In Broomfield, donations can be dropped off at:

Elevations Credit Union, 4750 W. 120th Ave.

Broomfield United Church, 825 Kohl St.

Lakeshore Athletic Club, 300 Summit Blvd.

SmileLogic, 403 Summit Blvd., No. 202

Underprivileged students in Broomfield can soon add a few more colors to their crayon box.

Local school supply drives, including the Fill a Backpack and Crayons to Calculators programs, plan to distribute needed back-to-school gear to area schools and assistance programs, giving thousands of kids the tools they need to start school next month.

The programs aim to assist low-income families by giving kids basic school supplies, such as pencils, notebooks, backpacks and more, saving families \$50 to \$70 per student.

"There are so many families that can't afford it. It's expensive to get backpacks and school supplies every year, and many of these families have more than one child," said Carina Martin, executive director of Broomfield nonprofit A Precious Child, which spearheads the Fill A Backpack program. "It can become a real strain."

Back for its third year, Fill a Backpack is a collaborative effort of North Metro Fire Rescue District and A Precious Child. It provides backpacks stocked with school supplies to A Precious Child's partner service agencies. The 15-day drive officially kicks off today, though donations have already been made at to drop-off locations around Broomfield. The program has received requests for 2,500 backpacks for students in the area.

"Education is so crucial for children to have the chance in life to be successful, so what better to do than give them the tools to succeed in school. I think it sends a message to the children that education is important," Martin said.

The Fill a Backpack program also teamed up with the Broomfield Police Department for two donation events Friday and Saturday at the Walmart Supercenter, 4651 W. 121st Ave. Police will be at the store collecting cash and supply donations for the program.

The Crayons to Calculators school supply drive also is in full swing. Donations are being accepted through Friday, although cash donations are accepted year-round. The 6-year-old drive specifically collects supplies for Boulder Valley and St. Vrain school district students. Project coordinator Cheryl Meyers said 13,000 students in those districts -- or roughly 30 percent of students -- qualify for free and reduced-prices lunches, which is used as an indicator of poverty and the need for assistance programs in the area.

"We make a really big effort to make sure all the backpacks are different, because we don't want them to be identifiable as 'the free backpacks,'" Meyers said. "Kids want to blend in, so we make a big effort to make that happen."

Crayons to Calculators organizers are hoping to outfit 8,000 students with backpacks full of school supplies this year.

Cash donations are accepted year-round and can be mailed to Crayons to Calculators, 728 Front St., Suite A, Louisville, CO 80027. For information on volunteering, e-mail Cheryl Meyers at cheryl@impactoneducation.org

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