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Supplies and demand: Crayons to Calculators looking to fill 2,500 backpacks for SVVSD students

By Victoria A.F. Camron
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LONGMONT — Backpack, 2-inch binder, paper, pens, highlighters, notebooks, paper.

Pretty quickly, you're talking \$50 or more to send one kid off to middle or high school with the needed supplies.

Not every parent can afford it. That's where Crayons to Calculators comes in.

Crayons to Calculators collects school supplies and cash donations with the goal of providing fully stocked backpacks to students who need them in the St. Vrain Valley and Boulder Valley school districts.

This year, principals in the two districts expect to need 6,900 backpacks, according to program director Catherine Bedell.

About 2,500 of those backpacks will be needed in the St. Vrain Valley School District, said Lora Lawrence, Crayons to Calculators coordinator for the Education Foundation for the St. Vrain Valley.

Steve Payne, principal of Erie High School, said school officials keep their eyes open for students who don't have supplies.

Of course, students aren't always quick to admit they need assistance.

Payne often asks one of the secretaries to bring a student to the office, then point out that "extra" supplies are available, he said.

One student refused help until he one particular backpack caught his eye, Payne said. After he admitted he liked it, he accepted it, the principal said.

Having cool backpacks is one key to the program's success.

"Any kid would be proud to carry them," Lawrence said.

Kathy Hall, executive director of the education foundation, said the organization tries to make accepting a backpack as easy as possible.

"They don't have to prove to us in any way that they need a backpack," Hall said.

Lists of supplies for different grade levels are available at the Crayons to Calculators website. Donors can purchase as little or as much as they want.

Supplies and backpacks can be dropped off at collection points throughout the school district beginning July 21.

Donations already are being accepted in the lobby of the Times-Call, 350 Terry St.,

Crayons to Calculators collection sites

Needed school supplies generally include pencils boxes or pouches, rulers, glue sticks, pencils, pens, highlighters and wide-ruled or college-ruled spiral notebooks and paper.

With your donation, include your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to receive a tax-deductible receipt.

Most collection sites will be open from July 21 to Aug. 7.

Dacono: Colorado East Bank and Trust, 801 Flying Circle

Erie: De Maj Salon, 3140 Village Vista Drive, No. 103

Frederick: Valley Bank and Trust, 450 Oak St.

I Rocky Mountain Christian Church, 5860 Majestic St.

Longmont: Elevations Credit Union, 1079 S. Hover St.

Elevations Credit Union, 2101 N. Main St.

First Lutheran Church, 803 Third Ave.

J.C. Penney, 955 S. Hover St.

LifeBridge Christian Church, 10345 Ute Highway

Longmont Board of Realtors, 420 Kimbark St.

Longmont United Hospital, 1950 Mountain View Ave.

Longs Peak United Methodist Church, 1421 Elmhurst Drive

Main Street School, 820 Main St.

St. Vrain Valley Credit Union, 777 21st Ave.

St. Vrain Valley Credit Union, 1444 E. 3rd Ave.

Longmont.

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Times-Call, 350 Terry St.

Wal-Mart, 2514 Main St.

Wal-Mart, 800 S. Hover St.

Lyons: Bank of the West, 303 Main St.

Valley Bank and Trust, 304 Second Ave.

Mead: Colorado East Bank and Trust, 141 Main St.

Niwot: Rocky Mountain Christian Church, 9447 Niwot Road

For more information: Visit www.CrayonstoCalculators.org or call 303-944-8548.