

News Release

For Immediate Release – July 18, 2016

Contacts: Kym Barber, Event Planning Specialist, (209) 238-1510
Cynthia Fenech, Communications Coordinator, 238-1704
Judy Leitz, Communications Coordinator, 238-1709

Stanislaus County Office of Education Helping Kids in Need with Annual Operation Backpack Drive

The start of a new school year is an exciting time for most children, but for homeless children, this is a time open to emotional and academic challenges. Without even the most basic supplies, these students start at a disadvantage that only gets worse as the school year progresses. SCOE aims to provide local homeless and at-risk youth with new backpacks and school supplies – tools they need to achieve academic success. **Stanislaus County Office of Education’s (SCOE) Operation Backpack Drive** is July 15 - July 28. Backpacks, school supplies or cash donations, can be made at any of the following locations.

- Alfred Mathews-3807 McHenry Ave. Modesto
- Nasco Retail Store, 4825 Stoddard Road, Modesto
- Mocse Credit Union, 1400 “J” Street or 3600 Coffee Road, Modesto
- Stanislaus County Office of Education, 1100 H Street, Modesto

According to Stanislaus County Superintendent of Schools Tom Changnon, “Our office is receiving wonderful support from local businesses such as; Alfred Matthews Buick GMC Cadillac, Mocse Credit Union and Nasco Retail Store.” This year SCOE hopes to serve as many of the 6,500 homeless children living in Stanislaus County as possible. Filled backpacks are distributed to children in schools via school district homeless liaisons.

“Operation Backpack enables us to distribute backpacks to students who wouldn’t have them otherwise,” said Changnon. “We invite the community to support the homeless and low-income children and their families by bringing new backpacks filled with school supplies to one of the four drop-off locations throughout Modesto.” Additional information, including a

full listing of all drop-off locations and the option to give online, is available at

www.stancoe.org/scoe/admin/backpack/index.html

Homeless children face a wide variety of challenges and long-lasting issues that are profoundly detrimental to their development and ability to learn, ultimately affecting their success in life. According to The National Center on Family Homelessness, homeless children are eight times more likely to be asked to repeat a grade; three times as likely to be placed in special education classes; and twice as likely to score lower on standardized tests. Operation Backpack seeks to provide some sense of normalcy and remove one obstacle from homeless students' lives. With a new backpack and new school supplies, students start the school year off right.

###