

WEST COVINA

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1717 W. MERCED AVENUE WEST COVINA, CA 91790 626.939.4600 WCUSD.ORG

PRESS RELEASE

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West Covina Students Receive School Supplies at Annual Back to School Kickoff

WEST COVINA, CA – Nearly 100 West Covina Unified students and families in need will be ready for the 2019-20 school year after receiving new shoes, backpacks, hygiene kits and school supplies during the District's third annual Back to School Kickoff, held July 31 at the WCUSD Family Resource Center.

The Back to School Kickoff was coordinated by the West Covina Unified Foster and Homeless Youth Center, which provides students who face severe hardships with opportunities to thrive on and off campus.

The Kiwanis Club of West Covina supplied a pancake breakfast as WCUSD administrators and board members assisted students in selecting backpacks and shoes, and community agencies including Citrus College and L.A. County Library staffed resource booths.

"This is an exciting day for us; seeing the smiles on the faces of the students when they try on a new pair of shoes brings us joy," WCUSD Foster and Homeless Liaison Ana Gutierrez said. "We are so grateful for the help of our community partners, and are indebted to the Kiwanis Club for all of their support."

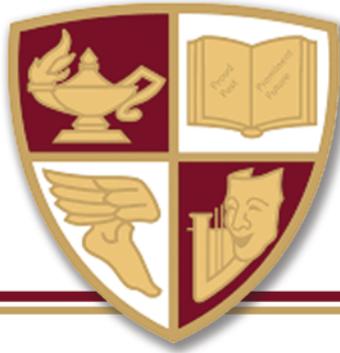
The Kiwanis collected materials for the students during a "Stuff the Bus" fundraiser on July 13 at the Eastland Center Walmart. Volunteers asked customers for donations of basic school supplies, including backpacks, spiral notebooks, glue sticks, rulers, crayons and three-ring binders.

By the end of the day, the Kiwanis had collected 78 large boxes of supplies, more than enough to fill a West Covina Unified school bus.

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"The Kiwanis mission is to support the community. It's all about the kids," Kiwanis member Ken Manning said. "We have a tremendous relationship with West Covina Unified and are ready to help in any way we can."

West Covina resident Britni Reed took advantage of the Back to School Kickoff to acquire new shoes and backpacks for her four sons, who attend Hollencrest Middle and Vine Elementary schools.

"This helps us out a lot, as it frees up money for other school expenses, like uniforms," Reed said. "The boys are really excited over what they are getting. It's like an early Christmas."

The Foster and Homeless Youth Center opened in 2016, supporting students with summer enrichment programs, college campus tours, after school tutoring programs, access to a computer lab, clothing and hygiene giveaways and referrals to community resources.

"The Back to School Kickoff ensures that every West Covina Unified student will be well-prepared for their first day, which sets the tone for the whole year," WCUSD Superintendent Dr. Charles D. Hinman said. "The Youth Center is a valuable resource for the community, working hard on behalf of students-in-need and coordinating with our District partners. Thank you to Ana Gutierrez and her staff for organizing this wonderful event."

PHOTOS

WCUSD_BTS_KICKOFF1: West Covina Unified students receive new shoes and school supplies during the District's third annual Back to School Kickoff on July 31.

WCUSD_BTS_KICKOFF2: West Covina Unified families explore booths and gather resources from local organizations, including Citrus College, during the Back to School Kickoff.

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