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## school district hosting school supply drive

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**DELAVAN** — Cram the van!

Stuff the bus!

School supplies are a must!

It's not a great rhyme, but it is a good cause.

Several businesses in the Delavan-Darien School District have formed a cheering squad for local schoolchildren and their families. Because business people aren't inclined to jump up and down with pom poms, they're supporting students in a more practical way: with school supplies.

At the Delevan branch of the Blackhawk Community Credit Union, organizers hope the public will help them "cram a van" with school supplies. Just down the road, staff at Fashion Bug hopes to stuff a school bus.

The school district's response?

Two, four, six, eight, they think their community is really great!

About 60 percent of students at the district's five schools are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunches, said Mike Heine, district coordinator of school-community relations.

Those families in particular will struggle with the burden of buying school supplies.

Sometimes, teachers hesitate to add everything needed to the school supply lists for fear of overburdening parents, said Donna Sorensen, principal of Wileman Elementary, Delavan.

"We spend a significant amount of time making sure those lists are reasonable," Sorensen said.

It's not always the expensive items that are the financial sticking points—no pun intended.

Glue sticks, for example, are a hot commodity.

Elementary school teachers would love to have each child start school with a dozen or so glue sticks. For art projects, glue sticks beat glue in a bottle, hands down.

“There’s not a lot of glue in each of those sticks, and kids press hard,” Sorenson said. “They’re not expensive, but we don’t want to start out the year asking parents for 18 glue sticks—not with everything else on the list.”

Sorensen is grateful to the local businesses for their efforts. They help get kids, teachers and parents off to a well-equipped and happier start.

“We always appreciate their support,” Sorensen said.

As for the businesses, they see it as a way to support the community that’s supported them.

This is the fourth year the Blackhawk Community Credit Union’s Delavan branch has run a school supply drive.

Parents with kids in the district brought it to the credit union’s attention.

“We’re hoping to beat last year’s record of 2,300 items,” said Donna Wagner, marketing director for the credit union.

Along with school supplies, the credit union will accept cash to pay for items students need most, Wagner said.

Blackhawk has joined forces with Kunes Country Ford Lincoln-Mercury auto group to “cram a van” with supplies.

Just up the street, the staff at Fashion Bug, 2129 East Geneva St., hopes to fill bus from Dousman Transport with school supplies.

On Fridays and Saturdays in August, Fashion Bug staff will be in front of local businesses such as Staples and Wal-Mart, offering coupons for \$10 off a \$40 purchase in exchange for a school supply donation. They’ll also be accepting donations at the store.

“It’s been going really well so far,” said Lucy Cruz, Fashion Bug assistant manager.

Donations are being accepted at the Fashion Bug store throughout the week.