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Pattonville schools support Hurricane survivors

The students, staff and families in the Pattonville School District are joining together to provide support and assistance to survivors of the devastating hurricane that struck the Gulf coast region two weeks ago.

“If you look at what our school family is doing, you get an idea of the scope and depth of caring that exists,” said Superintendent Hugh Kinney. “I’m extremely proud of how our Pattonville school family has indeed ‘circled the wagons’ to help our newest family members.”

Pattonville is selling Mardi Gras-colored rubber bracelets that read, “Pattonville Cares,” as a fund-raiser for the American Red Cross Hurricane Disaster Relief Fund. All schools in the district, along with the Pattonville Learning Center, are selling the bracelets for \$2 a piece.

Here’s a look at some of the other ways Pattonville is joining in to help with relief efforts:

- PattCare, a Pattonville foundation that supports Pattonville staff and families in crisis, is providing gift cards for groceries and other necessities to families from the affected area as they enroll students in the district. The Pattonville Education Foundation has donated \$500 to PattCare to support its efforts.
- To date, students and staff at Pattonville High School and the high school’s Positive School have donated more than \$3,900 for hurricane relief. Part of the funds will be donated to the American Red Cross, while the remaining funds are being given to assist new families to Pattonville High School from the affected Gulf Coast region. In addition, various departments within Pattonville High school are sponsoring particular families to assist them with resources. All displaced students at the high school are receiving a "Welcome Basket" containing basic supplies and resources. The school has compiled a notebook of resources for new families who have enrolled, with information ranging from job openings to housing possibilities. Student mentors are being assigned to help assimilate students in the high school. Members of the Drill Team, Color Guard and Junior Varsity Cheerleaders are also collecting canned goods and hygiene items. The Student Council Store is selling Katrina ribbons for \$1 each to benefit survivors.
- At Holman Middle School, students and staff collected monetary donations as well as supplies and clothing for survivors. Students collected funds throughout the week, held a hat day and finished their collections by hosting a competition between lunch tables one day. The school collected more than \$2,500 for the American Red Cross. Holman is continuing its efforts, however, by donating their original artwork for a silent auction to raise funds for hurricane survivors who were displaced and now currently living in Pattonville. The auction can be viewed online at ho.psd3.org/Katrina/. Bids may be e-mailed to mrichter@psdr3.org.
- At Pattonville Heights Middle School, family and consumer science students made baby quilts for families with small children, and the entire school is assembling health kits for relocated families. Renaissance students are organizing a spirit week, with students and staff donating money to participate in the different theme days.

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- Pattonville Learning Center staff participated in a Jeans Day to collect money for PattCare that would help support relocated families.
- A parent at Parkwood Elementary School coordinated a clothing drive and delivered two van loads of clothes to the Salvation Army.
- Drummond Elementary is hosting a pocket change drive. For every 25 pounds collected, a staff member will dress up as his or her favorite hero on Oct. 18. When the school's collection is up to 800 pounds, the school's principal and assistant principal will dress as their favorite hero. That evening, the school will host a "New Orleans" night, which will include Cajun food, selling Mardi Gras beads, live music and a dog parade. Some of the school's Indonesian families are helping with the program as a way of thanking their adopted country for its help when the tsunami struck southeast Asia last December. Profits will benefit the American Red Cross.
- Bridgeway Elementary's K-Kids Group collected more than \$1,500 from staff and fellow classmates to donate to Kiwanis International to help support relief efforts for children in the affected regions. In addition, the school's Recycling Crew student group is holding a paper drive and will donate all proceeds from these recycling efforts to the American Red Cross.
- Rose Acres Elementary students are now purchasing chances to be "Principal for a Day" (on Sept. 30) by making a \$1 donation that will go to the Salvation Army. The school's student leadership group, "Students Working As A Team" or SWAT, is organizing a collection drive of specific items to help with hurricane relief. SWAT is also hosting a family night at Cancun Mexican Restaurant at Northwest Plaza on Oct. 7. The owner will donate half of all sales that evening to SWAT, which will use the money to help a school impacted by the hurricane.
- At Remington Traditional School, first-graders participated in a project called "Message in a Bottle." Students decorated plastic bottles and wrote messages on them about helping hurricane survivors and then filled their bottles with monetary donations. The students raised \$600 for the American Red Cross.
- Pattonville's Human Resources Department is providing an updated list of job openings in Pattonville for relocated families who may be seeking employment.
- Pattonville's Special Services Department is streamlining the registration process for families, providing backpacks and school supplies for students and connecting families to Pattonville social workers to assist in finding resources and housing. The department is also coordinating services through the federal homeless act, which enables students to receive free lunch, Title I services and transportation to our schools for enrollment if needed.
- Counselors provided information to administrators on helping students relocate and supporting their mental health needs. Guidance personnel at the schools also are working with families to assess their specific needs. Counseling is also being scheduled to support students/families during this transition.

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