



Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Superintendent of Schools  
5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534-1658  
707.399.4400 ★ [www.solanocoe.net](http://www.solanocoe.net)

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## **NEWS RELEASE - For immediate release**

Date: 8-26-2019  
Phone: (707) 399-4812

Contact: Kimberly Govi, Program Manager & Educational Liaison  
Email: [KGovi@solanocoe.net](mailto:KGovi@solanocoe.net)

### **Solano's Homeless Youth Get New Backpacks to Start the School Year**

#### ***SCOE Distributes 700 New Backpacks for Students in Need***

**Fairfield, CA-** Solano County Office of Education's (SCOE) countywide Stuff the Bus campaign, held late this summer, proved to be another successful venture benefiting Solano County's foster and homeless youth. Thanks to the outpouring of local community members, SCOE was able to collect over 295 new backpacks during the campaign. As a result of Stuff the Bus and previously received donations, SCOE distributed over 700 backpacks this month to Solano school districts and group homes, earmarked for foster, homeless, and students in need across Solano County.

*Stuff the Bus* is an annual drive held throughout the nation as a means to better prepare our homeless and foster care population with a positive return to school. In Solano County there are over 1,400 identified homeless youth and approximately 300 foster youth.

Solano County Superintendent of Schools Lisette Estrella-Henderson commented, "The first day of school can be challenging for some students. Having brand new school supplies and a fashionable new backpack can help foster and homeless youth feel supported and prepared to learn. We are so grateful for the outpouring of support that the Solano community shows our students in need year after year. Their generosity really does make a positive difference."

SCOE's Student and Program Support department partnered with many local organizations and volunteers, for this year's campaign, to collect backpacks, school supplies, monetary donations, and gift cards to be passed along to students. Community partners also stuffed backpacks with supplies to ensure they were ready for the youth on or before the first day of school. Stuff the Bus partners included: Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Sutter Health Valley Area, Valero Benicia Refinery, Wednesday Club of Suisun, Child Welfare Service, and many Solano County residents.

For information about participating in next year's campaign, please contact the Solano County Office of Education's Foster and Homeless Youth Services Liaison at (707) 399-4812.

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Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) provides leadership, support, and fiscal oversight for Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield-Suisun, Travis, Vacaville, and Vallejo school districts which serve approximately 64,000 students. Solano County Superintendent of Schools, Lisette Estrella-Henderson is elected by voters of Solano County. The Superintendent is a state constitutional officer who serves as the chief executive officer of SCOE and as a liaison between local school districts and the state.