



Back to School Supplies Drive 2021: Backpacks and Gift Cards Information

Last year the COVID-19 pandemic and switch to virtual classrooms changed the way we collected and distributed school supplies. We asked for gift cards for students instead of backpacks and supplies and are grateful for the amazing generosity of Howard County residents, groups, businesses and faith congregations in responding to this change.

We received feedback from many parents and students who greatly appreciated the flexibility that gift cards provided - they were able to purchase exactly what they needed. Many families also appreciate receiving backpacks that are filled with essential supplies so this year we are taking a hybrid approach to best serve local families in need. Following is more information and thank you for helping prepare Howard County students for success this year!

Backpacks (new items only)

Pack a backpack with supplies for elementary, middle or high school students. Specifically we are looking for:

- 25-30 backpacks with the following:
 - Pencils
 - Pens
 - Notebooks
 - Folders
 - One 1” Binder
 - Loose leaf paper
 - Crayons
 - Highlighters
 - Ruler
 - Calculator
- **Neutral colors and packs without characters on them** are helpful for providing supplies to diverse ages and genders
- Visit the HCPSS School Supply Lists website for suggestions on quantities for schools and grade levels at <https://www.hcpss.org/schools/school-supply-lists/>

Gift Cards

- We recommend gift cards in amounts of \$20, \$25 or \$50 from Staples, Walmart and Target.

Note: Due to storage limitations we are asking for backpacks and gift cards only. If you would like to donate individual items such as notebooks, loose leaf paper, folders, crayons, pencils & pens, glue, rulers, etc. we suggest contributing directly to a school in your area. Thanks for your understanding!

For questions please contact Monteith Mitchell, Volunteer Coordinator, at mont@grassrootscrisis.org or (410) 531-6006.