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City of Charleston
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OFFICE OF
COMMUNICATIONS

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Annual First Day Festival School Supply Drive Begins in Charleston

Charleston, S.C.— The city of Charleston is kicking off its annual school supply drive in preparation for the upcoming First Day Festival. Donations will be accepted through 5 p.m., Thursday, August 10, 2023, and pre-packed bags of school supplies will be distributed to students at the festival, which is set to take place on Sunday, August 13, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Gaillard Center and SC Aquarium.

How to donate: School supplies can be dropped off at the following locations:

- **Downtown:**
 - Arthur Christopher Community Center, 265 Fishburne Street
 - Charleston Gaillard Center, 75 Calhoun Street, Suite 3700
 - City of Charleston Parks and Recreation offices, 823 Meeting Street
- **West Ashley/James Island:**
 - James Island Recreation Center, 1088 Quail Drive
 - Bees Landing Recreation Center, 1580 Ashley Gardens Boulevard
- **Daniel Island/Charleston:**
 - Daniel Island Recreation Center, 160 Fairbanks Drive
- **Online:**
 - Online donations can be sent directly to the City of Charleston- Mayor's Office for Children, Youth and Families at 75 Calhoun Street, Suite 3700, Charleston, SC 29401.

The most requested supplies include pencils, crayons, markers, colored pencils, composition notebooks, loose-leaf paper, spiral notebooks, glue sticks, two-pocket folders and pencil pouches.

About the First Day Festival: The First Day Festival, sponsored by the city of Charleston since 2003, is a celebration of education and the start of a new school year that welcomes students, families, educators and community providers to share information about available resources and support services.

In addition to the school supply distribution at the Gaillard Center, the festival will feature various exhibits showcasing student support services and community resources, entertainment and activities in the city Recreation Department's Kids Zone, boat rides, free admission to the South Carolina Aquarium (limited capacity) and a food distribution in partnership with the Lowcountry Food Bank.

This event is made possible through partnerships with the Charleston County School District, SC Aquarium and Lowcountry Food Bank; financial sponsors TD Bank, United Bank, Nucor Steele, the InterTech Group, Hanysworth, Sinkler, Boyd, and Burr & Forman; and the generous contributions of exhibitors, volunteers and donors.

What they're saying: Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg said, "The First Day Festival makes the remarkable impact it does because of the unwavering support of our Charleston community. Each year, through contributions of supplies, participation from local organizations and more, the festival brings an unparalleled celebration of education that gets local students ready for a strong start to the new school year. We look forward to welcoming students and their families for our 20th annual event next month."

Learn more: For more information on how to support and participate in the festival, please visit: <https://sites.google.com/view/firstdayfestival/home>.

For questions regarding the festival, please contact Mindy Sturm at 843-965-4190 or sturmm@charleston-sc.gov.

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