

Local school makes sure students stay warm this winter

Fresno,
Calif.

As temperatures dip, a local school is making sure students are bundled up as they head to class.

Schools already provide free and reduced meals for low-income students, making sure they don't start the school day hungry.

In the Central Unified School District, officials are also making sure its students don't come to school cold.

In the classroom teachers need students full attention to teach. If those students can't focus because they didn't eat breakfast or have other concerns, the learning doesn't happen.

School principal Karen Davis says, "So when they are fed and they are warm and they get a good night's sleep every night that's how they learn."

In the Central Unified School District, officials know many of their students don't get a good night's sleep, they come to school hungry and cold.

Devon Kizirian of Foundation Central Unified says, "I work at the district, I see those kiddos walking into the school with a short sleeve shirt on, like this morning it was freezing."

A new warm coat, that is one thing Central Unified knew it would provide to students in need. The districts foundation, an independent non-profit fundraising organization sought out the funding.

Foundation President Joe Doyland says, "Because it was going to be a substantial dollar amount to get every kid in the district that needed a coat a coat and we were able to do that with our partnership with Granville "homes and our home of hope it totally fills that purpose.

Foundation members not only helped with the funding, they took time to sort through all those coats, separating them by age group and size. Kids from 5 to 17 would receive this warm gift.

Central Unified Superintendent Mark Sutton says, "I don't think it is about us, even though it makes people feel good doing things like this. It's really about our kids and making sure they have what they need because not everybody is as fortunate as some others."

Students from Tilley Elementary were the first to receive their new coats. 9-year-old Juan Aquilar knew which one he wanted, "I like how they did the designs and the colors of it and it's cozy inside and it keeps me warm."

Darius Assemi of Granville Homes says, "Some of these kids haven't had a jacket all of their life and it's a privilege and an honor to be a part of this program."

The generosity did not go unnoticed by the students. 11-year-old Angelique Avina spoke for many of them, "I Think its very, very nice and generous and I think if we do this a lot more there won't be as many kids this winter coming to school cold."

