

From Jumpathons to Gash, Schools Export Aid to Katrina Victims

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After school today, second-grade teacher Jonathan Garber will slide into a 16-foot U-Haul truck parked outside his school in Brooklyn Heights and drive hundreds of miles to deliver hula-hoops, bicycles, and bags of neatly folded clothing to children displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Over the past several weeks, students and parents at P.S. 8 have been collecting clothes and toys to contribute to the effort. The collection now fills a quarter of the school's auditorium. Parents even raised gas money and bought Mr. Garber's plane ticket for the return home.

"We're a pretty affluent school in a pretty affluent neighborhood, and I thought it was good way to teach children about compassion and get the school to be a little bit more aggressive about community service," Mr. Garber said yesterday. He plans to deliver goods to St. Louis and Columbia, Mo.,

now home to many displaced families from New Orleans.

Other schools have also been looking for ways to help. Claremont Preparatory, a new private school in Lower Manhattan, is offering 10 one-year full-tuition scholarships for displaced children relocating to the New York area. This is no small contribution, considering tuition normally costs \$25,500.

"It's an opportunity to make a big move somewhat smaller," the head of the school, Shari Silverstein, said.

The school's students also held what they called the first Wall Street bake sale and raised \$800 hawking brownies and cookies to workers whisking by.

At Health Opportunities High School in the Bronx, students are selling candy bars and teachers are donating the \$30 they receive for covering absent teachers' classes to the disaster relief efforts.

At the elite all-girls Brearley School on the Upper East Side, the entire student body jumped into action after an alumna working for the Red Cross

called with an urgent plea for toys for families arriving from New Orleans. The call came on a Friday, and by the following Tuesday, Red Cross volunteers were hauling away a lobby full of games, stuffed animals, and books. Students at John Adams High School in Ozone Park, Queens, are selling blue bracelets that say "Katrina," similar to the yellow ones sold to raise money for cancer.

In Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, one school is taking a slightly different approach. A retired police officer named David Walker, who is credited with reviving double Dutch in 1974 by turning the jump-rope game into a competitive sport, is heading to P.S. 254 at the end of the month to oversee the school's first jumpathon.

Students will choose between regular jump rope and double Dutch, and every leap will raise money for the relief efforts. A bookathon is also under way at the school, with students reading to their families for money. The collection will be sent off to the Red Cross by December 1.