



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## New York City School Information for Parents from the Department of Education

DIANE J. SAVINO November 7, 2012

### Hurricane Sandy FAQ for Families

#### 1. General Questions

Q: When are schools reopening? A: The majority of schools reopened to students on Monday, November 5. However, some schools that were being used as shelters or that did not yet have electricity as of Monday are being reopened on Wednesday, November 7. In addition, a number of our schools sustained severe damage and will be unable to open for some time. Students from these schools will be directed to new school buildings beginning as soon as possible this week. You can check the status of your school and find information on temporary relocation for damaged schools and the buildings that will host them on the DOE website.

Q: What if I had to leave home because of the hurricane and my child's school is not located near our temporary residence?

A: Families forced by Hurricane Sandy to live away from home temporarily can send students to schools near their current temporary residence. They will not need to provide any documents to enroll.

Elementary and middle school students can temporarily enroll at the school that is zoned for their new temporary residence. To find the zoned school for a specific address, visit [schools.nyc.gov](http://schools.nyc.gov) or call 311. If there is no zoned school for that address, you should visit an enrollment office in the borough where you are currently residing. To find the enrollment office nearest you, visit [schools.nyc.gov](http://schools.nyc.gov) or call 311. High school students should visit an enrollment office if they would like to temporarily enroll at a school closer to where they are temporarily living.

Q: If my child enrolls in a school near my temporary residence, will my child retain a right to a seat at his or her regular school when we return to our permanent home?

A: Yes, students have the right to return to their home school.

Q: What school-related events have been cancelled or postponed due to the hurricane? A: Please visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Home/InOurSchoolsToday/2012-2013/cancellations#events> for an up-to-date list of cancellations and rescheduled activities.

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Q: Will school lunch be provided for students who have relocated because of the hurricane?

A: Yes, school lunch service is up and running and will be provided free of charge for all students, including those attending school in new locations, throughout the month of November. In addition, all of our school buildings serve breakfast at no charge every day; in most instances breakfast is served before the start of the school day in the cafeteria. If you have specific questions about breakfast service, please contact the school your child is attending.

Q: Why were temporary co-location sites chosen?

A: After assessing the needs of schools housed in buildings that suffered severe damage as a result of the storm, temporary co-location sites were identified based on the ability of the building to accommodate additional students, the location of the school, grade ranges, and other capacity and logistical factors.

Q: How long will relocated schools be at the temporary co-location sites?

A: We will return relocated schools to their home sites as soon as possible. However, buildings that suffered severe damage will be reopened to students and staff only after damage is repaired and the buildings are deemed fit for school to resume. Unfortunately, it is not possible to commit to a single timeline for all relocated schools, but we will keep students, families, and school staff updated.

## 2. School Transportation

Q: What transportation options are available for students whose schools have been relocated?

A: Several transportation options are available for students whose schools have been relocated. You can find your relocation site on the DOE website. If you have transportation concerns not addressed here, please contact the Office of Pupil Transportation hotline: 718-392-8855.

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Elementary and middle school students

Busing Confirmed

-Buses will pick students up from the closed school building at 7:00 a.m. and transport them to the new location. Buses will transport students back to the closed school building at the end of the school day. (Note: students at Q282-Knowledge and Power Prep Academy VI will have a bus pick up at 10:00 a.m.).

-Families who choose to drop off or pick up their child from the temporary location are also eligible for reimbursement. See the DOE's website for reimbursement information.

### Busing Not Yet Confirmed

The DOE will provide transportation support to families where busing is not yet available through the following two options:

-Families/students should travel to their school relocation site, where they will receive MetroCards.

-Families who drop off or pick up their child from the temporary location are also eligible for reimbursement. See the DOE's website for reimbursement information. High school students

### Busing Confirmed

-Buses will pick students up from the closed school building at 10:00 a.m. and transport them to the new location. Buses will transport students back to the closed school building at the end of the school day.

- Students with MetroCards from their school should continue using those cards to travel to their relocation site.

-Students without MetroCards should travel to their school relocation site, where they will receive MetroCards.

#### Busing Not Yet Confirmed

-Students with MetroCards from their school should continue using those cards to travel to their relocation site.

-Students without MetroCards should travel to their school relocation site, where they will receive MetroCards. Students with IEP-mandated transportation

Transportation will continue to be provided to all students with IEP-mandated transportation. These students will be picked up at their homes and taken to their temporary location. If these students have a sibling attending the same temporary location, and there is room on the bus, the sibling may ride the same bus.

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Q: My child has an IEP that requires specialized transportation services and is attending school at his or her regular building. What are the effects of Hurricane Sandy on these services?

A: While specialized transportation will be provided, parents should consider what is best for their child given the impact of Hurricane Sandy on transportation and staffing. Please make a determination as to whether busing is appropriate for your child under these circumstances: Traffic jams and long rides are likely There may be limited availability of mandated support staff such as paraprofessionals, attendants, and nurses Direct communications with buses will be limited It is possible that mandated medical equipment will be unavailable on some routes There may be extended call-hold times for the Office of

Pupil Transportation hotline (718-392-8855) In cases where streets are impassable, pickup locations may be changed

If you have transportation concerns, please contact the Office of Pupil Transportation hotline: 718-392-8855.

Q: Our family is living away from our home because of the hurricane, and my child is attending a nearby school. Is a school bus available to take my child to his or her temporary school? A: We are working to coordinate service to students' relocated addresses as quickly as possible. Please call the Office of Pupil Transportation hotline at (718) 392-8855 and provide us with your contact information, including email address and phone number if available. We will contact you once transportation has been arranged for your new address.

Q: Will field trips and after-school programs be cancelled?

A: Due to lingering effects from Hurricane Sandy, DOE transportation to after-school programs and field trips has been temporarily suspended. The Office of Pupil Transportation is working to ensure we can resume service to after-school locations as quickly as possible. Please contact your child's school with specific questions.

Q: What is the impact of the gas shortage on school bus routes and schedules?

A: There are no anticipated service disruptions to bus routes due to fuel shortages. We anticipate running bus routes close to normal, with delays expected from the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. We are working with our vendors and suppliers to ensure bus service resumes to normal levels as quickly as possible.

Q: Are subways running in neighborhoods with re-sited schools?

A: As of Monday, November 5, the majority of the subway system is up and running. MTA NYC Transit is continuing its efforts to dry out flooded tubes, track, signals, and other components damaged in the storm. While service is somewhat limited, many New Yorkers are relying on the subway and bus

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system for commuting and managing the system's current limitations. Visit <http://www.mta.info/> for details so that you may plan your trip accordingly. 3. School Calendar and Attendance

Q: How will my child's attendance be recorded for October 29 through November 2 when all schools were closed because of Hurricane Sandy?

A: Attendance will not be recorded for the week that school was closed due to Hurricane Sandy.

Q: How will student latenesses and absences be recorded in the weeks following Hurricane Sandy? What if my child has trouble getting to school?

A: Absences due to school closures and Latenesses or absences due to transportation-related issues resulting from Hurricane Sandy will be recorded as excused. Please communicate with your child's school to make the school staff aware of any challenges your child has arriving at school due to Hurricane Sandy.

Q: What are the expectations for student attendance in the weeks following Hurricane Sandy?

A: It is important for students whose schools have reopened either at their original location or at a new location to attend school regularly and arrive on time to the extent possible,

though we recognize the challenges many families are facing as they recover from the storm.

Q: What is the impact of Hurricane Sandy on the school year calendar? Will my child need to attend school for additional days later in the school year? A: All schools will need to make up school days missed as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Each year, the New York City school year calendar is designed to meet the New York State Education Department's requirement of a minimum number of school days. We are currently reviewing options to ensure this requirement is met and that students have the opportunity to make up missed instruction, while minimizing disruption to the school calendar. We will share more information as soon as possible.

#### 4. Academics

Q: How will my child make up the instruction and assignments missed during the days school was closed?

A: Schools are working to ensure a smooth transition for all students in the weeks following Hurricane Sandy. In the coming weeks and months, schools will be sure to incorporate lessons and assignments missed because of the storm. Your child's school will provide specific information about their plans to make up missed classes and assignments. Please contact your child's school with any questions.

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Q: Will the missed school days impact my child's grades?

A: Some schools typically include attendance and/or homework assignments as part of students' grades. These schools will not penalize students for any days missed due to Hurricane Sandy. To support students in making up missed assignments, many schools will



offer opportunities for makeup work. Please contact your child's school with any questions.

Q: What is the impact of Hurricane Sandy on high school students planning to graduate in January 2013?

A: Students planning to graduate in January will still have the opportunity to do so. Schools are working to ensure that students planning to graduate maintain consistent academic programs and have the opportunity to complete needed courses and exams. Families can also support students in staying on track to graduate by checking in on student progress in courses and exams. Families can view information about graduation requirements here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/GraduationRequirements>.

Q: Which exams were cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy, and when can students next take these exams?

A: The Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) has been rescheduled as follows: The SHSAT administration scheduled for Sunday, October 28, has been rescheduled to Sunday, November 18. The SHSAT administration scheduled for Saturday, November 3, has been rescheduled to Saturday, November 17.

Accommodations will be made for students with conflicts.

The SAT administrations for New York City public schools scheduled for November 3 and 4 have been rescheduled for Saturday, November 17, and Sunday, November 18, respectively. Students can also go to the College Board website (<http://sat.collegeboard.org>) and change their test date to a regularly-scheduled December administration date.

Q: I was planning to submit a Request for Testing (RFT) for the Gifted and Talented test (for my child in pre-kindergarten through grade 2), but I could not submit the form last week due

to Hurricane Sandy. Can I still submit a form?

A: Yes. The deadline to submit RFT forms has been extended to Friday, November 16, due to the impact of Hurricane Sandy. There are two ways families can submit RFT forms: Online: visit the Gifted & Talented website: [www.nyc.gov/schools/gt](http://www.nyc.gov/schools/gt). In person: visit a Borough Enrollment Office or submit the form to your child's school (remember to get a receipt).

Borough Enrollment Office locations can be found here:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/NewStudents/BEO/BoroughEnrollmentOffices>.

Please note that some schools and/or Borough Enrollment Offices may not be operational due to the impact of the storm. We encourage you to locate the nearest open Borough Enrollment Office to submit your child's RFT.