

## **Procedures for School Closings in the Case of Emergency Conditions**

September 2014

The New York City Department of Education will continue to make every effort to keep schools open on days of inclement weather. Parents should use their own discretion as to whether they will permit their children to travel to school on days with Citywide emergency conditions or on major storm days when schools remain open, recognizing that travel time will necessarily be longer and that there may be delays traveling to and from school. A Citywide policy on procedures for school closings is necessary in the case of Citywide emergency conditions or major storm days. These procedures outlined below are intended to serve as a guide to students, parents and staff. The reissuance of this memorandum reaffirms the authority of the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor of Operations to announce the Citywide closing of schools, and outlines the requirements and expectations that pertain to the dissemination of information, the impact on pupil transportation, and the responsibilities of central offices. All schools must adhere to the Citywide announcement to close schools. No school may open late, dismiss students early, or close for the day without the authorization from the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations.

### **Citywide Announcement to Close Schools**

The Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations will announce the Citywide decision to close schools (including the cancellation of after-school activities) on days of inclement weather or other Citywide emergency conditions after consultation with the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, the Weather Bureau, the City Sanitation Department, the City Transit Authority and other appropriate agencies. The Citywide decision will be made as early as possible prior to 5:00 a.m. on the affected day.

The Department of Education's (DOE's) Office of Communications and Media Relations will notify the Associated Press news wire service and radio and television stations as soon as possible prior to 5:00 a.m. All relevant information will also be posted on the DOE website (<http://schools.nyc.gov>), in addition to DOE social media outlets <https://twitter.com/nycschools> and <https://facebook.com/NYCschools>. School staff and parents are advised to check the DOE website listen to information broadcasts by local radio and television stations, or call 311.

In all instances when the announcement by the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations is made to close schools, the Office of Pupil Transportation will advise the bus companies of any related activity cancellation. While the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations does not have authority to close nonpublic schools, nonpublic school transportation provided by the City adheres to the decision made by the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations.

In all instances of an authorized Citywide closing, the following will be cancelled and staff whose after-school services are funded by the public school system will not be made available for after-school activities, unless the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations makes an announcement to the contrary: all field trips, all after-school programs (including Community-Based Organization after-school programs on public school sites and after-school program transportation, including transportation to after-school programs at Community-Based Organization sites), all Public School Athletic League (PSAL) and Small School Athletic League (SSAL) programs, all Adult and Continuing Education classes, all Young Adult Borough Centers, and all evening High-School Equivalency (HSE) programs.

**Central Offices:** Unless the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations instructs otherwise (which may be the case during severe emergencies), all central offices, and the offices of District 75 and 79 must remain open for regular hours on days when schools are authorized to close due to Citywide emergency conditions or major storm days, as staff must be in a position to provide essential information to parents and others.

### **Cancellation of Afterschool Activities**

In the event of Citywide inclement weather conditions, or if a storm worsens during a regularly scheduled school day, the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor of Operations may decide to cancel all afterschool activities, PSAL, and SSAL.

### **Questions**

Parents and staff should direct all questions regarding implementation of these procedures to their principal. Principals can contact their Superintendent for additional support.