



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

September 28, 2017

Dear Families,

We are deeply saddened and concerned about the widespread devastation in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and other Caribbean islands in the wake of Hurricanes Maria and Irma. Our hearts go out to those who have lost so much. As many New Yorkers prepare to welcome displaced relatives and friends into their homes, we stand ready to welcome their children into our schools.

We want to be clear that New York City's public schools are open to students in need, whether they arrive with or without documentation needed to register, such as a birth certificate that may have been lost in floods and chaos.

As school communities, we come together in the face of tragedy. Our focus remains on keeping students in school where they can learn. Being in the classroom keeps children safe and offers them stability during uncertain times. In addition, going to school every day connects students to a caring, nurturing community.

The Department of Education (DOE) is ready to assist in enrolling school-age children in the City's public schools, from pre-kindergarten through high school. For more information, families can call 311, go to [schools.nyc.gov/NewStudents](http://schools.nyc.gov/NewStudents), or visit a Family Welcome Center. Family Welcome Centers are open in all five boroughs from Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. You can find information on our Family Welcome Centers here: [schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/NewStudents/WelcomeCenters](http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/NewStudents/WelcomeCenters). The Early Childhood Outreach team can support families looking for pre-kindergarten and other early childhood options; call (212) 637-8000 for information.

For families who are not directly impacted but who would like to help, 18 firehouse and EMS stations across the City are accepting critically-needed donations daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. To find a list of these items or a drop-off center near you, visit [on.nyc.gov/PuertoRicoRelief](http://on.nyc.gov/PuertoRicoRelief). You can also join the DOE in supporting aid for students and schools in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico hit hard by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. To make a voluntary donation, visit the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City at [www1.nyc.gov/site/fund/donate/donate.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/fund/donate/donate.page).

We expect more families and children from devastated areas in the Caribbean to relocate to New York City in the coming months—and we are ready. The DOE and the entire City will do all in our power to help support students and their families in their hour of need.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Bill de Blasio in black ink.

Bill de Blasio  
Mayor

Handwritten signature of Carmen Fariña in black ink.

Carmen Fariña  
Schools Chancellor