



Archived Information

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



SUPPORTING AMERICANS AFFECTED BY HURRICANE KATRINA

"The children affected by Hurricane Katrina need a sense of structure and normalcy. And they need our support. We must not let this tragedy disrupt their education. We will work to help states and communities welcome these students and get them enrolled into schools as quickly as possible."

--Secretary Margaret Spellings

The U.S. Department of Education: Meeting the Needs of Students and Schools.

- President Bush has directed federal agencies to do everything in their power to save lives and assist Americans affected by Hurricane Katrina.
- The U.S. Department of Education is working with states and communities as they welcome the children displaced by Hurricane Katrina and get them enrolled into schools as quickly as possible. In the wake of this tragedy, it is important that we keep our commitment to provide every child with a quality education.
- The Department's Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education, Henry Johnson, formerly Mississippi's state superintendent of education, and other Department officials are working in the Gulf Coast region with State and local education officials to determine the full range of student-related and school-related needs.
- The Department of Education launched Hurricane Help for Schools (www.ed.gov/katrina) to serve as a nationwide clearinghouse resource for schools to post their needs and for Americans to help displaced students. More and more matches are made every day between schools needing help and companies, organizations, schools and individuals willing to help across the U.S.
- The Department continues to follow up and coordinate with the more than 50 national education organizations that attended a meeting with Secretary Spellings to determine other ways to coordinate and deploy resources.
- Department employees have joined the effort and are participating in Project Backpack collecting supplies to send to children in affected areas.

Marshalling Federal Education Resources to Assist Americans Affected by the Hurricane.

- The Department is working closely with Congress to marshal federal education resources to best meet the needs of children, families and schools affected by this tragedy.
- The Department provided guidance to colleges and universities to enable them to admit students from impacted institutions in a way that ensures these students continue to receive federal student aid.
- Student loan borrowers living in affected areas will be automatically granted a forbearance of payments for at least three months, and deadlines for a number of the Department's higher education programs have been extended until at least December 1, 2005.
- On a case-specific basis, Secretary Spellings and the Department will be considering accommodations to provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act* for affected states.

Good Neighbors: Americans Reaching Out to Help.

Communities across the United States are reaching out to those affected by Hurricane Katrina, including:

- In a nationwide effort, numerous states have opened their doors and waived residency requirements for displaced K-12 students.
- Many universities and colleges across the country have agreed to accept students enrolled in Gulf Coast-area universities and to reduce tuition and fees for the fall semester.

For more information, visit www.ed.gov/katrina or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.