



Olga Hugelmeyer
Superintendent of Schools

September 4, 2021

Dear Elizabeth Public Schools Learning Community:

The unprecedented damage caused by the remnants of Hurricane Ida has caused devastating hardship and loss for countless residents throughout the State of New Jersey, including many in the Elizabeth community. As a result of the storm, the Elizabeth Board of Education held an emergency meeting on Thursday, September 2 using an online platform technology to discuss and provide an emergency status update pertaining to the operations of the school district.

Please be advised of the following updates that pertain to the start of the 2021-2022 school year:

Delayed Opening of Schools

During the emergency Elizabeth Board of Education meeting, the Board approved a delayed opening of school for the 2021-2022 school year to **Tuesday, September 14**. The delayed opening was approved following discussion of the impact of the storm on members of the Elizabeth community in conjunction with the impact on the district's facilities. Our instructional team members will be reporting back on Monday, September 13.

Governor Visits City of Elizabeth

Governor Phil Murphy visited the City of Elizabeth on Friday, September 3 to tour the damage that took place throughout the greater community. Mayor J. Christian Bollwage joined the governor in visiting areas of the city that were significantly affected. In addition, I briefed Governor Murphy on the status of our schools.

Virtual Instruction for School Nos. 26 and 27

As a result of extensive damage at Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No. 26 on South Elmora Avenue and Dr. Anotnia Pantoja School No. 27 on Morris Avenue, students attending those schools will begin the school year in virtual instruction. Updates will be provided pertaining to the remediation process of these facilities and when students and team members will be able to return to their buildings for in-person instruction. A timeline cannot currently be provided as we are continuing to assess the damage to the infrastructure of these facilities to determine the repairs that will be needed.

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

As a learning community, we are deeply connected to the greater community we represent. We serve the residents of Elizabeth not only as an educational institution that prepares students for college and career success, but also as a valued partner that supports the prosperity of our great city. We celebrate the successes that take place throughout the City of Elizabeth and also mourn the tragedies.

Collectively, we are distraught by the overwhelming impact of Hurricane Ida and mourn the losses of Elizabeth residents who passed away as a result of the storm. We feel great sorrow for our many families and residents that have been significantly impacted, especially those who resided at Oakwood Plaza. You all remain in our thoughts during this very difficult time.

As we have learned during the hardships of the past 18 months, our learning community and our city is strong, resilient, and determined. We will continue to work together and support one another as we attempt to move forward in these most trying circumstances.

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and support and God bless you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Olga Hugelmeyer", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Olga Hugelmeyer