August 31, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: County and City Superintendents of Education

FROM: Joseph B. Morton
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Hurricane Katrina

I know everyone has the victims of Hurricane Katrina in their hearts and prayers. The devastation has been almost too severe to comprehend, and the recovery will likely be ongoing for years.

As we assess the damage in Alabama, we further are thankful for the fact that it could have been much worse. After speaking with Drs. Harold Dodge and Faron Hollinger, Superintendents of Education in Mobile and Baldwin Counties, respectively, again, we realize how fortunate Alabama was in comparison to Mississippi and Louisiana. It appears that Baldwin County will reopen on Thursday, September 1, and Dr. Dodge is close to making a final determination on reopening since his district received much more severe damage than Baldwin. We are still assessing damages from systems further north that border Mississippi.

Many schools in Alabama will be faced with new students enrolling from Mississippi and Louisiana as their parents/guardians seek to find housing close to relatives or friends. In speaking with Dr. Susan Rucker, Assistant State Superintendent in Mississippi, this morning, she informed me that today’s estimate is that 35,000 Mississippi students have no schools to attend – the schools are either too severely damaged to reopen or they are gone as a result of the hurricane. I also spoke with Dr. Cecil Picard, Superintendent of Education in Louisiana, and you may receive students from Louisiana since areas in and around New Orleans could be uninhabitable for weeks, months, or even longer. Additionally, I have spoken with the Assistant Secretary of Education in Washington, D.C., Dr. Henry Johnson, and he has been very understanding and willing to work through solutions to today’s challenges.
I urge each of you to work with your principals and do everything possible to welcome these refugees to your schools should they come to enroll. I am waiving usual and customary requirements for students who transfer into Alabama's public schools from other states, systems within the state, or home schooled/private school students in or from outside Alabama due to circumstances caused by Hurricane Katrina. Many of the people escaped with literally the clothes on their backs and have no humanly way possible to produce birth certificates, immunization records, school records, information for qualifying for the Child Nutrition Program, etc. Additionally, you may be approached by displaced teachers and other school employees seeking employment. Again, we can work out details in the weeks and months ahead. Now is the time to come to the aid of our neighbors.

I know I can count on each of you for your complete cooperation in this time of crisis. To aid and assist you and your staff as questions arise, I have appointed a four-member team from the Department of Education. The members are Craig Pouncey, Assistant State Superintendent, (334) 242-9755, cpouncey@alsde.edu; Perry Taylor, State School Architect, (334) 242-9731, ptaylor@alsde.edu; Perry Fulton, Administrator, Child Nutrition Programs, (334) 242-1988, pfulton@alsde.edu; and Maggie Rivers, Director of Federal Programs, (334) 242-8199, mr@alsde.edu. Please contact any of these people for additional information or as questions arise.

For your information, attached is a memorandum from the United States Department of Agriculture pertaining to children in areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

JBM/AS

Attachment

FY05-1040
BE IT ORDERED, that the Director of Planning, the Division of the Department of Finance, shall draft and provide any necessary assistance that may be required by the Superintendent of Education in formulating the Department of Education's budget for the fiscal year. The report shall address the educational needs of the state, in particular those of the disadvantaged citizens of the state, and local communities, and to provide aid and assistance to the K-12 educational needs of any and all educational institutions that may be authorized by the Governor's regulations. The report shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Department of Finance. The report shall also provide any necessary assistance that may be required by the Superintendent of Education in formulating the Department of Education's budget for the fiscal year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Riley, Governor of the State of Alabama, do hereby

ORDER, that the Department of Planning, the Division of the Department of Finance, shall draft and provide any necessary assistance that may be required by the Superintendent of Education in formulating the Department of Education's budget for the fiscal year.

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Alabama Department of Education have been authorized by the state to provide aid and assistance to the K-12 educational needs of any and all educational institutions that may be authorized by the Governor's regulations.

WHEREAS, many professional educators may be impacted by the recent natural disasters or other events that have affected the state.

WHEREAS, many schools and school districts have suffered from damages and destruction caused by natural disasters.

WHEREAS, the report may be used to inform the Board of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Department of Finance.

WHEREAS, a state of emergency has been declared by the Governor,Kalikin, and

WHEREAS, as a result of the devastation inflicted on the state by Hurricane Katrina, and

BY THE GOVERNOR

PROCLAMATION

STATE OF ALABAMA
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
ATTEST:

Governor
Bob Riley

September 1, 2009
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DATE: August 31, 2005

SUBJECT: Emergency Feeding of School Children in Areas Devastated by Hurricane Katrina

TO: Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions
State Agencies
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

This memorandum is to announce the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) policy for the feeding of school children in areas recently devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The agency will continually monitor the situation and provide updates as appropriate.

- Schools in the disaster area unable to maintain normal accountability systems and which are able to operate will be allowed to serve all meals free to attending children. This waiver is valid through September 30, 2005.

- Meal pattern flexibility is allowable. Schools may be exempt from the milk and other component requirements. In addition, flexibility is allowed as to time of meal service and offer versus serve.

- Households certified for emergency food stamps are automatically eligible for free school meals.

- When there are large numbers of homeless families and children because of property loss or damage, school officials may keep a list to document free meal eligibility, in lieu of individual applications (this is current policy for homeless children).

- In cases where a household from a designated disaster area moves in with another household the displaced individuals may be considered homeless and consequently automatically eligible for free meals. However, the host family would have to provide a revised application (and can include those displaced by the disaster as long as any income provided to the host family is also included on the application) in order to be eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits.

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Regional Directors
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➢ For those areas not immediately affected by the hurricane, but which have individuals displaced by the disaster, if a free and reduced price meal application cannot be obtained from the household, school officials may complete the application on behalf of the child based on the best available knowledge of the household’s economic circumstances;

School officials should review eligibility determinations made under these crisis procedures after 45 days to evaluate the household’s circumstances. If there are any questions concerning this policy, State agencies should contact their Regional office.

STANLEY C. GARNETT
Director
Child Nutrition Division