



Office of Deputy Mayor Jennifer C. Niles
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 307 | Washington, DC 20004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Charter LEA Leaders
FROM: Jennifer Niles; Deputy Mayor for Education
DATE: January 17, 2017
SUBJECT: Snow Emergency Planning SY2016-17

Summary

This memo summarizes the District’s plan for supporting public charter schools in the event of a snow emergency during the 2016-17 school year. In the event of a snow emergency:

- The Mayor requests all public schools remain open whenever DC government is open.
- In addition to calling 311, charter LEAs may contact my office for assistance with any aspect of a snow emergency.
- Please send my team priority roads and sidewalks that we should flag for DPW as vital to your school.
- Please let my team know if you are interested in having your school facility serve as a food center/feeding site for neighboring children and families in an extended snow emergency.

Background

Our goal is to ensure schools are open for students whenever possible. We believe that every day away from school is lost instructional time, and that every day away places a significant number of students at risk of not having adequate food and warmth. DC Government will make every effort to keep DCPS schools open which requires that students and staff can travel safely to and from warm and prepared school buildings, and we open them with the intent of remaining open for the full school day; early dismissals are used only in extreme situations. The Mayor requests that all of the District’s public charter schools remain open whenever DC government is open.

The process to determine whether to keep DC Government and DCPS open or closed is as follows: a call is held at 10pm the night before, or by 3am the morning of, with senior officials. Representatives from the Mayor’s Office, HSEMA, DDOT, DPW, DCPS, DGS, OUC, MPD, FEMS, OSSE DOT, PCSB and the Office of the City Administrator, discuss the weather forecast, federal government status, regional/local roadway status, transit and train information, and the status of utility services, before a decision is made to open or close government and schools. Every effort is made to make a decision about DC Government and DCPS closure by 11pm the night before, so that the decision can be shared on the 11 o’clock news and posted on DCPS’ and DC Government’s websites.





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Resources

To support charter schools' snow emergency response efforts, I would like to provide these resources:

- 1) You can track snow removal efforts at the Department of Public Works' Snow Map: https://www.511portal.com/dc_dpw.
- 2) In the event of a snow emergency, if there are roads or sidewalks near your school that should be plowed by DC government but have not yet been cleared and are essential for students and staff to get to and from your building safely, please contact:
 - a. The Mayor's Citywide Call Center, which can be reached at 311, and
 - b. My team via call or text:
 - i. *Ahnna Smith, Chief of Staff – 202-735-4509*
 - ii. *Shayne Wells, Deputy Chief of Staff – 202-215-8384*
- 3) We are proactively compiling a list of high-priority roads and sidewalks for snow removal to share with DPW. If you would like to participate, please send a list of your priority roads and sidewalks—especially those that may have not been cleared right away in the past—to Shayne Wells at Shayne.wells@dc.gov.
- 4) As a reminder, should charter LEAs have any questions or concerns regarding OSSE DOT services, please contact Kenneth King at Kenneth.King@dc.gov.

Request

During the January 2016 blizzard, DCPS operated food centers in 10 schools to ensure District children and youth had access to nutritious meals for two days. An estimated 502 breakfasts and lunches were served over these two days.

In the event of a snow emergency this year, we could need the participation of public charter schools in this effort to serve District families. If you are interested in discussing this opportunity further, please email Shayne Wells at Shayne.wells@dc.gov.

Please reach out to me or Chief of Staff Ahnna Smith (ahnna.smith@dc.gov) if you have any questions.

