

HURRICANE HARVEY AFTERMATH: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (COMMUNITY)

Q: When will classes resume and employees report to work?

The first day of school for Houston Independent School District students will depend on the level of damage incurred to the campus from Hurricane Harvey. We are coordinating efforts for rolling start dates. [See here for more information.](#)

[This page has a database](#) where the community can search for information on when their student's first day of school will be. The page will be updated as dates are finalized.

HISD's administrative buildings reopened and employees returned to work starting on Sept. 5. School principals and their administrative staffs also returned to work Sept. 5.

At campuses slated to open Sept. 11, teachers will report to work on Friday, Sept. 8, to prepare to receive students. All other teachers will report to Kingdom Builders Center, 6011 W. Orem Drive, Houston, TX, 77085, on Monday, Sept. 11, for crisis and trauma training.

Q: What schools have been damaged by the storm? If my school is damaged, where will my child go when school starts?

HISD has completed an initial assessment of 306 school and office buildings, and some schools have substantial damages that will require students from these campuses to attend classes at nearby vacant or underutilized schools. [See here to learn what schools are affected.](#)

Community meetings will be held for parents to ask questions about the temporary locations, and dates, times and locations of those meetings will be shared with school communities as soon as possible. In addition, HISD Transportation will be working with campuses on establishing new bus routes for relocated students.

Q: Are any HISD schools being used as shelters?

No. Per the request of the City of Houston Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, HISD closed all of its Refuge of Last Resort locations due to accessibility and safety concerns, and evacuees were moved to the George R. Brown Convention Center (1001 Avenida De Las Americas) or NRG Center (1 NRG Park, Houston, TX 77054).

Q: How will HISD provide emotional support to students and staff who have been affected by the storm?

HISD will have services available at schools to support the emotional needs of students and staff when they return. We are coordinating with other school districts across the region and country to help us in this effort, as we know many staff in our own district have been personally impacted by the storm.

Q: How can I help my child cope with the aftermath of the storm?

A catastrophe such as a flood is frightening to children and adults alike. It is important to acknowledge the frightening parts of the disaster when talking with a child about it. Falsely minimizing the danger will not end a child's concerns. Several factors affect a child's response to disaster. The way children see and understand their parents' response is very important. Parents should admit their concerns to their children, and also stress their abilities to cope with the situation.

A child's reaction also depends on how much destruction he or she sees during and after the disaster. If a friend or family member has been killed or seriously injured, or if the child's school or home has been severely damaged, there is a greater chance that the child will experience difficulties.

A child's age affects how the child will respond to the disaster. For example, 6-year-olds may show their concerns about a catastrophe by refusing to attend school, whereas adolescents may minimize their concerns but argue more with parents and show a decline in school performance. It is important to explain the event in words the child can understand.

Following a disaster, people may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is psychological damage that can result from experiencing, witnessing or participating in an overwhelmingly traumatic event.

Children with this disorder have repeated episodes in which they re-experience the traumatic event. Children often relive the trauma through repetitive play. In young children, distressing dreams of the traumatic event may change into nightmares of monsters, of rescuing others or of threats to self or others.

PTSD rarely appears during the trauma itself. Although its symptoms can occur soon after the event, the disorder often surfaces several months or even years later. Parents should be alert to these changes:

- Refusal to return to school and "clinging" behavior, shadowing the mother or father around the house;
- Persistent fears related to the catastrophe (such as fears about being permanently separated from parents);
- Sleep disturbances such as nightmares, screaming during sleep and bedwetting, persisting more than several days after the event;
- Loss of concentration and irritability;
- Behavior problems - for example, misbehaving in school or at home in ways that are not typical for the child;
- Physical complaints (stomachaches, headaches, dizziness) for which a physical cause cannot be found;
- Withdrawal from family and friends, listlessness, decreased activity, preoccupation with the events of the disaster.

Parents who are concerned about their children can ask their pediatrician or family doctor or contact Mental Health America of Greater Houston's partner, United Way of Greater Houston by dialing 2-1-1 for help identifying a mental health professional.

Q: I want to help the affected families of HISD. What can I do?

There are three ways:

Monetary donations

The HISD Foundation is accepting donations to help families recover, and 100% of the proceeds will go to helping affected students and families. [Click here to donate](#), and please specify "Harvey" as the purpose for your donation.

Local donations:

HISD has activated donation sites for Houstonians or local organizations who want to help the district's students and families recover from the devastating effects of Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath.

The district is accepting donations of the following NEW items:

- Undergarments
- Socks
- Uniforms
- Deodorant
- Hand sanitizer
- Pillows
- Blankets
- Shoes
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste
- Other hygiene items
- Professional dress for impacted staff

People can drop off donations at three locations during the days and hours noted below:

- Delmar Fieldhouse, 2020 Mangum Road, Houston, TX 77092. (People wanting to drop off donations should enter the complex on Mangum. Signs will be posted.)
 - Donations will be accepted Sept. 5-8 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.
 - Donations will be accepted starting Sept. 11 during normal business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Butler Stadium, 13755 Main St., Houston, TX 77035
 - Donations will be accepted Sept. 5-8 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Barnett Stadium, 6800 Fairway Dr, Houston, TX 77087
 - Donations will be accepted Sept. 5-8 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Beginning Sept. 11, Delmar Fieldhouse will be the sole donation site, and any donations previously made to Butler and Barnett stadiums will be taken there. Donations will be distributed to schools from Delmar Fieldhouse.

National donations

HISD welcomes assistance from national groups or corporations that would like to help our students recover and prepare for the coming school year. The district is accepting donations of NEW and unused clothing, shoes, underwear, socks, uniforms and school supplies, as well as canned food and water.

Donations can be shipped to:

HISD Harvey Donations
Delmar Fieldhouse
2020 Mangum Road

Houston, TX 77092

For more information, please contact Ann Scott at 832-470-7579.

Q: How can students and families benefit from these donations?

The donations will be distributed at various locations and times throughout the city through community groups and schools. Check HoustonISD.org/Harvey for updates.

Q: Do we have to wear a uniform to school?

No, HISD is relaxing its uniform policy until January 2018. Students who wish to wear a uniform may still do so.

Q: Will HISD be required to make up the instructional days lost to the storm?

In response to Hurricane Harvey, the Texas Education Agency granted a waiver for school districts for 9 missed days due to Harvey. Some school start dates were delayed beyond 9 days, and the district is in talks with the TEA about whether those days will be made up.

Q: My family does not qualify for the free lunch program. Will there be any consideration for free meals for those affected by Harvey?

The Houston Independent School District has received approval from the United States Department of Agriculture and the Texas Department of Agriculture to serve breakfast and lunch meals for free to all students until Sept. 30, 2017 under the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program. The district will work with both entities to gain additional guidance related to covering the need for the remainder of the school year.

Despite the federal waiver, HISD is still asking parents and guardians to complete and return the application. The National School Lunch/School Breakfast Program applications and surveys are available at <https://mealapps.houstonisd.org>. They can also be accessed by visiting the [HISD Nutrition Services website](#) and clicking on the “One Form Means So Much” button on the right side of the page. The information received in the forms helps the district to secure funding and track student data.

Q: Have HISD athletics events been affected?

The first two weeks of football and volleyball games in middle and high schools are cancelled and will not be rescheduled.

Q: Where can I keep up with new information related to Harvey?

Visit HoustonISD.org/Harvey for a continuously updated list of resources and news in the aftermath of the storm. Follow us at HoustonISD.org, [Facebook.com/HoustonISD](https://www.facebook.com/HoustonISD), and [Twitter.com/HoustonISD](https://twitter.com/HoustonISD) for updates.