Superintendent’s Report

August 25, 2026

Dr. Roderick F. Richmond,
Superintendent

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EMERGENCY CLOSURE DECISION

Why We Closed Schools Monday

A summary of the safety, operational, and District-wide factors that informed the decision — and the food-safety evaluation now underway in every affected building.



Scope of Impact:
The Storm Affected the Entire District

44

SCHOOLS DIRECTLY AFFECTED

4

ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS AFFECTED

44

CHARTER SCHOOLS ALSO CLOSED

75,000+

UTILITY CUSTOMERS LOST POWER IN OUR SERVICE AREA

IT'S BIGGER THAN THE BUILDINGS.

That number climbs significantly higher once you account for the students and staff who live in our District but attend or work at buildings that weren't directly affected. Their ability to get to school safely is impacted just the same.

Transportation & Road Safety:
We Could Not Safely Get Students to School

23,000

students ride the bus
to school each day



Signals down District-wide

Several traffic signals throughout the District lost power and were not functioning safely for normal traffic flow.

Debris in the roadways

Storm debris was reported in roadways in multiple areas, creating hazards for buses, staff, and family vehicles.

A bus route is only as safe as its intersections

We cannot put drivers and students on the road when intersections along their routes aren’t functioning safely.

Food Safety Evaluation:
Every Cafeteria Must Be Individually Cleared

1 Loss of power is assessed	Each building's outage window and duration are confirmed before any cafeteria inspection begins.
2 Refrigeration & freezers are inspected	Staff check whether cold-storage units maintained safe temperatures during the outage.
3 Unsafe food is discarded	In many cases, food that may no longer be safe to serve must be discarded — building by building.
4 Cafeteria is cleared to reopen	Only after inspection and any needed disposal is a cafeteria cleared to safely serve students again.

This process cannot be skipped or rushed; it protects every student who eats at school.

Building Systems:
Every System Must Be Verified Before Reopening

HVAC

Heating, ventilation, and cooling systems must be checked and confirmed operational in every impacted building.

Internet

Network connectivity must be restored and verified so that instruction, safety systems, and communication all function.

Phone Lines

Phone service is tested and confirmed, since it’s essential to daily operations and emergency communication.

Reopening a building means every one of these is checked, restored, and verified fully functional — not just powered back on. ***That inspection process takes time and can't be rushed if we want it done safely.***

Our Staff:
Employees Face the Same Storm Our Families Do

Not just a workforce — our neighbors.

Many of our employees and their families were also without power.

They are living through the same emergency as the students and families they serve.



01

Can our staff safely get to work given road and traffic-signal conditions?

02

Are staff members dealing with power loss, damage, or other emergencies at their homes?

03

Are enough staff available across every building to safely supervise and support students?

Academic & Accountability Impacts:
A Closure Day Carries Consequences Beyond Today

Chronic Absenteeism

Unexpected closures can affect chronic absenteeism rates tracked for every student across the District.

School Letter Grades

Attendance factors into the state accountability formula that determines each school's letter grade.

Federal Accountability Designations

Those grades and rates feed into federal accountability designations that matter for schools long after any single day off.

The Decision
Six Factors, One Priority: Safety

1. Scope of impact across 44 schools, 4 admin buildings, and 75,000+ utility customers
2. Transportation and road safety, with signals down and 23,000 daily bus riders
3. Food safety evaluation required in every affected cafeteria
4. Building systems — HVAC, internet, and phone — verified before reopening
5. Our staff's own safety and ability to reach work
6. Academic and accountability impacts on attendance and district ratings

Status Update:
Where Things Stand Today

All Schools Open Today

except **19***

schools remain closed today

Food Support at Closed Schools

In partnership with the YMCA, meals were provided at all 19 closed schools from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM today.

All on-site registered students at the closed school were offered a meal regardless of enrollment in a meal program.

**18 originally closed schools from the decision made on Monday, August 24, 2026, in addition to Lucie E. Campbell Elementary School, which closed due to a separate power outage that occurred today, Tuesday, August 25, 2026.*



THANK YOU

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