

FROM THE DESK OF SUPERINTENDENT JOHN KELLY

To the Parents of All Pearland ISD Students:

In the aftermath of an unparalleled natural disaster, Pearland ISD stands ready to receive your children tomorrow (Tuesday, September 5. While the Pearland area was less affected than many areas, there are pockets of serious flooding within our boundaries that left faculty, staff, and students without homes and/or vehicles. Moreover, many of our employees travel to work here from areas outside of Pearland that have been devastated.

Here are a few things for you to know:

- While a few of our school campuses/facilities did get water within them, our terrific maintenance department has remedied those by this past Saturday night.
- By starting school tomorrow, we begin one day to weeks before other districts. This helps us immediately assess the needs of ALL those impacted by the storm.
- All students who cannot attend school because of hurricane/flooding reasons will have excused absences.
- Our Pearland High School served as a shelter for many in the area. The few evacuees left in the PHS shelter on Saturday were re-located to the Recreation Center so that we had time to prepare PHS for students and staff. That work has been done.
- There is school bus access to every part of Pearland ISD with the exception of some roads near Brookside and Knapp Roads. In those cases, our Transportation Department has instructed families to the nearest larger road where they will be picked up.
- We anticipate “first day of school” traffic conditions tomorrow and possibly for the remainder of this week – as anxious parents deliver their children to our doorstep. I urge patience and kindness on the parts of both parents and staff.
- We will provide free breakfast and lunch to ALL students who desire it during the month of September. (This does not apply to a la carte offerings.) We may extend this beyond September, depending on the needs.
- We intend to connect food and clothing distribution centers to those students/families who need it. We’ve established partnerships with various community (and PTA) groups to do this. Please go to our website for more information.
- The dress code will NOT be enforced in our school district this week.
- We are also assembling community resources to provide counseling to affected students and staff.

- We anticipate some students now residing within our boundaries who are displaced from flood areas in the greater Houston area. They are entitled to attend our schools. We have no idea yet how many. But we will make their immediate enrollment as seamless and “unbureaucratic” as we can. Likewise, we don’t yet know how many students who have been living within our boundaries but are now displaced by the storm and cannot return to us yet.
- With many different types of relief being developed in our community, our school district will also be collecting gift cards for distribution to those who need it. (Check our website and with our Communications Department for more details.)
- The Texas Education Agency has already indicated that the instructional days missed so far by districts in our area will NOT need to be made-up. So we will not be converting holidays or adding instructional days to the end of our current school calendar.
- Athletic practices are already resuming. We do not yet know if the schools against which we compete will participate. But we are ready. For example, the Rig is ready for Friday night’s anticipated game provided our competition can participate.
- Through staff sponsors, we encourage volunteer efforts by students and staff aimed at helping people affected by this storm. There are needs ranging from those who need to “dig out” of the flooding in their homes – to the distribution of food and clothing.

In summary, I’d like to emphasize two things: First, that we wish to provide tangible REASSURANCE and help from our Pearland ISD family to those in need. Second, our students are best served by a return to NORMALCY as soon as possible. For some, that will not be easily achieved – but we will do our part.

Pearland ISD is an extraordinary school district ready to help our own – and in this case to help others outside our boundaries who are harder hit. I’m incredibly proud and blessed to be associated with our faculty/staff and with all those parents and students who have selflessly helped others in this time of need.

God bless our Pearland ISD family!

John P. Kelly, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools