

DAVID N. CICILLINE  
*Mayor*

THOMAS M. BRADY  
*Superintendent*

# Providence Schools

Providence Public School District  
Office of the Superintendent  
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March 23, 2009

Rhode Island Department of Education  
Commissioner Peter McWalters  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903

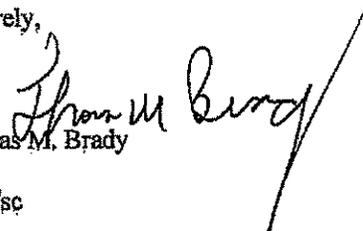
Dear Commissioner McWalters:

As a result of inclement weather, the Providence School District has cancelled school on five days during the 2008-2009 school year. These dates include: 12/19/08, 1/15/09, 1/16/09, 1/28/09, and 03/01/09. We recommend that students, faculty and staff make up the days as follows:

1. Beginning Monday, April 20 and ending Thursday, June 4, the school day will begin 15 minutes early. School ending times will be extended by 5 minutes, extending the school day by 20 minutes for 33 days (11 hours). The school year for students will end on June 19, 2009 in lieu of June 18, 2009, as previously scheduled.
2. Teachers and Instructional/Teacher Assistants will participate in mandatory Professional Development on Monday and Tuesday, June 22-23, 2009. Teachers will engage in Professional Development sessions to include:
  - ✓ Anti-Bullying (2 hrs)
  - ✓ Effective Use of the School Library (2 hrs)
  - ✓ Understanding Board Policy (1-hr)
  - ✓ Overview of new math resources for all elementary teachers and all high school math teachers (5 hrs)
  - ✓ Overview of new science resources for all secondary science, special education and ESL/Bilingual teachers (5 hrs)
  - ✓ Calculator training for all middle school math teachers (5 hrs)
  - ✓ Transforming School Counseling for all guidance counselors (5 hrs)
  - ✓ Effective Teaching Practices for all other secondary teachers (5 hrs)
  - ✓ Parent Engagement for all Itinerant Teachers (5 hrs)

While the student school year will be shortened by two days, I believe the combination of district and school-based professional development to be held at the end of the school year will: (1) increase understanding of District Corrective Action Plan initiatives; (2) improve implementation of District curricula and student support initiatives; and (3) increase teacher preparedness for the 2009-2010 school year. We seek your approval of this proposal for making up inclement weather days and trust that you will find our solution consistent with RIDE priorities.

Sincerely,

  
Thomas M. Brady

TMB/sc

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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Peter McWalters  
Commissioner

May 22, 2009

Mr. Thomas M. Brady  
Superintendent of Schools  
Providence Public School District  
797 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island  
02903-4045

Dear Superintendent Brady:

This is a follow up to my letter dated April 15, 2009, in which I stated that I would recommend to the Board of Regents that your request to reduce the student's school year from 180 days to 178 days be granted. The authority to grant a waiver requested through R.I.G.L. § 16-2-3 (emergency reduction of school year) was delegated to me during the May 13, 2009 Board of Regents meeting:

"The Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with its authority to assign to the Commissioner any other additional duties that may be determined by the Board and in accordance with the Board's general supervisory authority over elementary and secondary education, hereby delegates to the Commissioner the authority to grant or to deny approval to reductions in the school year in accordance with R.I.G.L. 16-2-3. The Commissioner's grant or denial of a reduction may be reviewed by the Board."

Rhode Island General Law § 16-2-3 provides a mechanism by which "the school committee or any city or town with the approval of the board of regents for elementary and secondary education may reduce the number of school days" in the event of an "emergency which may endanger the health of children of the physical well being of the community."

In your specific request made on March 23, 2009 and in subsequent correspondence since that time, you state that multiple days of inclement weather has necessitated a change in the school year. Your proposal includes extending the student year by 3 instructional days as well as providing 2 days of mandatory targeted professional development for all teachers and teacher assistants.

**Telephone** (401)222-4600 **Fax** (401)222-6178 **TTY** 800-745-5555 **Voice** 800-745-6575

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I find your request to be within the parameters of §16-2-3, based on the reason for your request and the ultimately beneficial manner in which you have proposed to use the 179<sup>th</sup> and 180<sup>th</sup> days.

For the foregoing reasons, please be advised that I am granting your requested waiver to the 180 day school year. Please provide me with written verification of the adjusted school year for students (178 days) and the schedule and agenda for the mandatory professional development during the 179<sup>th</sup> and 180<sup>th</sup> day. In addition please submit a proposed school calendar for the 2009 – 2010 school year that includes 184 in accordance with Board of Regents Regulation G-4-1 (a copy of the regulation is attached).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have in regard to the issues raised herein.

Very truly yours,



Peter McWalters  
Commissioner of Education

cc: Robert G. Flanders, Chairman, Board of Regents  
David V. Abbott, Deputy Commissioner/General Counsel

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RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF REGENTS  
FOR ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

REGULATIONS GOVERNING  
THE SCHOOL CALENDAR AND SCHOOL DAY

G-4-1. Adoption and filing of calendar and minimum number of days scheduled.  
G-4-2. First day of school.  
G-4-3. Filing of changes  
G-4-4. Statutory minimum.  
G-4-5. School opening and closing dates.  
G-4-6. Special provisions— kindergarten screenings  
G-4-7. Rules governing graduation dates.  
G-4-8. Inclement weather.  
G-4-9. Physical plant problems — other emergencies.

G-4-10. Mid-Term and Final Exams.  
G-4-11. Required length of school day — elementary and secondary.  
G-4-12. Secondary level compliance.  
G-4-13. Alternative secondary approaches.  
G-4-14. Elementary level compliance.  
G-4-15. Alternative elementary approaches.  
G-4-16. Additional requirements — multi-year intervention status.  
G-4-17. Professional time defined.  
G-4-18. Professional time — progressive support and intervention.

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**G-4-1. Adoption and filing of calendar and minimum number of days scheduled.** — Each school committee shall, no later than the July 1 next preceding the beginning of the school year for its district, adopt, file with the Commissioner of Education and give public notice of a tentative calendar for that year, in which shall be included at least one hundred and eighty-four (184) school days. Such calendar is subject to the review of the Commissioner of Education.

**G-4-2. First day of school.** — In said tentative calendar, the first day of school shall be scheduled to take place not later than the first Thursday following the first Monday of September.

**G-4-3. Filing of changes.** — By May 1 of each year, each school committee shall file with the Commissioner of Education any changes in the originally scheduled calendar.

**G-4-4. Statutory minimum.** — Nothing contained in these regulations should be construed to require any school to operate more than the statutory minimum of one hundred and eighty (180) days for students.