



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Statement From Senator Andrew Lanza Regarding DOE's Decision to Keep Schools Open Today

ANDREW J LANZA February 13, 2014

When the School's Chancellor decided to open schools this morning, Senator Andrew Lanza sent the following statement to the Mayor's office: The danger associated with requiring students to navigate this storm to get to school far outweighs the benefit of keeping schools open. Conditions are quite dangerous, and roads around schools are barely passable. Coupled with the low visibility at the precise time when children are arriving puts them, teachers, and parents in unnecessary peril. Staten Island does not have the same services as Manhattan, and our children live further away from school than their counterparts there. Opening schools today, under these conditions, is wrong. If anyone from the administration were standing in Great Kills or Tottenville right now, they would see this point. This is bad policy, and people this morning are making negative comparisons to the past when people were rightfully dissatisfied with City Hall. Schools should be about educating children without negligently putting their safety at risk. If some children need to be out of their homes for childcare, then we should find a way to safely provide that service without requiring children not in dire need of that service to risk their lives. Anyone who was not able to, or prudently decided not to attend school this morning should be excused and not marked absent on their record. Additionally, in recent weeks, after the last storm, I introduced legislation that would require schools to be closed any time the Governor of the State of New York declares a weather emergency. It should be noted that this morning, Governor

Cuomo issued a State of Emergency declaration.