



DEPARTMENT MEMO

M-32-13

May 3, 2013

SUBJECT: OPERATION SAFE PASSAGE

As you know, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) will be closing over 50 schools this year and redirecting children to other schools known as welcoming schools. As part of the transition strategy, CPS has asked the Chicago Fire Department (CFD) to assist in two (2) phases of the strategy.

Part of the transition strategy will be expanding its successful Safe Passage program to support all welcoming schools. Safe Passage is designed to help improve student safety by partnering with community-based organizations to provide a positive adult presence to and from school.

For Phase I, the CFD will conduct surveys for all Safe Passage routes for all welcoming schools. This involves identifying abandoned buildings located on and around the routes and making the determination if they are open and/or dangerous.

Phase II involves the CFD having a strong physical presence, on each Safe Passage route for all welcoming schools, for three (3) weeks. This year, the first day of school will be August 26, 2013, for all schools. During specific hours of the day, all companies will be on the routes and establish a visible presence to the children traveling to and from schools. Companies will be in service and on the air during this time.

During this transition period, it is critical that the CFD assist in providing the children with reassurance during their travels. This will be accomplished through our public presence, being good ambassadors to the children of Chicago and providing support when and if they require it. In the upcoming days, more logistical information will be released by the Bureau of Operations.

As Fire Commissioner, I am grateful for your efforts in making the safety of Chicago's children an unwavering priority. Thank you.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "José A. Santiago".

José A. Santiago
Fire Commissioner

TO BE READ AT FOUR ROLL CALLS AND POSTED

Distribution: B