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**OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION PRESENT READY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR AWARD TO
P.S. 23 IN THE BRONX**

More than 42,000 Students Across the Five Boroughs Trained Through Ready Schools Emergency Preparedness Program

Recognizing the importance of teaching New Yorkers of all ages to prepare for emergencies, the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and the Department of Education (DOE) today presented the Ready School of the Year Award to Principal Shirley Torres at P.S. 23, the New Children's School, in the Tremont section of the Bronx for its outstanding commitment to preparedness education. All 513 P.S. 23 students received emergency preparedness training through the Ready Schools program this year.

"This school year we reached more than 14,000 students in 46 New York City public schools through the Ready Schools emergency preparedness education program," said OEM Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno. "P.S. 23 staff was not only instrumental in ensuring its students, teachers, and their families were prepared, they also helped us reach other schools in the Bronx with invaluable preparedness lessons."

"P.S. 23 students, parents, faculty and administration are models for others to follow when it comes to being prepared in emergencies," said Deputy Chancellor of Operations Kathleen Grimm. "It is so important to know what to do in case of emergencies and the Ready Schools program helps all school communities be prepared not only at school but also at home."

"Our entire school community at P.S. 23, The New Children's School, is extremely honored to have been selected as the 2012 Ready School of the Year by the Office of Emergency Management and the New York City Department of Education," said P.S. 23 Principal Shirley Torres. "Throughout the year, Commissioner Bruno and Chancellor Walcott have fully supported the Ready School Program. This outstanding program has been responsible for preparing and highly motivating our school community to be able to respond to potential disasters and various emergencies. The dedicated OEM presenters, the Ready School guides, the curricula and the family preparedness brochures have generated a great awareness for emergency preparedness at all age levels including pets."

This school year, P.S. 23 invited OEM to teach its pre-K through third graders about emergency preparedness at a series of assemblies and workshops. Building on Principal Torres' commitment to educating P.S. 23's students about preparing for emergencies, Assistant Principal

Susan Rolon-Nelson provided additional support for the Ready Schools program by connecting OEM with Bronx school safety directors and expanding the program to even more Bronx elementary schools. Assistant Principal Rolon-Nelson also champions the importance of emergency preparedness after the school day ends as a newly appointed deputy team chief for her local Community Emergency Response Team (Bronx CB 10).

During the 2011-2012 school year, OEM's Ready New York program completed over 113 events in 46 schools throughout the five boroughs and trained over 14,000 students in preparedness. Since the program was introduced in 2009, OEM has trained more than 42,000 students.

Ready Schools is part of the Ready New York for Kids program, which launched in 2007 with the introduction of two interactive emergency preparedness guides for students. In spring 2009, OEM and DOE expanded the initiative, introducing a pilot program to teach the lessons from Ready New York for Kids in schools. After a successful pilot program in Brooklyn, OEM and DOE launched Ready Schools in all five boroughs at the start of the 2009-2010 school year.

Ready Schools focuses on three key messages:

- **Get Ready: *Make a Plan*** – Have at least two phone numbers – one local and one out-of-state number – you can call in an emergency and practice the plan with adults in your home.
- **Get Set: *Prepare a Stay at Home Kit*** – During emergencies that require you to stay at home, have extra food and water for all family members and a battery-operated radio for news updates.
- **Get Ready to Go: *Pack a Go Bag*** – During emergencies that require you to leave your home, have a Go Bag with emergency supplies.

Ready Schools and Ready New York for Kids are part of OEM's Ready New York emergency preparedness program. Launched in 2003, the Ready New York program includes 11 multilingual publications, video content, an advertising campaign, interactive web content, a speakers' bureau, and extensive community outreach. Ready New York guides are available in up to 23 languages and in Braille and on audio tape.

For more information about the Ready Schools initiative and the Ready New York program visit www.nyc.gov/oem or call 311.

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