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Statement by Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr.

"I would like to commend all of New Jersey's school districts for the extraordinary way in which they assisted and comforted their children, teachers and other staff members during this very difficult time for our country.

"I have heard many stories during the last week of actions taken by school personnel to comfort children in the wake of this tragedy. I have heard of teachers riding buses with children to make sure that a parent or guardian was home to greet them. Schools stayed open late, sometimes all night long, to provide a safe haven until all children were picked up by a parent or guardian. Some schools even prepared food for stranded children.

"As we all know schools play a vital role in our communities. Not only do they educate our children, but also the buildings themselves often represent places where communities meet and interact after school hours. Schools symbolize home, safety and nurturing. I am proud of the way our schools and school officials have fulfilled this important function during this crisis.

"I am confident that our dedicated school personnel will continue to provide support, comfort and guidance to our children as the full impact of these senseless acts of terrorism hits home."