



HOLY FAMILY ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 140

OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

CATEGORY: SCHOOL OPERATIONS
 TITLE: STUDENT HEALTH
 CODE: 5125 Pandemic Influenza Preparedness

Reference Matrix	
Education Act (1995)	Sections 85, 87, 109, 141, 175, 178, 190, 231,
Other Related Acts	<i>Public Health Act (1994); Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (LAFOIP)</i>
Holy Family Related Procedures	OP 5121 General Services and Information OP 5124 Communicable Diseases
Holy Family Related Manuals	Traumatic Incident Protocol Guide, 2013
Resources (Ministry, SSBA, SCSBA, etc.)	A Guide for School Board Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (2008)
Alerts on Provincial and Regional Health Websites	Remain current by reviewing provincial and regional alerts
Date Reviewed	January 6, 2016

Background:

A pandemic means an epidemic of any disease over a wide geographic area affecting a large proportion of the population.

Pandemic influenza occurs when a major new subtype of influenza virus appears against which the entire human population has little or no immunity. It spreads rapidly and widely, and causes more severe disease and deaths than a seasonal influenza.

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Health’s Public Pandemic Influenza Plan states that *“It is not possible to predict when the next influenza pandemic will occur or how serious its impact will be. However, since there may be little warning, the federal government, Saskatchewan Health, the Regional Health Authorities, and Municipal Government along with other governments and agencies around the world are preparing to respond when the next pandemic arrives.”* Holy Family RCSSD No. 140 will work closely with community partners, especially Sun Country Health Region during a pandemic and will rely on their expertise.

Closure of schools may be particularly affected in an influenza pandemic. Schools will not be automatically closed. The working expectation is that schools will continue to operate and provide an environment that is as safe as possible during a pandemic. The Ministry of Health, the Emergency Measures Organization, and the Ministry of Education in Saskatchewan have the authority to close schools for health emergency response or educational reasons respectively. The working expectation is that decisions about school closure will remain a local responsibility as much as possible.

It should be noted while schools are open in a pandemic; normal programs, expectations, and service levels may not always be met.

Pandemic Phases, Characteristics and Responses:

Pandemic Phase	Characteristics	Responses	
		Public Health	School Division
INTERPANDEMIC PHASE			
Phase 1	No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused a human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.	Strengthening influenza pandemic preparedness at global, national, provincial and regional levels.	Strengthen influenza pandemic preparedness at the Division and school level.
Phase 2	No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease	Minimize the risk of transmission to humans; detect and report such transmission rapidly, if it occurs.	Minimize the risk of transmission to employees and students. Educate employees and students on preventative measures.
PANDEMIC ALERT PERIOD			
Phase 3	Human infections with a new subtype but no human-to-human spread. Or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.	Ensure rapid characterization of the new virus subtype and early detection, notification, and response to additional cases.	Minimize risk of transmission to employees and students. Educate employees and students on preventative measures. Monitor influenza outbreaks in the Division and schools.
Phase 4	Small cluster(s) with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localized, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.	Contain the new virus within limited foci or delay spread to gain time to implement preparedness measures, including vaccine development.	Work with Health Region to contain new viruses. Implement pandemic response measures.

PANDEMIC ALERT PERIOD			
Phase 5	Large cluster(s) but human-to-human spread still localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk).	Maximize effort to contain or delay spread, to possibly avert a pandemic and to gain time to implement pandemic response measures.	Work with Health Authorities and Municipal Government, other governments and agencies to contain and delay spread
Phase 6	Pandemic increased and sustained transmission in the general population.	Minimize impact of the pandemic.	Minimize impact of the pandemic. Activate the Education Continuity Plan.

Note:

The distinction between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the World Health Organization Pandemic Cycle is based on the risk of human infection of disease resulting from circulating strains in animals. The distinction is based on various factors and their relative importance according to current scientific knowledge.

The distinction between Phase 3, Phase 4 and Phase 5 is based on an assessment of the risk of a pandemic. Various factors and their relative importance according to current scientific knowledge may be considered. Factors may include rate of transmission, geographical location and spread, severity of illness, presence of genes from human strains (if derived from an animal strain) and/or other scientific parameters.

Education Continuity Plan:

In the event of a pandemic being declared Education Continuity Management Committees (ECM) will be formed at the school division and school levels.

1. The Division ECM will consist of:

- Director of Education
- Superintendent(s) of Education Chief Financial Officer, Manager of Facilities and Transportation, and School Administrators

2. Responsibilities of Division ECM:

2.1. To make decisions and direct the overall operations of the school division.

2.2. To make a clear and complete assessment of situations that may arise within the school division and recommend course of action, considering guidance from the health region.

2.3. To oversee communication with stakeholders.

2.4. To liaise and cooperate with other organizations in response to the pandemic.

2.5. To determine the closeness of any school(s) and/or changes in school operations.

2.6. To report to the Board of Education.

3. The School ECM Committee will consist of:

- School Administrator(s)
- Caretaker(s)
- Secretary(s)
- Teacher(s)
- Educational Assistant(s)

4. Responsibilities of School ECM:

4.1. To implement school influenza prevention efforts:

4.1.1. To communicate with employees, students, and parents as directed by the School Division Committee.

4.1.2. To educate employees and students on preventable measures.

4.1.3. To monitor, track and report the health status of students and staff.

4.1.4. To identify and report on influenza/epidemic/infectious disease outbreaks in school.

4.1.5. To monitor school cleaning and sanitizing prevention efforts.

4.1.6. To communicate and emphasize the need for good personal hygiene practices such as, but not limited to:

- Covering nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing
- Good hand washing/hand hygiene practices
- Workplace cleaning habits to minimize influenza transmission

Potential Impact:

The health and safety of students and staff is paramount.

It is the intention of the Board of Education to conduct the affairs of the school in accord with Board policy and operational procedures.

If a pandemic is declared (Phase 6, World Health Organization pandemic cycle), and in consultation with Health officials, the intention is that:

1. After-school activities/access to schools – after-hours access to schools will be cancelled.
2. Extra-curricular activities – extra-curricular activities will be cancelled.
3. Field trips/Mission Trips/Excursions – there will be a moratorium on field trips/mission trips/excursions.
4. Hot lunches – hot lunch days and other special lunches will be cancelled.
5. Student Lead Conferences –will be cancelled.
6. Student Transportation – where possible and subject to daily review, school buses will maintain regular schedules while schools remain open.
7. Meetings – meetings that take individuals out of the school will either be cancelled or held by teleconference.
8. Professional Development Activities – all professional development activities and attendance at conferences will be cancelled.
9. School Community Council – SCC meetings will be cancelled. Arrangements will be made for ongoing communication between the principal and council chairperson.
10. Facility Rentals – there will be a moratorium on facility rentals.
11. Board Meetings – board meetings will be held as scheduled and more frequently, if needed. They will be held via conference call.
12. Instruction – where possible, the regular in-school instructional program and those activities related to instruction will continue.
13. Maintenance – where possible, normal procedures will continue.
14. Substitute teachers, Casual Service and Support Staff – where possible, normal procedures will continue.
15. Volunteers – continued use of volunteers will be considered on a case by case basis.
16. Staff Placement and Reassignment – staff may be reassigned to alternate locations to perform alternate duties in order to meet system needs.
17. Traumatic Events Response Teams – traumatic events support will be provided.

Resources:

Sun Country Health
www.suncountry.sk.ca

Regina Qu'Appelle Health District (St. Augustine School)
www.rqhealth.ca/

Ministry of Health
www.health.gov.sk.ca

Government of Canada
www.influenza.gc.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.phacaspc.gc.ca

World Health Organization
www.who.int

Saskatchewan Health Line
811