



South Shore Regional School Board Pandemic Influenza Plan

GENERAL

This document was created by the Emergency Management Team and serves as the South Shore Regional School Board's Pandemic Influenza Plan, which forms part of the overall Emergency Management Plan. The purpose of this plan is to support decision-making and responses as a result of any declared Pandemic Influenza with a potential of affecting the school board's jurisdiction.

The World Health Organization, Health Canada and the Nova Scotia Department of Education have recommended plans are developed to reduce any impact and respond to any effects. The South Shore Regional School Board has a large student population congregating in close proximity as well as facilities and programs that are open to the general public. The onset of a Pandemic Influenza may compromise the board's ability to deliver essential services, and this plan is written in the event of such a risk. It is imperative that a Pandemic Influenza Plan is an evolving document, one that will undergo continuous review and revisions made as new information emerges. Since most emergencies involve countless unknown situations, this plan attempts to cover many, but not all potential considerations.

For ease of incorporation, this plan is organized by considerations and activities based on the World Health Organization's (WHO) declared pandemic phase. The WHO system utilizes a six-phased model to classify recommendations and approaches for preparedness and response. Although the WHO globally-declared pandemic phase will dictate the level of response to consider from this plan, the actual response shall be based more on local proximity and rate of advancement as determined in collaboration with the Department of Health.

The following table summarizes the WHO Pandemic Phase Model:

Period	Phase	Description
Interpandemic Period	Phase 1	No animal influenza virus circulating among animals have been reported to cause infection to humans – <i>no potential pandemic threat identified</i>
Interpandemic Period	Phase 2	An animal influenza virus circulating in domesticated or wild animals is known to have caused infection in humans and is therefore considered a specific potential pandemic threat – <i>considered a potential pandemic threat</i>
Pandemic Alert Period	Phase 3	An animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks – <i>does not indicate that the virus has gained the level of transmissibility among humans necessary to cause a pandemic</i>
Pandemic Alert Period	Phase 4	Human to human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to sustain community-level outbreaks has been verified – <i>indicates a significant increase in risk of a pandemic but does not necessarily mean that a pandemic is a forgone conclusion</i>
Pandemic Alert Period	Phase 5	The same identified virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in two or more countries in one WHO region – <i>a strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and response time is diminutive</i>
Pandemic Period	Phase 6	In addition to the description in Phase 5, the same virus has caused a sustained community level outbreaks in at least one other country in another WHO region – <i>global pandemic is underway</i>
	Post Peak Period	Levels of pandemic influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance have dropped below peak levels – <i>pandemic activity appears to be decreasing, waves may continue to occur, and a second resurgence is possible</i>
	Post Pandemic Period	Levels of influenza activities have returned to the levels seen for seasonal influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance – <i>pandemic is considered concluded</i>

PANDEMIC PHASES

Interpandemic Period: Phase 1 & Phase 2

(Note: The following considerations are to guide, and actual response shall be based more on local proximity and rate of advancement as determined through interaction with the Department of Health)

Regional Level:

- Ensure the South Shore Regional School Board has a Pandemic Influenza Plan
- Adopt routine monitoring and establish communication plan with Department of Health
- Communicate periodically to all staff any information about an influenza pandemic appropriate to the phase
- Prepare resources and tools for schools (ie, routine infection control practices)

Schools Level:

- Ensure schools has access to a copy of the Pandemic Influenza Plan
- Communicate periodically to all students and parents information about an influenza pandemic based on communication plan with Department of Health

Pandemic Alert Period: Phase 3, Phase 4, Phase 5 (& Global Phase 6, but not locally)
(Note: The following considerations are to guide, and actual response shall be based more on local proximity and rate of advancement as determined through interaction with the Department of Health).

Regional Level:

- Review the Pandemic Influenza Plan with the Emergency Management Team and Senior Management Team
- Ensure the Pandemic Influenza Plan is current and available to all locations and appropriate management levels
- Determine roles and responsibilities, such as: command & control, risk assessment, communications, human resources, legal, surveillance, facility operations, and transportation.
- Adopt enhanced monitoring and maintain ongoing communications with Department of Health
- Provide relevant information to schools and establish a resource to field queries
- Consider need to establish regular meetings/conference calls based on information from Department of Health
- Specific Human Resources considerations: reporting absenteeism, working from home, leaves of absence for family care, compensation, benefits and other employment considerations for various situation
- Specific Communications considerations: information and materials for internal staff, public and media
- Support implementation of prevention measures as recommended by Department of Health (ie, infection controls measures such as hand washing techniques, enhancing school and bus cleaning procedures)
- Consider increasing essential supply stocks (ie, cleaning materials, personal protective equipment)
- Consider impact of cancellation of off-site and non-essential school activities, including impacts of usage agreements or joint programs such as community/school agreements, youth health centres, or public C@P sites
- Departments to review business continuity plans
- Establish a resource to monitor statistics and health status of affected students and staff and ensure appropriate reporting to Department of Health
- Consider means of reminding employees to follow self-isolation recommendations from the Department of Health
- Establish a liaison with South Shore Health authorities for status and potential school utilization as alternative pandemic treatment centres (refer to Memorandum of Agreement with South Shore Health dated May 8, 2006)

***Pandemic Alert Period: Phase 3, Phase 4, Phase 5 (& Global Phase 6, but not locally)
Continued***

(Note: The following considerations are to guide, and actual response shall be based more on local proximity and rate of advancement as determined through interaction with the Department of Health).

School Level:

- Provide timely information provided based on collaboration with Department of Health to staff, students and parents: communicate periodically on pandemic status, importance of control measures, and preventative techniques
- Implement and/or augment health measures including posters, fact sheets, hand sanitizer supplies, cleaning/disinfecting procedures
- Follow board directives regarding surveillance, reporting, off-site and non-essential school activities
- Provide information on any affected students and staff in accordance with normal reporting practices (ie, “Communicable Diseases” and “Illness/Injury of Children at School” policies)

Pandemic Period: Phase 6 (Locally)

(Note: The following considerations are to guide, and actual response shall be based more on local proximity and rate of advancement as determined through interaction with the Department of Health)

Regional Level:

- Convene joint meeting of the Emergency Management and Senior Management Teams
- Adopt enhanced monitoring (24-7) and maintain ongoing communications with Department of Health as needed
- Re-evaluate cancellation of off-site and non-essential school activities or restriction of public access to buildings (ie, after hours school programs, community activities, night or summer school, extracurricular activities, field trips, school food programs, home instruction, internal and public meetings, professional development activities, volunteer programs)
- Provide critical incident resources where required
- Monitor ability to operate schools based on staff availability, student attendance, and in consultation with the Department of Health and Department of Education
- Proceed with announcements of any program, activity or school cancellations according to communication plan
- In the event of school utilization as alternative pandemic treatment centres, review and arrange for responsibilities outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement

School Level:

- Inform staff, students and parents of accessibility to relevant information and distribute any educational materials
- Encourage parents to provide information on student absences
- Implement restrictions and cancellations and notifications of such as directed
- Ensure enhanced infection control methods are implemented
- In the event of school utilization as an alternative pandemic centre, assist as required by the board

Post Peak Period

(Note: The following considerations are to guide, and actual response shall be based more on local proximity and rate of advancement as determined through interaction with the Department of Health)

Regional Level:

- Return to routine monitoring and maintain ongoing communications with Department of Health
- Perform inspection of any schools utilized as alternative treatment centres with South Shore Health
- Implement any necessary thorough cleaning/disinfection processes at affected sites, including buses
- Review ability to re-open schools based on staff availability, student attendance, health official recommendations, and in consultation with the Department of Education.
- Consider means of reminding returning employees to follow self-isolation recommendations from the Department of Health
- Consider opening closed sites with staff first and provide briefing materials
- Consider re-establishing programs based on essential programs first, and then off-site and non-essential activities, and public access last.
- Provide any information as recommended by the Department of Health for reopening day
- Provide critical incident resources for counseling and support for staff and students
- Monitor and prepare for any potential resurgence of pandemic

School Level:

- Brief staff and provide information to parents and students on re-opening
- Provide critical incident resources for counseling and support for staff and students
- Monitor and report any attendance changes on any affected students and staff in accordance with normal reporting practices (refer to “Communicable Diseases” and “Illness/Injury of Children at School” policies)

Post Pandemic Period

Regional Level:

- Emergency Management Team conduct debriefing, review of pandemic period, procedures, responses, and recovery
- Modify Pandemic Influenza Plan accordingly

School Level:

- Conduct debriefing, review procedures, responses and recovery
- Communicate observations and concerns to school board Emergency Management Team

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