

# Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools

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# Overview

## Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools

### **Purpose of the Plan:**

To develop an integrated community/school response plan in the event of an influenza outbreak on a pandemic scale.

### **Background:**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus appears against which the human population has no immunity. Increased urbanization with over crowding conditions as well as the increase in global travel makes it more likely that epidemics due to a new influenza virus would quickly spread world wide” (WHO, Draft November, 2004). Influenza is a highly contagious respiratory virus that is responsible for the annual epidemics in the United States and other countries. Each year an average of 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 die in the U.S. from influenza infection or secondary complications. (Dubuque Pandemic Plan, 2006). During an influenza pandemic the level of illness and death from influenza will likely increase dramatically worldwide (Iowa Department of Public Health – IDPH, 2006). It is likely that 15%- 35% of Iowa’s population could be affected by a pandemic flu outbreak creating high levels of illness and death, contributing to significant disruptions to our economy, our way of life, and potentially to our schools (IDPH, 2005).

### **Rationale:**

At the directive of the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Polk County Health Department (PCHD) the National Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools has been developed for the Polk County School Districts.

**Goal:**

To establish community partnerships and the lines of communication between School Districts and Health Departments located in Polk, Madison, and Dallas counties that will facilitate an orderly and efficient response to any potential pandemic threat to our communities.

**Plan Strategies:**

The intent and purpose of this plan is to assist in managing the impact of a pandemic threat on schools by determining ways to:

1. *Prevent the spread of illness within school communities.*
2. *Effectively partner with state and local health departments in the containment of the illness.*
3. *Sustain educational function and district operations.*

**Chain of Command:**

The Polk County Health Representative will initiate the countywide and District-response by contacting the Superintendents of Polk County Schools. The Polk County School Superintendents will initiate their in-district response by activating the Crisis Intervention process and Polk County Influenza Response Plan for Schools.

**What will this mean to Polk County School Employees:**

Each department and every employee of a Polk County school district will be impacted by the initiation of this response system. Specific responsibilities and duties can be found in this booklet outlining the Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools. The plan is organized according to the Pandemic Phases. The plan will be reviewed after each implementation and a minimum of annually when the program has not been utilized in the past 12-month period. Please review this booklet. Become familiar with the duties and responsibilities that pertain to your specific position in the district. This plan will require a team effort to be successfully implemented. Thank you in advance for your commitment to this plan. Your participation in the execution of this plan could be lifesaving.

**General Preparedness and Prevention Responsibilities for All District Employees:**

1. Promote healthy hygiene habits throughout the school (i.e. frequent hand washing after restroom use, prior to and after meals/snacks, covering coughs and sneezes, disposal of waste materials in safe and efficient manner).
2. Prevent personal exposure to germs and illness causing pathogens by:
  - a. Practicing Universal Precautions at all times.
  - b. Routine disinfection of wiping desktops and telephone hand pieces with disinfectant solution during periods of high incidence of illness.
  - c. Periodic cleaning of computer keyboard equipment per district technology recommendations.
  - d. Consider installation of waterless hand washing stations at designated sites for staff and student use. (Note: Iowa Department of Public Health recommends that waterless hand wash must have 60% or higher alcohol content.)
  - e. Routine disinfection of health office cots and other shared surfaces after each student or staff intervention.
  - f. Routine disinfection of common shared surfaces, paperwork surfaces, counters, railings, and door knobs/handle mechanisms. Cafeteria tabletops and seats should be disinfected after each seating of students.
  - g. Routine disinfection of common shared surfaces, such as bus seats, railings, steering wheel and shift levers.
3. Report any signs of illness in the classroom or office to the School Nurse. Refer student(s) or staff member(s) to the School Nurse for evaluation of illness.
4. Do not report to work or school if an employee or student experiences any of the following symptoms. Follow district protocol for reporting an absence or illness.
  - a. A temperature of 101°, unless there is a known noninfectious cause of fever (American Academy of Pediatrics, School Health Policy and Practice, 2004, page 34). The School Nurse can exercise discretion and exclude at a lower temperature in the presence of other symptoms of communicable illness or when symptoms are persistent, not conducive to school participation or felt to be at risk of spreading illness to others.
  - b. Repeated episodes of vomiting or diarrhea.

- c. An undiagnosed rash associated with fever or behavior changes suggestive of contagious disease.
  - d. A persistent productive cough.
  - e. A headache associated with fever or vomiting.
  - f. A severe sore throat associated with fever.
5. Strongly encourage voluntary participation in annual influenza or flu shot clinics.
  6. Review district crisis and pandemic planning strategies as warranted, or at minimum on an annual basis.
  7. Be familiar with the valuable role each student, family, employee, School Board Members, and community has in the execution of this Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools.
  8. In the event that schools would be closed by order of the Polk County Health Department, students and staff will be directed to return home during school closure. Closing school is a last resort and is only effective for disease containment if the staff and students eliminate contact with others by staying home.

## Specific Roles and Responsibilities of School Personnel

The World Health Organization has established phases of responding to a pandemic threat. The roles and responsibilities to be initiated in each phase are indicated as follows.

### Inter-Pandemic Phase

**Phase I:** No new influenza virus subtypes; subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. School district response during this phase is geared to providing general information, reviewing/updating existing crisis plans and establishing protocols for illness surveillance and reporting.

| Administration/Human Resources/Principals   | School Nurse and School Health Personnel   |
|---|--|
| <p>1. <u>Participate fully with Polk County Public Health Officials to promote effective planning and aid in communicating pertinent health information.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that district preparedness plans and lines of communication align with Polk County planning efforts and communication networks.</li> <li>• Identify chain of command for each school district and each school building.</li> <li>• Establish defined roles and designate appropriate staff to approve and oversee communications and execute key decision-making regarding school response.</li> <li>• Facilitate a link of communications within each school district that fosters effective, efficient and consistent information sharing between the district and Polk County Health Department. Communication links with the Polk County Health Department will be established with each school district’s Health Supervisor, who will in turn disseminate accurate information to Administration, employees and students/families.</li> <li>• Determine who will serve as the primary district media spokesperson. Notify Polk County Health Department Public Information Officer at #286-3926.</li> </ul> <p>2. <u>Manage material resources for the district:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate actions to reduce the spread of virus through thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the facilities. Recommend that each district maintain an adequate supply of cleaning supplies, including bottles of disinfectant and wiping cloths for each classroom, protective wear (masks, gloves, goggles), waste liners, restroom supplies (hand soap, toweling, and toilet paper) of cleaning supplies, trash can liners, facial tissues and restroom products. Potential areas of</li> </ul> | <p>1. <u>Surveillance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop procedures for reporting illness trends to the Polk County Health Department.</li> <li>• Develop standardized methods for collecting surveillance data.</li> <li>• In-service staff responsible for collecting and reporting data.</li> <li>• Partner with Polk County Health Department in developing web based reporting system.</li> </ul> <p>2. Investigation: None at this time</p> <p>3. <u>Education/Communication:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate release of information aimed at increasing general pandemic/influenza awareness.</li> <li>• Promote health hygiene habits throughout the school district (i.e.</li> </ul> |

**(Continued Phase I Administration/Human Services/Principals)**

contamination or concerns should be reported to district supervisors.

- Manage food supplies and inventory. Develop contingency plan in event of limited arrival of food shipments. Food Service administrators will develop contingency plans in the event of absenteeism due to illness, for coverage of essential food services duties. Cross training of food service personnel may be indicated to support continuity of food service during high absenteeism.
- Ensure that district plan addresses specific duties of each individual and includes provisions to:
  - \* Plan for assistance for students with special needs, students in special facilities and those who do not speak English.
  - \* Provide for psychosocial support services.
  - \* Advise staff, students and families where to find up-to-date and reliable information.

**3. Provide for and effectively manage Human Resources and maintain the functioning of the district business office.**

- Identify essential staff and functions. Prioritize functions and designate back up staffing plan to cover essentials to continuing the operation of vital district services.
- Establish systematic process to track rate of staff absences due to illness.
- Develop a staffing contingency or back-up plan for functioning with 30%-40% of school employees absent due to personal or family illness.
- Address potential implications for district sick leave policies. Involve local collective bargaining units for contract issues as applicable.
- Establish mechanism to aid in cross training staff to maintain vital academic personnel and support services.
- Identify a process for maintaining the operations of the Central Office including budget, payroll and ongoing communications with employees, students, families, School Board and key school stakeholders.

**4. Promote the continuity of educational functions.**

- Plan for student absences.
- Develop alternative methods of continuing educational progress in the event of a prolonged school closure (i.e. internet posting of assignments on school websites, e-mailing assignments, community access television stations, phone messaging, establishing virtual schools, etc.)

**(Continued Phase I School Nurse and School Health Personnel)**

frequent hand washing after restroom use or prior to and after mealtime, covering coughs and sneezes, use and proper disposal of personal tissue, staying home when ill).

- Establish methods and messages to regularly communicate with families, encouraging healthy lifestyles.

**4. Prophylaxis/Treatment: None at this time.**

**5. Community/Containment:**

- Work with administration to identify person(s) responsible to ensure adequate supplies are consistently present to practice good hand washing.
- Distribute information explaining good hand washing techniques and illness prevention strategies.
- Review Universal Precautions and building emergency plan with staff at least annually.

**Inter-Pandemic Phase**

**Phase II:** As above, but circulating animal subtype poses substantial human disease. School district response during this phase is aimed at progressing in the planning process and developing the partnerships between the district and community health entities as more becomes known about the potential health risk.

| <b>Administration/Human Resources/Principals</b>  | <b>School Nurse and School Health Personnel</b>   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue with establishing district response and emergency response plans. Share plans with staff, families and community stakeholders.</li> <li>2. Continue to educate families about the illness and the district’s plan for managing illness if the disease enters the school/district</li> <li>3. Work with Polk County Health Department to determine what information needs to be shared with students, families and staff. Determine information that needs translation. Identify and recruit translators.</li> <li>4. Formalize the chain of command in case of illness both in the district and building specific levels.</li> <li>5. Confer with surrounding school districts to establish partnerships in providing like services in critical operational and curricular areas to maintain the continuity of instruction should the spread of illness becomes widespread in the region.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Surveillance:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain standardized surveillance practices with routine daily web based reporting to the Polk County Health Department.</li> <li>• Report to the district Health Supervisor and the PCHD when the rate of absence due to illness of students and staff with like illness reaches a rate of 10% or greater. Monitor and report the rate of illness over 10% daily to the Polk County Health Department by calling #286-3890 until the rate of absence returns to normal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <u>Investigation:</u> None at this time</li> <li>3. <u>Education/Communication:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as a resource for interpretation and understanding of all health communications.</li> <li>• Develop procedures for school health providers to communicate with the PCHD during normal and emergency conditions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. <u>Prophylaxis/Treatment:</u> Educate public about the importance of obtaining an annual flu shot.</li> <li>5. <u>Community Containment:</u> Anticipate school community response to the possibility of an illness/outbreak and support the PCHD in providing accurate information to school communities and in addressing public concerns.</li> </ol> |

**Pandemic Alert Phase**

**Phase III:** Human infection with new subtype, no human to human spread or rare spread to close contact. During this phase the school response centers around formalizing the Polk County Pandemic Flu Response Plan for Schools and communicating it to key stakeholders. Additional emphasis is place on surveillance and preventive measures.

| <b>Administration/Human Resources/Principals</b>  | <b>School Nurse and School Health Personnel</b>   | <b>District/Classroom Staff</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the Polk County Pandemic Flu Response Plan for Schools and stage an exercise of the plan.</li> <li>2. Evaluate the results of the plan and revise if necessary.</li> <li>3. Support the work of the PCHD in reinforcing to staff and families the recommendations for maintaining good overall health status and receiving immunization updates if warranted.</li> <li>4. Administrators are encouraged to discuss the possibility of developing regional planning committees to address academic and operational aspects of the Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools.</li> <li>5. Share Polk County Pandemic Flu Response Plan for Schools with District insurance carriers, District health</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Surveillance</u>: Review immunization status of students (if applicable). Identify students and staff who are medically unstable and/or immunocompromised.</li> <li>2. <u>Education/Communication</u>:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform school administrators of upgrade to Pandemic Alert status. Review surveillance protocols and protocols for school exclusion.</li> <li>• Serve as a professional resource to school administrators as the pandemic plan is initiated and sustained in the school setting.</li> <li>• Review and share information about disease prevention distributed by the Public Health Department, Health Services and/or School Administrators.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <u>Prophylaxis/Treatment</u>: Continue to encourage public to obtain flu vaccine. Share information about community flu clinics.</li> <li>4. <u>Community/Containment</u>:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent personal exposure to germs and illness causing pathogens by wearing protective gear such as gloves, masks and goggles as needed.</li> <li>• Disinfect cots and other shared surfaces after each use.</li> <li>• Dispose of waste materials in safe and efficient manner. Liners will be needed in all waste cans that are collecting potentially contaminated materials.</li> <li>• Assess ill students and staff who present to the Health</li> </ul> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reinforce good hand washing practices.</li> <li>2. Refer students or staff with illness symptoms to the School Nurse for assessment/care.</li> <li>3. Discuss and develop a process to promote the continuity of educational process. Ideas include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-arranging lesson plans for substitute’s use in event of teacher absence due to personal or family illness.</li> <li>• Posting homework assignments on Internet via in-district programs, using phone-messaging system, or e-mailing assignments to students homes.</li> <li>• Collecting and preparing packets of take-home assignments for pick-up in main office or postal mail delivery.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> |

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|---|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Continued Phase III Administration/Human Services/Principals)</b></p> <p>insurance carriers, local emergency response teams, hospitals and other health care agencies and neighboring schools and districts.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Continued Phase III School Nurse and School Health Personnel)</b></p> <p>Office. Exclude those meeting the exclusion criteria: Students should stay home with temperature of 101°, unless there is a known noninfectious cause of fever, repeated episodes of vomiting or diarrhea, an undiagnosed rash associated with fever or behavior changes suggestive of contagious disease, a persistent productive cough, a headache associated with fever or vomiting, or a severe sore throat associated with fever. The School Nurse can exercise discretion and exclude at a lower temperature in the presence of other symptoms of communicable illness or when symptoms are persistent, not conducive to school participation or felt to be at risk of spreading illness to others.</p> |  |
|---|---|--|

**Pandemic Alert**

**Phase IV:** Small clusters with limited human to human transmission, highly localized spread..

School district response during this phase would focus on continuing to review the specific aspects of the plan and identifying key staff who will be first responders should the illness extend into the state or school community. Assuring that all understand their roles and responsibilities. Increased surveillance and follow-up will occur as inherent risk of illness or the absence rate for students and/or staff increases.

| <b>Administration/Human Resources/Principals</b>  | <b>School Nurse and School Health Personnel</b>   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to respond to questions and concerns raised by school community. Support the work of the PCHD in distributing relevant updates.</li> <li>2. Review and suspend student attendance policies, testing policies, athletic and extracurricular activities that give incentives for attendance and/or participation during periods of high absenteeism.</li> <li>3. Review options for school continuity and specific strategies to respond to gaps in service delivery resulting in staff absences.</li> <li>4. Identify key school staff and priority groups that need to receive vaccination in the first round of inoculation if available.</li> <li>5. Assess the financial impact of potential altered scheduling and school closure.</li> <li>6. Establish staffing plans to cover critical health needs if building health professional becomes ill.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Surveillance:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with routine surveillance practices and weekly and/or daily reporting to the PCHD. Maintain daily review of absenteeism rates and report absenteeism rates that exceed 10% to Polk County Health Department by calling #286-3890.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <u>Investigation:</u> None at this time.</li> <li>3. <u>Education/Communication:</u> Continue to serve as a resource to administrators and to teachers in conveying accurate information about the illness.</li> <li>4. <u>Prophylaxis/Treatment:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote strategies for prophylaxis and containment.</li> <li>• Monitor supplies needed to perform good hand washing are readily available.</li> <li>• Working in collaboration with PCHD, discuss and develop a screening process to assess call-in symptoms in students or staff absences. (See example form in Appendix I)</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. <u>Community/Containment:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to assess and exclude persons with illness symptoms that fit the exclusion criteria.</li> <li>• Remove the ill person(s) from school as quickly as possible to minimize exposures. Isolate ill students as much as possible as they exit the building. Direct the individual to stay home until the illness has resolved or their physician or public health professionals release them for return to work/school</li> <li>• Facilitate referral processes as indicated as pertains to specific strain.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> |

**Pandemic Alert**

**Phase V:** Large clusters, but human to human spread is still localized, virus increasingly better adapted to humans but not fully transmissible.

School district response during this phase involves updating all school entities on pandemic status and school response plans, extending surveillance practices and responding to changes in school illness experiences, and providing anticipatory support to county health providers.

| <b>Administration/Human Resources/Principals</b>   | <b>School Nurse and School Health Personnel</b>   | <b>District Staff</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. Continue to clarify decision-making authority and process.</p> <p>2. Review roles and responsibilities with key school responders.</p> | <p>1. <u>Surveillance:</u> Begin tracking specific symptoms as developed in Phase IV and report to PCHD.</p> <p>2. <u>Investigation:</u> Respond to CDC requests for follow-up with travelers from endemic areas.</p> <p>3. <u>Education/Communication:</u> Provide support to Polk County Health Department in sharing information prepared by health department entities about general risk reduction, vaccine availability for priority groups.</p> <p>4. <u>Prophylaxis/Treatment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate the screening process of any call-in of a student or staff absence using the basic intake form designed in Phase IV. This form will record the type of symptoms exhibited by the ill individual. Information data will be reported to the PCHD and will remain securely filed in a designated location (might be the Health Office or Administrative Office). This information will be destroyed at the conclusion of the pandemic event when cleared to do so by the PCHD.</li> </ul> | <p>1. Continue preventive practices as outlined in the “General Preparedness...” section non pages 5-6 of the plan.</p> <p>2. Remain informed of pandemic activities and school response plan.</p> <p>3. Follow-up with PCHD recommendations that could impact personal health and preventive measure to remain healthy.</p> <p>4. Confer with School Nurse regarding strategies to minimize germ transmission in the building and classroom setting. Where possible/feasible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space student desks three feet apart or in small pods or clusters.</li> <li>• Discourage prolonged congregation in hallways or entryways during passing, arrival and dismissal times.</li> <li>• Limit group activities and interaction between classes.</li> <li>• May need to cancel classes such as choir, band, orchestra, and/or other activities that typically place</li> </ul> |

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|  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Continued Phase V School Nurse and School Health Personnel)</b></p> <p>5. <u>Community Containment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist PCHD in planning for mass vaccination clinics should the need arise.</li> <li>• Coordinate the administration of any other prophylaxis/treatment as directed and made available by the PCHD.</li> <li>• Disinfect health office cots and other shared surfaces after each student or staff intervention.</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Continued Phase V District Personnel)</b></p> <p>individuals in close proximity. May be directed by administration to stagger lunchtimes and shorten time in the cafeteria to minimize the number of students in the cafeteria at one time. This may require schedule changes and flexibility to accommodate the component of the pandemic plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Per district operations and/or district procedure, promote frequent air exchanges in the classroom by closing the door to the hallway, opening window if available and as weather and outdoor temperatures warrant.</li> </ul> <p>4. Disinfect daily (or more often if possible) common or shared surfaces, paperwork surfaces, counters, railings, and door knobs/handle mechanisms. Cafeteria tabletops and seats should be disinfected after each seating of students.</p> <p>5. Disinfect daily (or more often if possible) common shared surfaces, such as bus seats, railings, steering wheel and shift levers.</p> |
|--|--|--|

**Pandemic Phase**

**Phase VI:** Increased and sustained transmission in general population. Outside of the U.S.

**School Nurse and School Health Personnel**

1. Surveillance/Investigation:

- Continue routine surveillance practices
- Discuss with the PCHD anticipated changes in surveillance should illness extend into the U.S.
- Continue to monitor persons who have recently traveled to endemic areas.

2. Education/Communication: Continue to support PCHD in the effort to inform and educated the community on general risk information and to recruit volunteers.

3. Prophylaxis/Treatment: Support PCHD efforts to establish vaccination clinics for school population.

4. Community Containment:

- Review treatment protocols, specific treatment scenarios and reporting procedures with school health care providers.
- Ensure that recommended supplies needed to minimize illness spread in the Health Office are available (based on list suggested by PCHD taking into account specific illness and the mode of transmission).

**Pandemic Phase**

**Phase VII: In the U.S. but not in Iowa**

| <b>Administration/Human Resources/Principals</b>  | <b>School Nurse and School Health Personnel</b>  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review procedures for communicating with PCHD and the media during normal and emergency conditions.</li> <li>2. Review how decision-making will take place between school district and the PCHD.</li> <li>3. Aid the PCHD efforts in announcing the change alert status and publicize specific risk reduction strategies. Implement procedures to communicate essential information to staff, students and families. Provide translation services as needed.</li> <li>4. Final review of planned procedures for sending ill staff and students home related to planning changes in normal school operations. Establish back-up staffing plans to cover critical health needs if the building health professional becomes ill.</li> <li>5. Convene District Crisis teams to anticipate how emotional and psychological support will be provided if there is a possibility of resultant loss of life in the school community.</li> <li>6. Establish back-up staffing plans to cover critical school needs if regular staff in critical operational positions become ill.</li> <li>7. Assist the PCHD in updating families, staff and school stakeholders about likely practices and steps that may anticipate if self-isolation or quarantine procedures become necessary. Reassure the public that closing school would be a last resort action taken on the direction of the PCHD as a measure to contain the spread of the disease to the community. Inform staff and families that in the rare event that schools would be closed, students and school staff would be directed to return home and remain there through the duration of the school closure.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Surveillance</u>: Increase frequency of reporting to daily. If the rate of school absences due to like illness symptoms exceeds 10%, also collect and report data on total number of persons in the household who are ill with like symptoms.</li> <br/> <li>2. <u>Investigation</u>: Review anticipated follow-up protocols with PCHD in advance of case being confirmed in Iowa.</li> <br/> <li>3. <u>Education/Communication</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to serve as a professional resource in interpreting related information and clarifying questions and concerns.</li> <li>• Assist school staff in instituting strategies recommended by the PCHD to maximize student spacing and distancing individuals to avoid the spread of pathogens.</li> </ul> </li> <br/> <li>4. <u>Prophylaxis/Treatment</u>: Continue to support the work of the PCHD in conducting mass vaccination clinics (as indicated and allowed by available vaccine).</li> <br/> <li>5. <u>Community Containment</u>: Continue to do surveillance and appropriate school exclusion. Institute additional containment measures as recommended by PCHD.</li> </ol> |

**Pandemic Phase****Phase VIII: In Iowa**

School district response during this phase is to take the necessary action to minimize the spread of the illness into the school communities and to respond in appropriate ways if the illness presents itself in school districts.

**Initiation of a County-Wide Response**

The Public Health Department representative for the county in which the affected school district resides will initiate the county-wide and district-wide response by contacting the Superintendent(s) of the county school districts. The Superintendent of each school district will initiate the in-district response by activating the District's Crisis Intervention Plan.

**What Will This Mean to the School District Employee?**

Each department and every employee of the district will be impacted by the initiation of this Polk County Pandemic Influenza Response Plan for Schools. General staff roles and responsibilities are outlined in the "General Preparedness and Prevention Responsibilities for All District Employees."

**Superintendent and Key Administrative Staff and Building Principals**

1. Participate fully with public health officials to implement their recommendations and convey critical information to students, staff, families and key school stakeholders.
2. Support district employees as they perform duties as delegated and assigned within this plan.
3. Provide for and manage material resources for the district.

4. Provide for and manage Human Resources of the district.
5. Promote continuity of educational functions and follow public health recommendations.
6. Maintain business operations of the district.
7. Monitor the cumulative stress on care-givers within the school system (office staff, School Nurses, teacher assistants, school counselors, and crisis team members). Provide respite care services and opportunities to debrief those showing undue signs of stress. Modify work roles or add volunteers and/or support staff as needed.

### **School Nurses and School Health Personnel**

1. **Surveillance:** Continue to monitor daily surveillance and reporting practices. Tailor activities to best address the data needs required by county and state health officials.
2. **Investigation:** Support the work of the county health departments in investigating confirmed cases and providing follow-up with close contacts/persons referred by community agencies for follow-up care.
3. **Education/Communication:**
  - a. Coordinate with PCHD to share any and all information with families, students, staff, and school stakeholders. Provide translation services as needs dictate and resources available.
  - b. Provide staff updates related to extent of the illness. Instruct staff on specific signs and symptoms to report to the School Nurse. Review resources available to provide counseling support.
  - c. Consult with school staff in implementing health department strategies aimed at minimizing the spread of infection within the school environment.
4. **Prophylaxis/Treatment:**
  - a. Continue assistance with mass vaccination clinics and any other available prophylaxis/treatment as warranted.

- b. Provide strict adherence to PCHD directives related to school exclusion practices in cases of suspicious symptomology and by management of confirmed cases.
  - c. Identify students, families, and staff who may need long-term physical and emotional support. Work with community health care providers to establish access to needed health care services.
5. Community Containment:
- a. School Health Care Providers such as School Nurse and School Health Paraprofessionals are to wear recommended personal protective equipment while caring for individuals who present with possible influenza symptoms.
  - b. Strict adherence to good hand washing practices, health office surfaces disinfection methods and appropriate disposal of infected materials should be consistently enforced.
  - c. Support PCHD in implementing school strategies to reduce the spread of pathogens and in implementing isolation and quarantine procedures if necessary.

### Teachers

1. Report any signs of illness in the classroom to the School Nurse.
2. Wipe down desk tops and telephone hand pieces daily with a disinfectant during high incidence of illness.
3. Follow PCHD recommendations to specifically minimize the spread of illness in the classroom.
4. Promote continuity of the educational process utilizing one or more of the following strategies:
  - a. Pre-arrange lesson plans for substitutes use in the event of teacher absence due to personal or family illness.
  - b. Posting home work assignments on the Internet system or e-mail assignments to student homes.
  - c. Collect and prepare packets of take home assignments for pick-up in the Main Office or postal mail delivery.

### **Counselors**

1. Provide emotional-psychological support to students and staff.
2. Follow-up with staff and student referrals to other community agencies for intervention as need indicates.
3. Monitor effects of cumulative stress on school care givers and bring needs to the attention of the building administrator.
4. Provide safe area for students or staff to utilize during times of high stress or when emotionally distraught.
5. Provide educational materials to families and staff on topics such as how to support loved ones while recovering from illness, common symptoms of grief or loss and describe aspects of effective versus ineffective coping mechanisms.

### **Food Service**

1. Prevent personal exposure to germs and illness-causing pathogens by:
  - a. Practicing Universal Precautions at all times.
  - b. Performing kitchen and cafeteria duties according to established protocols.
  - c. Utilizing mechanical dishwasher at appropriate temperature setting and for full-cycle washing.
  - d. Preparing foods as directed, achieve and maintain ideal temperatures for hot and cold foods.
2. Maximize personal spacing and distance to reduce the spread of pathogens. Avoid close contact with others that may be ill. Student lunch rotations may be altered to allow fewer students in the cafeteria at one time. The allowed time for eating may be shortened to decrease congregational time, therefore decreasing potential exposures.
3. Disinfect daily (or more often if possible) common or shared surfaces. Cafeteria tabletops and seats should be disinfected after each seating of students. Standard cleaning solutions or products are adequate – no specialized solutions are indicated. Detailed information regarding cleaning solutions can be found on the Iowa Public Health website at: [www.idph.ia.us/pandemic](http://www.idph.ia.us/pandemic).
4. Where operationally possible, promote frequent air exchanges and increase ventilation in the building. During the day increase air exchanges in the kitchen and cafeteria. Following each school day, thoroughly ventilate the building by either opening all doors and windows or by turning up the air conditioning or heating systems to promote air exchange.

5. Dispose of waste materials in safe and efficient manner. Liners will be needed in all waste cans that are collecting potentially contaminated materials.
6. Report any potential areas of contamination or concern to the Supervisor.

### **Building and Grounds**

1. Take measures to regularly ensure that adequate supplies for good hand washing practices are readily available.
2. Institute the following school cleaning recommendations during a pandemic outbreak:
  - a. Disinfect daily common or shared surfaces, desktops, counters, railings and door/knobs/handle mechanisms. Standard cleaning solutions are adequate – no need for specialized solutions are indicated. Detailed information regarding cleaning solutions can be found on the Iowa Public Health website at [www.idph.state.ia.us/pandemic](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pandemic).
  - b. Dispose of waste materials in safe and efficient manner. Liners will be needed in all waste cans that are collecting potentially contaminated materials.
3. Where operationally possible, promote frequent air exchanges and increase ventilation in the building. During the day increase air exchanges in the building. Following each school day, thoroughly ventilate the building by either opening all doors and windows or by turning up the air conditioning or heating systems to promote air exchange.
4. Filters of air conditioning or heat exchange units should be cleaned and changed frequently.
5. Report any potential areas of contamination or concern to the Supervisor.

### **Transportation**

1. Apply the following bus cleaning practices during a pandemic outbreak
  - a. Disinfect daily (or more often if possible) common shared surfaces, such as bus seats, railings, steering wheel and shift levers. Standard cleaning solutions are adequate – no specialized products are necessary. Detailed information regarding cleaning solutions can be found on the Iowa Department of Public Health website at [www.idph.state.ia.us/pandemic](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pandemic).

- b. Dispose of waste materials in a safe and efficient manner. Liners may be needed in all waste cans that are collecting potentially contaminated materials.
- c. Where operationally possible, promote frequent air exchanges and increase ventilation in the bus. Following each school day thoroughly ventilate the bus by opening bus doors and windows.
- d. Report any potential areas of contamination or concern to the Supervisor.

### **Students and Parents/Guardians**

1. Promote and reinforce healthy hygiene habits (i.e. frequent hand washing after restroom use or prior to and after meals remembering to rub hands together after creating a lather for 10-15 seconds for best results, covering coughs and sneezes, use and proper disposal of personal tissues).
2. Prevent personal exposure to germs and illness-causing pathogens by:
  - a. Not attending school if students are ill. Students should stay home with temperature of 101°, unless there is a known noninfectious cause of fever, repeated episodes of vomiting or diarrhea, an undiagnosed rash associated with fever or behavior changes suggestive of contagious disease, a persistent productive cough, a headache associated with fever or vomiting, or a severe sore throat associated with fever. The School Nurse can exercise discretion and exclude at a lower temperature in the presence of other symptoms of communicable illness or when symptoms are persistent, not conducive to school participation or felt to be at risk of spreading illness to others.
  - b. Not sharing drinking glasses or eating utensils.
  - c. Encourage eating a well-balanced diet and getting plenty of rest during illness.
  - d. Contacting family's primary health care provider for questions and/or concerns.
  - e. Disinfecting commonly shared surfaces.
  - f. Students – Contact School Nurse if feeling ill at school.

- g. Parents – Be prepared to pick up sick child from school as soon as possible if notified by school personnel
- 3. Communications will be forwarded to families as appropriate via school newsletter, website postings, posters, video segments per close circuit television, or printed materials. Health communications will be distributed through the schools under the direction of the PCHD, Health Services or Administration.
- 4. Discourage participation in large group activities/events in times of high incidence of infection.
- 5. Isolate family members as appropriate to minimize further spread of infection.
- 6. Classes or activities that typically place individuals in close proximity may need to be cancelled.
- 7. Be aware that administration may take measures to decrease close student contact such as staggering lunchtimes or shortening time in the cafeteria, to minimize the number of students in the cafeteria at one time. This may require changes and flexibility to accommodate this component of the pandemic plan.
- 8. Promote frequent air exchanges in the home by opening windows if available and as weather and outdoor temperatures warrant.
- 9. Schools will continue to promote continuity of educational process. In the event of school closure, alternative educational strategies will be announced.

## Resources and References

[rkozin@co.polk.ia.us](mailto:rkozin@co.polk.ia.us), #286-3798

Polk County Health Department - #286-3798

<http://www.polkcounty.iowa.gov/health>

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us>

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/references.htm>

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## Appendix I

## Example of a Pandemic Planning Screening Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type: \_\_\_\_\_

| (√) | Name | Staff | Student | Fever | Nausea | Vomiting | Diarrhea | Cough | Head-<br>ache | Body<br>Aches | Rash | Other | Contact<br>Phone # |
|-----|------|-------|---------|-------|--------|----------|----------|-------|---------------|---------------|------|-------|--------------------|
| 1   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 2   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 3   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 4   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 5   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 6   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 7   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 8   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 9   |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 10  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 11  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 12  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 13  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 14  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 15  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 16  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 17  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |
| 18  |      |       |         |       |        |          |          |       |               |               |      |       |                    |

