



Pandemic Preparedness Tips for Schools

| Everyday Preventive Actions | Interventions Reserved for a Pandemic |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home when sick. Stay home for at least 24 hours after no signs of fever without medications. • Cover coughs/sneezes with tissue. • Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (use 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available). • Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared for staff/students to stay home if someone at home is sick. • Increase space between people at school/daycare to at least three feet. • Modify, postpone or cancel large school/daycare events. • Temporarily dismiss students attending childcare facilities, K-12 schools, or institutions of higher education. |

Before a Pandemic Occurs: Plan

- ✓ **Meet with your emergency operations coordinator or planning team to update emergency operations plan.** Review all aspects of your school, such as personnel, systems, services and other resources.
- ✓ **Establish relationships with key community partners and stakeholders.** When forming key relationships, include the local health department, hospitals, businesses and community leaders. Clearly define each partner's role, responsibility and decision-making authority.
- ✓ **Promote the daily practice of everyday preventive actions.**
- ✓ **Provide flu-prevention supplies in your school.** Have supplies on hand for staff and students, like soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets and disposable face masks.
- ✓ **Plan for staff/student absences.** Develop flexible attendance and sick-leave policies for students and staff. Staff may need to stay home when caring for a sick family member or children in the event of school dismissals. Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff.
- ✓ **Develop staff/student absence tracking method.** Understand the usual absenteeism patterns and determine what level will disrupt your daily activities. If staff/student absenteeism increases to disruptive levels, some facilities may need to close. Please report increased absences to the local health department during a pandemic.
- ✓ **Identify a space to separate sick people if possible.** Designate a space for ill children/staff members who cannot leave school immediately, and designate a nearby separate bathroom just for sick people if possible.
- ✓ **Plan ways to increase the space between people to at least three feet or limit face-to-face contact between people at school.** Several ways include moving desks further apart, leaving empty seats between students, dividing classes into smaller groups, holding outdoor classes, and canceling school-related group meetings and events.
- ✓ **Review your process for planning school events.** Identify actions needed for postponing or canceling events, such as sporting or special events. Consider limiting access to school campuses by non-essential visitors.

- ✓ **Plan ways to continue educating students if schools are temporarily dismissed.** Consider using web-based instruction, e-mail, social media, local television, radio stations or US mail.
- ✓ **Identify strategies to continue essential student services.** Meal, health and social services may need to continue if schools are dismissed.

During a Flu Pandemic: Take Action

- ✓ **Stay informed about the local pandemic situation.** Get up-to-date information about local illness activity from public health officials.
- ✓ **Implement interventions listed in the box above to protect your staff and students.**
- ✓ **Track staff and student absenteeism related to pandemic symptoms.** Work with local public health officials to determine when information needs to be reported.
- ✓ **Implement your risk-assessment and risk-management plan.** Work with local public health officials to conduct health risk assessments at your school if warranted by the severity of the pandemic.
- ✓ **Ensure you are able to adequately continue to provide flu-prevention supplies and distribute health messages to staff, students and their households.**
- ✓ **Accommodate all staff and students who are at high risk for illness complications.** Provide staff who are at high risk for illness complications alternative work arrangements if possible. Offer high-risk students options for completing class work if schools are not dismissed.
- ✓ **Provide information to explain why and when schools may be temporarily dismissed.** Some households may need to make alternative childcare arrangements.
- ✓ **Implement flexible attendance and sick leave policies if possible.** Encourage students/staff to stay home if they are sick or caring for another sick person.
- ✓ **Increase space to at least three feet and limit face-to-face contact at school.**
- ✓ **Postpone or cancel extracurricular activities or large events.**
- ✓ **Separate those who are sick from those who are well.** Send sick staff home immediately. Send students who become sick during school to a designated space until they are able to go home.
- ✓ **Temporarily suspend classes or dismiss school, if recommended by local public health officials.** Put into action strategies for continuing education and essential student services. Discourage staff and students from gathering or socializing in other places when schools are dismissed. Update everyone in your communication chain about when schools will re-open.