

Pandemic Response Plan

Horizon School Division No. 67 Safety Plan



2009

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. **FORWARD**

The Horizon School Division *Pandemic Response Plan* is part of the comprehensive *School Division Safety Plan* which addresses the development of safe and caring school environments, management of critical incidents and emergency response procedures. In the event of an influenza pandemic, Horizon School Division Board will have an important role to play in protecting the health and safety of their students and staff. This *Pandemic Response Plan* is intended to prepare and assist all staff, students and parents for the possibility of an influenza pandemic.

2. **PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

The purpose of the *Pandemic Response Plan* is to provide for the continuation of critical school functions and recovery of suspended services in the event of a pandemic influenza. Many potential contingencies and disasters can be averted, or the damage they can cause can be reduced, if appropriate steps are taken to manage through the event. The stats included in this plan are reflective of estimates suggested by the World Health Organization and Canadian Health Authorities and are for illustrative purposes only.

This completed Pandemic Response Plan outlines the course of action to be taken in the event of a pandemic and processes for to normal business operation. It is intended to:

- Provide an orderly and efficient transition from normal to emergency conditions.
- Provide specific guidelines appropriate for complex and unpredictable occurrences.
- Provide consistency in action.
- Prevent activity inconsistent with the philosophy of this Division.
- Establish a threshold at which an emergency response is triggered and determines who may authorize the response.
- Aid in the transition to desired level of service following a pandemic

3. **OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN**

This Pandemic Response Plan is intended to:

- Define critical operations that must be continued, those operations that can be postponed for a period of time and those operations than can be postponed indefinitely.
- Provide a planned transition for normal operations to emergency operations and maintaining only those functions defined as critical or vital operations.
- Provide a level of security and safety for employees and students.
- Provide standard of testing the Pandemic Response Plan.
- Ensure continuation of services and the protection to student's interests.
- Maintain confidence in schools.
- Meet regulatory requirements imposed by the Province or other regulatory agency.
- Manage successfully through an emergency and reduce the disruption to services.
- Provide leadership by example.

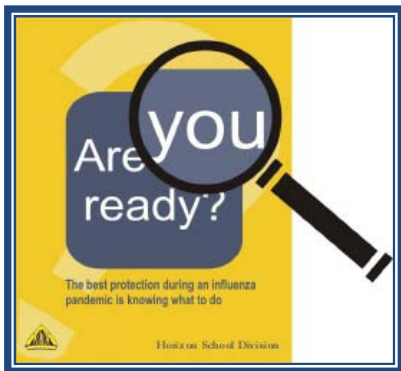
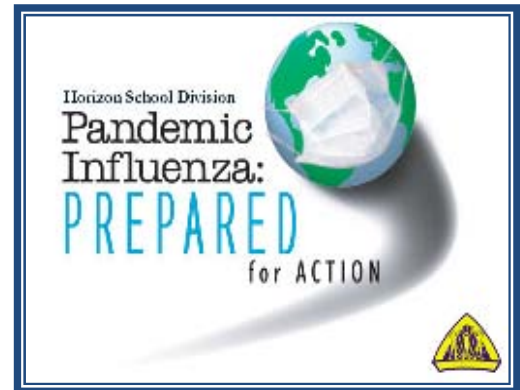
B. BACKGROUND ON PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

1. WHAT IS PANDEMIC INFLUENZA?

The World Health Organization (the “WHO”) defines Pandemic Influenza as an epidemic (sudden outbreak) that is geographically widespread.

An influenza pandemic occurs when a novel influenza-A virus strain emerges with an ability to efficiently spread in human populations and cause significant morbidity and mortality. Since the 1500’s, influenza pandemic has occurred 3 to 4 times per century. In the last century, there were 3 pandemics: the “Spanish Influenza” of 1918 (H1N1), the “Asian Influenza” of 1957 (H2N2) and the “Hong Kong Influenza” of 1968 (H3N2).

In 2004, a new influenza strain – influenza A (H5N1) – was spreading through bird populations across Asia, Africa, and Europe, infecting long-range migratory and domesticated birds, including ducks and chickens. It was feared that this would be the next pandemic. Although it did not materialize it did infect over 400 people with a mortality rate over 62 percent.



Today we are faced with a true pandemic (“swine flu” - H1N1). The epidemiology (clinical spectrum and virulence pattern of the strain) of the first wave H1N1 has been similar to seasonal influenza with slightly greater morbidity and mortality. This can change, however, given increased globalization and the potential for mutation. Pandemic plans need to be flexible to be useful as well as adaptable to a wide range of possible impacts.

2. THE PLAN OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

The Province of Alberta has developed a response plan to a possible pandemic emergency. In 1999, the Government of Alberta began work to prepare the health system and the province for an influenza pandemic. The work was led by Alberta Health and Wellness and involved a range of partners, including other provincial ministries, regional health authorities, municipalities, emergency response agencies, utility and transportation companies, and professional organizations. The Province of Alberta’s response plan will be used in coordination with the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan, prepared by a partnership of federal, provincial, and territorial governments.

The goal of Alberta’s plan is to reduce the number of influenza cases and deaths and to minimize disruptions to daily life by providing access to appropriate prevention, care, and treatment. The plan outlines roles, responsibilities and key activities before, during, and after an influenza pandemic. It is a work in progress, and will be updated and added to as situations change.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

An influenza pandemic is an international health event. International, federal, provincial, and local agencies will work together to respond.

International:

The WHO watches for the emergence of new strains of influenza throughout the world. If an influenza pandemic strain emerges, it will notify federal health authorities and provide information to governments, the media, and the public on immunization and anti-viral medication use.

Federal:

Health Canada will provide nationwide coordination for the influenza response. They will monitor the spread of the disease in Canada, provide links with the WHO and other nations, obtain and distribute vaccines.

A National Pandemic Influenza Committee with representation from provincial, territorial, and the federal governments will coordinate a national influenza response.

Provincial:

Alberta Health Services will lead the health sector response. During an influenza pandemic, the department will establish a Pandemic Response Centre. It will support Alberta Health Services, coordinate vaccine delivery across the province, provide information, collect data on the spread of the disease in Alberta and help resolve any health care issues that may arise. Alberta Municipal Affairs will lead the response regarding the non-health consequences of a pandemic, primarily through Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA). AEMA will communicate with municipalities, monitor the effect of the pandemic on essential services, coordinate volunteer activities and federal assistance programs, and monitor the need for support among families of victims.

Each provincial government department will have contingency plans for the delivery of provincial services and will assist Alberta Health Services, Emergency Management Alberta, and municipalities to respond to a pandemic.

All provincial ministries and municipal governments will have contingency plans for an influenza pandemic, which will include plans to keep essential services operating and identification of back-ups for key personnel.

Local:

Alberta Health Services will allocate services and resources to meet priority health needs. In addition, they will provide information on the number of cases, hospitalizations, deaths from influenza, deliver vaccines and anti-viral drugs, and establish and maintain communications in their regions.

Municipal governments will set priorities for maintaining public safety and other essential public services (fire, police, waste management, water, and utilities), support Alberta Health Services in providing information to the public, and, where necessary, close public buildings and establish alternative care sites for the delivery of health care and immunization to the public.

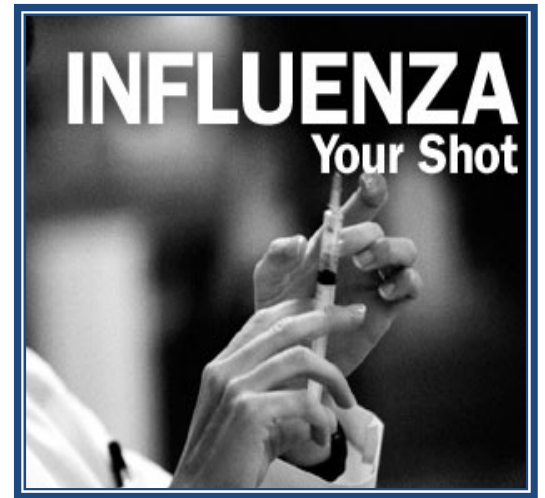
Alberta's pandemic plan (the "*Plan*") includes:

Working with health officials worldwide to look for evidence of disease;

Rapid distribution of a vaccine when it becomes available;

Ensuring the health care system can manage the surge of patients during the pandemic; and

Readying emergency planning services.



PLAN PHASES

The *Plan* is divided into three phases:

1. Pre-Pandemic Phase: a new type of influenza virus has not been detected anywhere or a new strain has been found only in a small number of people outside of Canada.
2. Pandemic Phase: the WHO declares that an influenza pandemic is underway and the new flu is detected in Canada. There will be localized outbreaks of the flu to start, followed by broader outbreaks that will occur in waves.
3. Post-Pandemic Phase: the number of cases and deaths from the flu returns to normal levels and the pandemic is declared to be over.

Action will be taken in the following key areas:

Surveillance;

Immunization;

Health services;

Emergency preparedness; and



5. RISK MANAGEMENT

In risk management, foresight is critical; the focus of pandemic planning is on prevention. In the event of influenza pandemic, it is possible employee absenteeism could be in the 30% to 40% range, with at least 20% absenteeism being likely. For example, employees may be absent due to their own illness, family illness, or employees may not report to work due to the fear of becoming ill. This level of absenteeism could result in school closures. Suppliers and other services upon which School Authorities rely such as garbage removal or food distributors may not be available. This shortage of supplies and services may last a few weeks with several waves of more extreme shortages.

It is important to plan ahead for an influenza pandemic because of the serious impact it may have on a School Jurisdiction. Pandemics evolve quickly and require a co-ordinated and timely response.

Horizon School Division will endeavor to identify and assess exposures to injury and identify critical operations to be maintained during an influenza pandemic, and those operations the Jurisdiction may have to suspend. Plans will be made to prioritize tasks that can be completed with the resources, physical and human, reasonably available to the Division.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

In preparing this plan it is assumed that 35% of the Jurisdiction's staff will either be infected by the influenza and unable to work or to attend at work because they are needed to care for family members.

As pandemics may occur at any time during the year, not necessarily during "flu" season all services offered by the school jurisdiction must be considered in the Pandemic Response Plan.

7. CONTEXT

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO HORIZON SCHOOL JURISDICTION?

Assuming this moderate scenario, 35% of the school population will be infected, that is Horizon School Division students and staff will be observed to be ill and receive some form of medical treatment.

- 50% will seek outpatient care
- 1% will be hospitalized and recover
- 0.4% may die

- If the pandemic is severe:
 - 10% will be hospitalized
 - 2% may die

Absenteeism will be the major issue that Administration and Schools will be forced to deal with. Students and employees will be absent from work for many reasons, including illness, caring for others, fear of going to work/school, pandemic related public health measures (e.g. school closures) and normal baseline absenteeism.

When preparing this plan, consideration was given to:

- The pandemic virus may spread rapidly leaving little or no time to prepare due to the high level of global traffic;
- The pandemic will be widespread with simultaneous outbreaks resulting in a situation where jurisdictions or schools will not be able to rely on neighboring jurisdictions to assist;
- There may be shortages of healthcare, emergency, and essential services personnel due to illness and absenteeism;
- There may be severe disruptions in essential services;
- There may be shortages of equipment and supplies;
- There may be scrutiny from media and the public and fear will be abundant.

C. PANDEMIC PLANNING

1. PANDEMIC PHASES

The World Health Organization has established six distinct phases with reference to geographical location to facilitate Pandemic preparedness planning. (Note: these relate to the spread of the disease not its severity)

WHO PANDEMIC PHASE DESCRIPTIONS AND MAIN ACTIONS BY PHASE

PHASE	DESCRIPTION	MAIN ACTIONS				CONTINUITY OF HEALTH CARE PROVISION
		PLANNING AND COORDINATION	SITUATION MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT	COMMUNICATIONS	REDUCING THE SPREAD OF DISEASE	
PHASE 1	No animal influenza virus circulating among animals have been reported to cause infection in humans.					
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.	Develop, exercise, and periodically review national influenza pandemic preparedness and response plans.	Develop robust national surveillance systems in collaboration with national animal health authorities, and other relevant sectors.	Complete communications planning and initiate communications activities to communicate real and potential risks.	Promote beneficial behaviour in individuals for self protection. Plan for use of pharmaceuticals and vaccines.	Prepare the health system to scale up.
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.					
PHASE 4	Human to human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to sustain community-level outbreaks has been verified.	Direct and coordinate rapid pandemic containment activities in collaboration with WHO to limit or delay the spread of infection.	Increase surveillance. Monitor containment operations. Share findings with WHO and the international community.	Promote and communicate recommended interventions to prevent and reduce population and individual risk.	Implement rapid pandemic containment operations and other activities collaborate with WHO and the international community as necessary.	Activate contingency plans.
PHASE 5	The same identified virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in two or more countries in one WHO region.					
PHASE 6	In addition to the criteria defined in Phase 5, the same virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in at least one other country in another WHO region.	Provide leadership and coordination to multisectoral resources to mitigate the societal and economic impacts.	Actively monitor and assess the evolving pandemic and its impacts and mitigation measures.	Continue providing updates to general public and all stakeholders on the state of pandemic and measures to mitigate risk.	Implement individual, societal, and pharmaceutical measures.	Implement contingency plans for health systems at all levels.
POST PEAK PERIOD	Levels of pandemic influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance have dropped below peak levels.	Plan and coordinate for additional resources and capacities during possible future waves.	Continue surveillance to detect subsequent waves.	Regularly update the public and other stakeholders on any changes to the status of the pandemic.	Evaluate the effectiveness of the measures used to update guidelines, protocols, and algorithms.	Rest, realock resources, revise plans, and rebuild essential services.
POST PANDEMIC PERIOD	Levels of influenza activity have returned to the levels seen for seasonal influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance.	Review lessons learned and share experiences with the international community. Replenish resources.	Evaluate the pandemic characteristics and situation monitoring and assessment tools for the next pandemic and other public health emergencies.	Publicly acknowledge contributions of all communities and sectors and communicate the lessons learned; incorporate lessons learned into communications activities and planning for the next major public health crisis.	Conduct a thorough evaluation of all interventions implemented.	Evaluate the response of the health system to the pandemic and share the lessons learned.

The designation of phases will be included in various locations throughout this plan to assist in determining appropriate responses throughout the cycle of a pandemic event.

A pandemic event will affect the entire world. Assessment of such a global event will likely be determined by the World Health Organization (WHO). Likewise assessments in the provincial and regional jurisdictions will occur as a pandemic event occurs. Many terms used in this plan will be similar or identical to language used by WHO, the provincial government and/or Alberta Health Services . The assessment of the phase of the pandemic, as it relates to this plan, is assumed as a local assessment. This assessment may be determined having taken advice from other authorities; however a local determination will be made by the Superintendent of Schools.

2. SUCCESSION PLAN

It is possible in the event of a pandemic, that senior management may not be capable of functioning in their normal positions.

If a person is not available the person in the position listed immediately below that person on the chart will assume that position.

Superintendent
Associate Superintendent of Programs and Services
Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations
Principals, Supervisors and Coordinators

In the event the Superintendent is not available, the Designate or his/her replacement will assume the responsibilities of the Superintendent. In the event that more than two members of the Superintendent team are not available to assume their leadership responsibilities, the remaining Superintendent shall confer with Principals, Supervisors and Coordinators to determine assignment of responsibilities to members of the Administrator Team (site and division office administrators) in the event that all Superintendents were unavailable at the same time.

It is also recognized that staff in one school or department may be affected by the pandemic to a greater extent than others. In this event, existing staff may be asked to assist in areas of responsibility that are different from their regular staff assignment. The school principal shall identify an acting principal and alternate acting principal in the event both the principal and acting principal are absent at the same time.

3. COMMUNICATION

-See Section 1 (3.2).of the *School Division Safety Plan*

-For the most part, communication will be sent to staff/parents at the direction of AHS public health officials

-Letter templates for communication to staff, parents and community are attached at the end of this Pandemic Plan.

4. **MINIMIZING ILLNESS**

4.1. MINIMIZING ILLNESS AMONG STAFF

Primary strategies which will be used in order to minimize illness among staff include:

- Restrict workplace entry of people with influenza symptoms;
- Promote good personal hygiene practices and workplace cleaning practices;
- Enforce social distancing (3 meter workspace rule, no shaking hands, limit number of meetings);
- Where possible, enable work from home strategies;
- Assist staff who become ill at work as described below;
- Provide flexible worksites and work hours to minimize face to face contact.

The Jurisdiction will ensure that sufficient supplies of hand cleansers and tissues are available in the work place and that used tissues are properly disposed of in a timely manner. The Jurisdiction will also strive to provide a “clean” environment, however it is recognized that a clean environment is not necessarily a “sterilized” environment. Disinfectants will be provided in areas of schools and workplaces deemed to be “high traffic” areas. These will include waterless hand cleanser and spray bottles and wipes which contain disinfectant.



If staff choose to use a mask, such mask would be provided by the staff member. Wearing of masks is not a strategy of Horizon School Division, however, if staff choose to use masks below the P95 standard, they must be disposed of as soon as it becomes moist or after any cough or sneeze, in a waste receptacle and hands must be thoroughly washed and dried after the mask has been discarded. Current research indicates that improper use of a mask may result in increased risk of contracting a virus to the mask wearer. Employees demonstrating respiratory illness at work shall be instructed to leave work and immediately contact a health professional for advice and direction. Infected employees shall not return to work until no longer infectious (as defined by Alberta Health Services). Wearing of masks to reduce the spread of infection in schools is currently not recommended at this time.

There are two types of masks commonly used by health care workers when staff are interacting with clients in a health care setting - surgical masks and N95 respirators. Health care workers follow established infection and prevention control procedures and complete an assessment to determine which type of mask they must wear prior to use. Both masks must be put on and off properly to avoid contaminating oneself and the N95 mask must be fit-tested prior to use to ensure an effective seal.

4.2 MINIMIZING ILLNESS AMONG STUDENTS AND STAFF

While schools within the Division expect to continue to operate during a pandemic event, Horizon School Division will also take steps to minimize the spread of infection. The primary strategy for achieving this is to send staff and students home if they are exhibiting symptoms of respiratory illness. While this action is straight forward with staff (as they can be directed to return home), more preparation is required to accommodate students. To that end when a student is identified as being ill, the student shall be isolated from the unaffected students and staff population, to be held there until the students' parent or guardian can arrange to take them home. Each school shall identify, in advance of a pandemic event (during Phase 1), an isolation room that will provide for the care of ill students until they are picked up. The isolation room shall be established in consultation with the Facilities Manager.

4.2.1 Isolation Room Guidelines:

Characteristics:

- Large enough for size of school (ideally to accommodate up to 10% of students population);
- Water and/or washroom should be easily accessible;
- Room surfaces should be easily cleanable (not carpet);
- Should be isolated from other parts of school where ever possible;
- Near an exit;
- Room shall have communication capability with school office

Cleaning of Isolation Room:

- Custodian to wear protective clothing;
- Custodial staff to receive training for standard of cleaning;
- Cleaning equipment used in isolation room to be cleaned after each day;
- Cleaning equipment used in isolation room to be dedicated to use in that room only during a pandemic;
- Cleaning of isolation room to be completed in isolation of the remainder of the school.

Supplies Required:

- Protective clothing for workers to include gloves, eye protection;
- Room supplies shall include: waterless hand wash, cleansing supplies, spray disinfectant, wipes, "mess" kits (to clean up vomit), soda crackers, bottled water, mats/cots/mattresses and bedding.

Room Attendant:

- Must wear protective clothing
- Shall be trained in the appropriate use of and care of protective clothing and equipment
- Care for students that are located in room
- Is assigned to the room for extended period of time during school operations
- Assists in cleaning messes
- Transfers infected students to parents
- Should be in good physical health
- Should have influenza vaccination
- Be trained in cleaning standards
- Several candidates should be considered for each school

4.3. FITNESS FOR DUTY GUIDELINES IN THE EVENT OF A PANDEMIC

The Fitness for Duty Guidelines provide a protocol for employee and employer responsibilities with respect to individuals being in a healthy condition while at work during a pandemic. It provides guidelines on how long employees who have demonstrated they are suffering the effects of influenza should stay away from work based on information provided by health organizations. This period of time will be established once the effects of the influenza are known. The guidelines shall also facilitate employees returning to work once they are well. Staff will be informed about respiratory etiquette and symptom recognition.

FITNESS FOR DUTY IN THE EVENT OF A PANDEMIC

The Division is committed to providing a safe work environment in the event of a pandemic, and to protect the health and safety of students and staff. This policy and application applies specifically to a pandemic event.

Purpose: This Guideline provides a procedure for identifying and intervening when staff could pose a threat to the safety of others and property as a result of having contracted a flu virus related to the pandemic.

Definitions:

“Fit for Duty”: means able to perform the duties of the job, without creating a risk for other students or staff of contracting the flu virus.

“Health Service Provider” is a doctor of medicine or other health care practitioner who is qualified to provide a medical opinion on the state of health of a staff member as it relates to the flu virus as expected in a pandemic event.

“Supervisor” is the person to whom a staff member reports.

Employee Responsibilities:

1. Reporting to work fit for duty
2. Notifying the supervisor when not fit for duty
3. Notifying the supervisor when observing a co-worker who may not be fit for duty (in cases where the possibly impaired individual is the employee's supervisor, the employee should make the notification to the next higher level manager or Human Relations staff).
4. Cooperating with a supervisor's directive and/or referral for a medical evaluation

Supervisor Responsibilities:

1. Observing the attendance, performance and behavior of staff they supervise.
2. Interviewing an employee who appears to the supervisor unfit for duty and referring an employee for a medical evaluation when appropriate.
3. Recording the reasons/observations that triggered a fitness for duty medical evaluation referral.
4. Utilizing this policy in a fair and consistent manner, respecting the employee's privacy and the confidentiality of medical information.

Procedures:

1. The supervisor who receives reliable information that an employee may be unfit for duty, or through personal observation believes an employee to be unfit for duty, will validate

and document the information or observations as soon as is practical. Actions that may trigger the need to evaluate an employee's fitness for duty with respect to this policy are limited to observation of flu conditions consistent with a pandemic event.

2. The supervisor will present the information or observations to the employee at the earliest possible time in order to validate them, and will allow the employee to respond to the concern. The supervisor will then determine whether the employee should leave the workplace immediately for safety reasons.
3. The supervisor may direct the employee to a health service provider to assess the condition of the employee. An employee may not be allowed to return to work until such an assessment has been provided or until the supervisor has been satisfied that the employee is fit to return to work.
4. The employer shall be responsible for the cost of any medical evaluations completed by a health service provider, if required by the employer.
5. Prior to returning to work after recovery from a flu virus consistent with a pandemic event, the supervisor shall consider advice received from the local health authorities on the length of time considered appropriate to recover from the flu virus, and the length of time the virus remains infectious.

D. PLAN ACTIVATION

Once the first confirmed case of pandemic influenza is found in Canada and it is progressing toward Phase 4 or 5 (depending on geographic distribution of the influenza), the Division will take steps to ensure the Division's *Pandemic Response Plan* is on standby and activated when appropriate. Significant consideration must be committed to the decision to activate the plan. The risks inherent with the delay of implementing the plan must be considered and conversely the premature activation of the plan. The Division will regularly update and inform key stakeholders as per the Division Communication Plan of ongoing preparations during the pre-planning and activation stages.

The Superintendent or designate shall have the authority to activate the *Pandemic Response Plan*, and shall have the authority to suspend the delivery of services as required based on the resources available to deliver those services and to redeploy staff as necessary. Those services defined as desired will be the first to be suspended, followed by those defined as necessary. If the public need for any of the services identified as critical or vital were to decrease, their continued operation will be reviewed and may be suspended, and any staff made available by the suspension redeployed to another service.

Once the plan has been activated communications with staff (both at work and at home) must strive to address or assist with a wide range of concerns, from questions regarding service delivery to assistance in providing information on health care and shelter-in-place suggestions.

Once the plan has been activated, schools may be asked to report student absentee rates.

1. RESTRICTIONS

Travel restrictions, school athletics and public gatherings within schools

To contain the spread of influenza and to protect those staff and students who are well, travel, participation in school athletic programs, public gatherings at schools and participation in meetings may have restrictions instituted during a Pandemic. When Pandemic Phase 4 is reached in a local area, the Superintendent or designate will confer with Health authorities, neighboring jurisdictions and principals to determine the need for the institution of restrictions. Application of restrictions will continually be reviewed as the Pandemic Alert phase progresses to Level 6 (Pandemic) or declines to Level 3 (first stage of Pandemic Alert). The Superintendent or designate is responsible for the communication of restrictions to schools and will assist schools with communication to staff, students and parents.

Schools and staff may choose to limit travel prior to Phase 4 to reflect conditions or concerns specific to the school or community context.

2. OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RATING CATEGORIES

This plan only considers the effect of a Pandemic Influenza on operations of Horizon School Division, and outlines the manner in which those services deemed critical and vital will continue to be delivered throughout a pandemic event. Services offered by the Division were considered and rated as critical, vital, necessary and desired. Once critical and vital services are established, necessary services will be established and then desired services as resources become available. These will be exercised in the context of the pandemic phases as identified earlier.

Critical: Services that must be provided immediately without which result in loss of life or injury, infrastructure destruction and loss of confidence in government. These services normally require resumption within 24 hours, but for the purposes of pandemic planning they are the core services of the School Division.

Vital: Services that must be provided within 72 hours without which would likely result in loss of life or injury, infrastructure destruction, loss of confidence in government and disproportionate recovery costs. For the purposes of pandemic planning, these are vital and necessary services that would normally need to be performed or completed within a two to four week business cycle to avoid significant damage or loss. These are services that may be performed on a rotating schedule.

Necessary: Services that must be resumed within two weeks or could result in considerable loss, further destruction, or disproportionate recovery costs. For purposes of pandemic planning these are services that staff will be allocated to on a “last” or “need to do” priority.

Desired: Services that could be delayed for two weeks or longer, but are required in order to return to normal operating conditions, or alleviate further disruption. For pandemic planning purposes, these are services that will be deemed as non-essential until such time as either staff levels are back to normal and/or priority necessitates.

Factors that may be considered in prioritizing services may include, but are not limited to:

- Immediate external obligations;
- Immediate internal obligations;
- Dependencies on other departments, service providers or agencies;
- Other agencies dependent on your services;
- Contractual obligations and liabilities;
- Regulatory requirements;
- First response obligations;
- Access to essential information;
- Minimum manpower required to provide services.

During a pandemic or other serious interruption of the Division’s business, Senior Management may not be available to make decisions. This plan will also be the basis that outlines the criteria, including scope of responsibility for available senior staff to activate and implement the plan.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Department: Corporate Services

Service	Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
FOIPP	Follow duties as described in the <i>FOIP Act</i> in the event of an application under that Act.				X		
Payroll	Process employee payrolls and issue payment. Accessibility to information regarding employee group plan coverage is maintained	DO or home by 2 staff.	X				
	Issue T4's.				X		
Finance	Process payments for supplier invoices.				X		
	Complete and submit GST returns.					X	
	Ensure sufficient funds are available to meet obligations.			X			
Communications	Routine communications						
	Communications necessary as a result of the pandemic.	Working from home	X				
	Update the website with information as directed.				X		
Technology	Maintain and ensure the operation of the internal computer network.		X				
	Facilitate ability of staff to work at home if necessary and approved.				X		
Human Resources	To help coordinate services required from HR	Division Office				X	
Facilities and Maintenance	Ensure delivery service to schools					X	
	Train DO staff on disinfecting and proper cleaning of their space.				X		
Transportation				X			
Counselling						X	
Student Services						X	
Curriculum						X	
Superintendency					X		
Caretaking	To maintain essential cleanliness	Custodian or other DO staff	X				
Reception					X		

Department: School Administration

Service	Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Instructional Leadership	Programs of Study	* Ensure access to current Programs of Study for every teacher in every subject is being administered to K-12 students through routine inspection and observation of teachers by principal or designate.				X	* ADLC *2Learn TLC *Tools 4 Teachers *LearnAlberta.ca
		* Implement programs which will enable students to meet the provincial graduation requirements.				X	
		* Deliver programming to children who are eligible for Alberta Education funding for Early Childhood Special Education (ECS) and PUF.				X	
		* Support the education of all learners with appropriate instruction by teachers.				X	
	AISI	* Provide opportunities for teachers to coordinate and implement AISI initiatives in collaboration with school administration and the Jurisdiction Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator.				X	
	Special Education	* Provide Special Education Programs based on Individualized Programs Plans (IPP) to students with special education needs, including those who are gifted and talented by teachers, specialists or outside agencies.				X	
Evaluation of Students and Programs	Staff Professional Development	* Make necessary resources available or provide access to promote staff development.				X	
	Evaluation of P.A.T. and D.I.P. results	* Collaborate with teachers to evaluate students and programs to identify areas of strength and those needing improvement.				X	

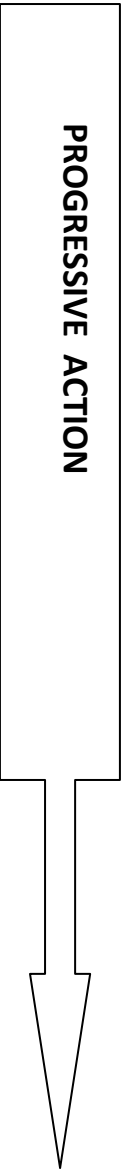
Department: <u>School Administration</u> (cont.)							
Service	Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Evaluation of Students and Programs (cont.)	Reporting of Student Achievement/GLA	* Communicate student progress to parents regarding achievement and grade level of achievement by teachers.				X	
Standards of Education	Provincial achievement tests, diploma exams	* Teachers and Administration will distribute, test and collect Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma exams for grades 3, 6, 9 and 12.				X	* Alberta Ed will make decisions regarding PAT.'s and DIP's
Management of the School	School Plans including: * Three Year Plan/ AERR * Safety Plan * Budget	* Identify key goals, strategies, performance measures, results and time lines for school based plans.			X	X X	Critical that the School Safety Plan is completed pre-Pandemic
	Implementation of School Plans including: * Tech Plan * Safety Plan	* Implement plans and monitor their effectiveness. Modify plans as necessary.	X	X			* as related to pandemic
	* Program Organization and Delivery	* Provide access to minimum hours of instruction for students.				X	
		* Configure teaching assignments, room allocation, student timetables and support staff responsibilities.	X				- as related to pandemic
Technology	* ICT outcomes	* Supervise and evaluate the incorporation of ICT outcomes by teachers as directed by Alberta Education				X	
		* Maintain and ensure the operation of the internal computer network by LAN Tech and Division designates.	X				- as related to pandemic
		* Foster and promote the integration of technology by teachers in all subject areas.				X	
	* School web-site	* Ensure web-site is functional and updated to adequately reflect information related to the school.	X				

Department: School Administration (cont.)

Service	Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Safe and Caring Environment	* Supervision of students	* Provide students with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours.	X				
	* Safety of Staff	* Provide staff with proper education and safety procedures to ensure a safe and healthy workplace with adherence to Occupational Health and Safety Standards.	X				
	* Routine inspections of safety equipment, facility, grounds	* Provide training to safety team within school in coordination with the Jurisdiction Safety Manager to carry out annual inspections.				X	
	* Communicate implement and update Safety Plan	* Practice and review safety procedures including fire drills, lockdowns and severe weather.	X				Practice safety procedures as they pertain to Pandemic Plan
Communication	* Communication with staff	* meet with staff to educate and inform of necessary information.	X				
	* Communication between school and home	* Update school community with necessary information in all aspects to maintain quality education and a safe and caring environment.	X				
	* Communication with School Councils	* Communicate to get feedback with School Councils.	X				
	* Communication with School Jurisdiction Central Office staff	* Establish ongoing communication with the Superintendent and other Division personnel regarding all information required to successfully carry out quality education and a safe and caring environment within the school.	X				

Department: <u>School Administration</u> (cont.)							
Service	Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Teacher/Staff Supervision and Evaluation	* Evaluate the teachers and support staff employed in the school	* Provide feedback to teachers using the Teacher Effectiveness Framework to promote quality education.				X	
	* Teacher Quality Standards	* Ensure all teachers are meeting the Teacher Quality Standards and implement Supervision Cycle for those teachers not meeting these standards.				X	
Adherence to Collective Agreement	Carry out those duties that are assigned to the principal/designate by the Board in accordance with the regulations and the requirements of the School Act and the Board.		X				- as per Pandemic Plan

Department: Transportation

Service	Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
<div> <div>TRANSPORTATION</div> <div>PROGRESSIVE ACTION</div> <div>  </div> </div>	Pandemic Bussing	Drivers continue to drive their daily routes Regular office administration services	X				First Student is involved in pandemic planning and preparation
	Pandemic Bussing	With evidence of increased transmission drivers continue to drive their daily routes Coordinators update the office on driver absence and any significant change in student rider ship daily Regular office administration services	X				First Student: In-service on hygienic practices; appropriate disinfectants/gloves stockpiled; combining of routes prepared
	Pandemic Bussing	With evidence of significant human to human transmission gate service is suspended Coordinators report for each route student rider ship and the status of the driver Office administration priority to verify daily rider ship for the following day to update driver directions for route combinations		X	X		First Student: Transportation is provided by combining of bus routes and contingency for central pick up points are planned for as driver availability declines; hygienic practices required daily; department updated daily on driver availability; field trips and non-mandated shuttle service is cancelled; right of refusal of transportation services for children identified as ill.
	Pandemic Bussing	Last resort - Parent provided transportation				X	Notifying parents of suspension of transportation service through announcements on local radio and school communication on the status of the pandemic

Department: Facilities

Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Cleaning						
General Cleaning	By Contractors/Custodial Staff			X		Classroom, halls and general cleaning. Floors, wall spotting, glass.
Garbage	By Contractors/Custodial Staff	X				Garbage to be removed daily.
Washrooms	By Contractors/Custodial Staff	X				Necessary to be cleaned daily for sanitary reasons and disease control.
Food prep-areas	By Contractors and/or staff	X				Maintain health standards.
Isolation Room	By Contractors/Custodians/Staff	X				Primary area for disease control. Protocols will be followed...
Recycling	Determined at Site				X	Dry recycle can be retained for some time pending space needs and fire issues.
Recycling	Determined at Site		X			Juice/milk containers to be removed from the school every couple of days
Heat - ½ day shut down, cold weather	By Maintenance Staff	X				One half day shutdown will not create critical problems with the building freezing. Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Heat -one day shut down, cold weather	By Maintenance Staff	X				A full day shutdown of heat requires the maintenance department to start to winterize the building. Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Heat -warmer winter weather	By Maintenance Staff		X			Specific action depends upon the actual outdoor temperature. Mitigation can be to shut the ventilation systems down.
Heat -spring/fall	By Maintenance Staff		X			Heat is not as critical. May go 1 day or more without heat. Mitigation strategies may be shutting the ventilation system off.
Ventilation	By Maintenance Staff		X			Longer shut downs affect air quality, but in cold weather also retain interior temperature levels. Short term shut down minimal impact on school.
Exhaust -Washrooms	By Maintenance Staff			X		Exhaust systems provide odor and dilution control. Not critical but should be repaired in a few days.

Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Exhaust -cafeteria	By Maintenance Staff		X			Exhaust systems provide odor and dilution control. Not critical but should be repaired in a few days. Consult with Maintenance Depart.
Power Outage under 2 hours.	Provided by the Utility		X			Not critical from the safety of the building. May disrupt the education operations of the school.
Power outage over 4 hours Mechanical Systems	Provided by the Utility	X				Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Power Loss of power 1 day or more	Provided by the Utility	X				Preparation for freezing may be required. Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Water Loss of water service for up to 4 hours	By Municipality or by Maintenance for Wells	X				Sanitary sewer issues need consideration. Drinking water will be delivered using bottled water. Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Water Loss of water service for more than 4 hours	By Municipality or by Maintenance for Wells		X			Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Water Loss of potable water service beyond 4 hours			X			The municipality maintains service to the meter. If water is contaminated (i.e. boil water orders), Maintenance will arrange for bottled water for drinking. Water can be used for toilets
Sanitary Sewer Due to loss of water	By Municipality	X				Loss of water restricts ability to use sanitary sewer. Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Sanitary Sewer Due to total sewer line blockage	Inside schools – by Maintenance	X				If total blockage occurs in a school, it becomes critical within in a few hours. Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Sanitary Sewer Due to partial sewer line blockage	Inside Schools – by Maintenance		X			If only portions of the school are affected plans must be implemented by staff to use the remaining toilets. Closure may not necessary in these situations.

Function	How is Service Provided	Critical	Vital	Necessary	Desired	Notes
Septic Fields/ Lift Stations – system failure for more than 2 hours	By Maintenance Staff	X				If main system fails it becomes critical Follow Policy EBCD Emergency School Closure
Building Maintenance						
Snow Cleaning Parking lots	Contractors and Maintenance Staff		X			
Snow Cleaning sidewalks	Custodian Staff	X				
Ongoing Maintenance	A variety of systems requiring Maintenance		X			Telephones, intercoms, security systems, doors and hardware and a range of other items need maintenance. The priority will be determined by the other critical items and the ability to provide resources to these items.
Deliveries						
Mail	Provided by Jurisdiction Staff			X		For the short term, not critical, for ongoing operations it becomes critical.
Supplies	Provided by Jurisdiction Staff			X		Generally not critical as schools carry their own inventory however for sustained periods it will become critical
Supplies	Provided by Jurisdiction Staff	X				Supplies necessary for Pandemic response will be stocked centrally.

4. SCHOOL OPERATION GUIDELINES

External Recommendation for School Closure:

There are a number of complex factors that are considered by various health service groups when determining recommendations for public response to a health matter such as a pandemic and school closure. Horizon School Division will be guided by recommendations given by Alberta Health Services for any health-related matter, including a pandemic.

Internal Decision for School Closure:

It is understood that schools are an integral part of all communities, and decisions that are made regarding school closure have a domino effect on the mobilization of the adult community in response to delivery of services during an emergent situation such as a pandemic.

With respect to Horizon School Division determining the need for such an extreme measure as school closure outside of a recommendation by Alberta Health Services, there needs to be a balanced approach that considers both staff/student ratios and reasoned judgment. “Reasoned judgment” needs to be used in addition to guidelines because school environments and staff/student configurations are very contextual. Every school in Horizon School Division is unique and staff/student ratios that are reasonable with respect to maintaining a safe and caring environment may vary. The Superintendent (or designate) will work with each principal (or designate) to monitor staff/student ratios, effect on safety and management of students, delivery of instruction, and whether or not there is a need to close the school. The following guidelines will be used to evaluate specific circumstances in a school. Reasoned judgment may call for school closure recommendations at different levels, but the guidelines provide a basis for pre-planning.

Guideline for safe staff/student ratios per classroom

	Staff/Students Ratio
K- 5/6	30-40
6-8	35-45
K - 9	30-45
9- 12	40-50
K- 12	35-40

Strategies that are most appropriate for organizing and delivering instruction under changing staff/student ratio configurations will vary from school to school. As such, each school staff, under the direction of the principal, is responsible for developing an instructional delivery response plan. The goal of the instructional delivery response plan is to determine the most appropriate form of educational program delivery at different student/staff ratios and configurations. Schools, especially those with diploma level high

school courses, will need to be creative in planning for potential sustained absence of teachers and students, and consider alternate delivery methods and materials that may be used (eg. distance learning materials, pre-developed independent units of study, *Tools for Teachers* resources, etc.). Alberta Education will make decisions regarding achievement and diploma test administration.

5. CATEGORIES OF NEED: STUDENTS AT RISK

Medical Conditions

- Respiratory needs
- Feeding needs
- Other

Special Needs

- Students who require personal care and/or direct supervision of an adult in small group or one-on-one context

Plan

- Students identified as “at risk” need to be identified in advance
- Specific plans for crisis response outlined in school plans
- Individuals working with these students need to be made aware of plans in advance
- More than one employee (special needs assistant) should be familiar with the student, care and supervision needs
- Alternate arrangements made with parents to accommodate needs
- Specialized communication plan with parents to respond to and compensate for needs when direct support becomes unavailable
- Students receiving only academic assistance may no longer receive this assistance if staff are needed to care for students at risk
- Employees hired for academic assistance (eg. classroom support assistant) may be reallocated to higher needs situations
- Peripheral programs requiring transportation to/from other sites may be discontinued
- Administration or designate will consider and assign duties on a case-by-case basis
- Employees working with medically fragile students may need to take special precautions to protect themselves regarding hygienic measures

E. SUPPORT TO EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYEES' FAMILIES

The Division plans and prepares to allow staff to provide for personal and family wellness and safety.

To assist maintaining employees at work and to ensure that employees who are sick do not return to work and infect other employees, the Division shall institute modified personnel and employment policies during a pandemic as follows.

All staff are encouraged to complete the Horizon School Division ***Personal Pandemic Planning Guide*** (attached). The planning guide is intended to assist staff in pre-developing their own plans and strategies to manage their personal responsibilities at home and in the workplace.

1. SICK LEAVE ACCOMMODATIONS

1.1 TEACHERS

- All Teachers will first access their cumulative sick leave as provided for in the Horizon School Division/A.T.A. Collective Agreement Article 8.
- After continuous absence of 90 calendar days staff members may be eligible for ASEBP long term disability.
- If a teacher is in his/her first year of service with accumulated sick leave benefits of 20 days, and further sick leave associated with the pandemic is required:
 - *Superintendent Approved* application for enhanced sick leave time will be available (not part of Collective Agreement and non binding outside of a pandemic event).
 - Staff will be provided information on Sick Benefits through Employment Insurance.
- If caring for others, teachers will first access absence avenues provided for in the Collective Agreement (Family Medical Day and Personal Leave). In the event that staff require further absence to care for others, a *Superintendent Approved* application for further Family Medical Care absence will be available (not part of Collective Agreement and non binding outside of a pandemic event).
- If possible a doctor's note will be required.

1.2 SUPPORT STAFF

- All Support Staff will first access their cumulative sick leave as provided for in the Horizon School Division/C.U.P.E. Collective Agreement Article 13.
- After continuous absence of 90 calendar days staff members may be eligible for ASEBP long term disability.
- If a support staff member is in his/her first year of service with accumulated sick leave benefits of 2 days per month of service, and further sick leave associated with the pandemic is required:
 - *Superintendent Approved* application for enhanced sick leave time will be available (not part of Collective Agreement and non binding outside of a pandemic event).
 - Staff will be provided information on Sick Benefits through Employment Insurance.

- If caring for others, support staff will first access absence avenues provided for in the Collective Agreement (Family Medical Day and Personal Leave). In the event that staff require further absence to care for others, a *Superintendent Approved* application for further Family Medical Care absence will be available (not part of Collective Agreement and non binding outside of a pandemic event).
- If possible a doctor's note will be required.

2. COMPASSIONATE/BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- As per the Jurisdiction collective agreement, policy and procedure.

3. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PLAN

An *Employee Assistance Plan* is available to assist all employees and their families (accessible from Horizon School Division website or call Division Office).

F. RECOVERY PROCESS

Previous pandemics indicate that there will be a second and third wave of the pandemic. Therefore the Division will have to regroup quickly to determine its status in terms of staffing, availability of supplies or services from external suppliers and what role the municipality needs to play in the recovery of its residents and the public and non-profit sectors.

As part of the recovery process, the Division will develop plans for the replacement of employees unable to return to work and prioritizing hiring efforts. This will largely be driven by the reintroduction of the desired and necessary services.

The Jurisdiction shall evaluate the plan following the first wave and make any adjustments that are deemed necessary, based on experience or on advice from health professionals.

G. TESTING AND MAINTAINING THE PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

The plan shall be reviewed, via a table top exercise, annually to determine if environmental changes, or plan and policy changes effect this plan. Benefits or regular testing include:

- Recent review for memory
- Ensuring adequacy to this plan
- Determining additional training that may be required, particularly as a result of staff changes
- Identifying any deficiencies in this plan
- Demonstrating that the Division has the ability to provide services during an emergency.

A record of the date and time of the test of this plan shall be maintained. Testing, training and exercising of this plan should include social distancing techniques including work from home capabilities and impacts of reduced staff on families and essential functions and services.

H. RESOURCES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

1. HELPFUL WEBSITES

Health Departments:

World Health Organization:

www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en

Public Health Agency of Canada Influenza Watch:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index.html>

Capital Health:

<http://www.capitalhealth.ca/EspeciallyFor/EmergencyPreparedness/AvianInfluenza/default.htm>

Alberta Health Services:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca>

Calgary Health Region:

<http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/pandemic/pdf/ResponsePlan.pdf>

Alberta Health and Wellness:

www.health.gov.ab.ca/influenza/pandemic.html

Health Canada:

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/pandem_e.html

Other online resources:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov> (American website)

<http://www.fightflu.ca>

<http://www.redcross.org/news/ds/panflu> (American Red Cross)

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada website:

<http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/index-en.asp>

2. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Telephone Help Lines

Workforce Planning Branch - phone: (780-644-8328) fax: (780-644-3591)

Alberta Education Admin Information Package for H1N1:

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/healthandsafety/h1n1.aspx>

The Capital Health Authority posted a Pandemic Preparedness Guide for schools at:
www.capitalhealth.ca/Especiallyfor/PandemicInfluenza/default.htm

“Alberta’s Plan for Influenza pandemic”:

<http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/Influenza/PandemicPlan.html>

“Alberta Government, Municipal Excellence Network, Pandemic Planning and Preparedness”: <http://www.menet.ab.ca/541.asp>

“It’s in your hands”: http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/influenza/Self_Care.html

Booklet

Influenza Self-Care: It's in your hands

Fact Sheets

Hand washing to prevent Influenza

How to take a temperature - children and adults

Over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications for Influenza

Influenza antiviral medications

Dealing with stress or feelings of fear because of Influenza

Influenza pandemic

For more information:

Health Link Alberta

Edmonton, call 408-LINK (5465)

Calgary, call 943-LINK (5465)

Outside Edmonton and Calgary local calling areas, call toll-free 1-866-408-LINK (5465)

Horizon School Division No. 67

Personal Pandemic Planning Guide

This planning guide is intended to assist staff in pre-developing their own plans and strategies to manage their personal responsibilities at home and in the workplace.

Personal Planning Questionnaire

Do you have children? _____

Ages 0-4 _____ 5-12 _____ 13-18 _____

Do you have children with special needs that require specific care?

Is there another parent or guardian? _____

Does that person live with you? _____

Does the other parent or guardian work? Stay at home? _____

Can the other parent/guardian/caregiver work from home? _____

What are your current childcare arrangements?

- Daycare
- Day home
- Other parent/guardian
- In house nanny or babysitter
- Family member

Do you have families or friends in the area that would be willing and able to help with children? (List names, phone numbers)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

If schools/daycares/day homes were closed, what are your alternatives for childcare?

Option 1: _____

Option 2: _____

Option 3: _____

Do you provide care, in house or otherwise, for another family member or adult who may be ill or have other special needs?

Is there another caregiver to assist you? _____

Does that person live with you? _____

Does the other caregiver work? Stay at home? _____

Can the other caregiver work from home? _____

What other services do you use to assist with this care?

Which of these services are you most dependant on? _____

What arrangements will you have to make if these services are not available during a pandemic?

If you absolutely could not make any alternative arrangements for care of persons at home, please consider the following questions:

Can you do your job from home? _____

What portions of your job could be done from home?

What portions of your job could be prepared in advance for smooth transition to another individual who may not have the same training or background in the event of a short absence (1 to 3 days)?

What portions of your job could be prepared in advance for smooth transition to another individual who may not have the same training or background in the event of a lengthy absence (4 to 10 days)?

What portions of your job could be prepared in advance for smooth transition to another individual who may not have the same training or background in the event of a prolonged absence (more than 10 days)?

Other Considerations

Do you have any pets? (type, number) _____

Do you live on an acreage or farm with animals? (type, number)

Do these animals have any special care requirements? _____

Do you have someone to look after your animals if you become ill or have to be away from home for extended periods of time? (Name, phone number)

Make sure you contact all the people you have listed in your plan as alternate caregivers, whether for people or animals, so they can include you in their own pandemic plans.

Horizon School Division No. 67

Personal and Family Emergency Health Information

Family Member	Blood Type	Allergies	Past/Current Medical Conditions	Current Medications, Dosages

Emergency Contacts

Contacts	Name/Phone Number
Local personal emergency contact	
Out-of-town personal emergency contact	
Hospitals near: Work	
School	
Home	
Family Physicians	
Health Unit	
Pharmacy	
Employer contact & emergency information	
School contact & emergency information	
Religious/spiritual organization	
Veterinarian	

Your Personal Pandemic Plan

Working through a plan like this can often prompt you to think of other things that may not be contained within this Planning Guide. That's great! Here's your opportunity to write out the things that you need to consider and take care of in case of a pandemic influenza situation.

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Horizon School Division No. 67

Plan for a Pandemic

- Store extra food and water. During a pandemic, you may not be able to get into a store, or they might be out of supplies.
- Ask your doctor for an extra supply of your regular medications and follow proper storage instructions.
- Have on hand an extra supply of non-prescription medications for common ailments.
- Make plans for caring for ill family members at home. Check in on neighbors, such as seniors, who may need assistance.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved with your community to prepare for influenza pandemic.

Supplies to have on hand

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formulas
- Pet food
- Manual can opener
- Prescribed medical supplies
- Soap and water or hand sanitizer
- Medicines for fever (acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight, batteries, portable radio
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers, feminine hygiene products

How much water? -3 litres per person/day - 1 pint per cat/day – 1 gallon per dog/day (size dependent) for a two week period

Influenza Self-Care: It's In Your Hands

How to care for yourself and others with influenza

This document gives valuable information on:

- How to prevent influenza;
- How to help yourself and others when influenza happens;
- When to seek medical care.

What is influenza?

Influenza is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by a virus. As with other viral illnesses, antibiotics do not work against an influenza virus. Various strains of influenza virus circulate throughout the world each year. In Canada, influenza usually affects people during the winter, between November and April. The influenza virus changes slightly from year to year. An influenza infection lowers the body's ability to fight other infections. This can lead to pneumonia or bronchitis. Influenza can also make other health conditions such as diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, kidney disease and cancer worse. Most healthy people are able to recover from the illness without severe complications. However, for some people influenza can be very serious, and can lead to other major health problems and even death.

How is influenza spread?

Influenza spreads rapidly among people. The influenza virus passes from person to person by droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. Droplets travel through the air one to two metres (three to six feet) allowing the virus to enter the eyes, nose or mouth of people nearby. The virus can live on hard surfaces (door knobs, telephones, computer keyboards, light switches, countertops, etc.) for one to two days. Influenza virus can also live on cloth, tissues and paper and especially on hands. Infection can occur when people touch any surfaces and then touch either their own mouth or nose, or someone else's, before washing their hands. People develop symptoms of influenza from one to four days after becoming infected. They are contagious from the day **before** they have the first symptoms until at least five days after the symptoms start.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of influenza include:

- Sudden fever of 38 C (100.4 F) or higher.
- Headache.
- Dry cough. Muscle aches especially in the lower back and legs.
- Extreme weakness and exhaustion.

Other symptoms can include:

- Chills.
- Loss of appetite.
- Sore throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.

Note:

- Individuals younger than five years of age or those 65 years of age and older may not have a fever.
- Some nausea, vomiting and diarrhea have been reported in some people with human swine influenza.
- Fever usually goes down and the person starts to feel better in three to five days. However, exhaustion and cough can continue for several weeks. Influenza symptoms are different from those of a cold or a stomach upset.

What is the difference between influenza, a cold, or stomach upset?

Description/ Symptoms	Respiratory Infection		Gastrointestinal Infection
	Influenza	Common Cold	Stomach Upset
Virus involved	Influenza A or B Note: H1N1 Influenza Virus (Human Swine Influenza) is a type of Influenza A	Many different kinds of viruses such as rhinovirus, coronavirus, adenovirus, etc.	Norovirus (Norwalk-like viruses) is the most common
Fever	Usually high with sudden onset and lasts three to four days	Sometimes	Rarely
Headache	Usually, can be severe	Rarely	Sometimes
Chills, aches, pain	Usually and often severe	Rarely	Common
Loss of appetite	Sometimes	Sometimes	Frequently - usually nausea, vomiting and diarrhea occur as well
Cough	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
Sore throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Rarely
Sniffles or sneezes	Sometimes	Usually	Rarely
Extreme tiredness	Usually - tiredness may last two or three weeks or more	Rarely	Sometimes
Involves whole body	Usually	Never	Stomach and bowel only
Symptoms appear quickly	Yes	More gradual	Yes
Complications	Pneumonia, kidney failure, swelling of the brain and death	Sinus infection or ear infection	Dehydration
Vaccine	Yearly vaccine covers two influenza A strains and one influenza B strain Vaccine for human swine influenza is not yet available	No vaccine available	No vaccine available

Note: A stomach upset is sometimes incorrectly called the "stomach flu". There is no such illness as "stomach flu". As noted in the chart, stomach upsets are caused by viruses and other micro-organisms but not by the influenza virus.

How serious is influenza?

Certain people are at risk of developing serious complications, such as pneumonia, which may even result in death. These include:

- Children younger than two years of age and adults 65 years of age and older.
- People with weakened immune systems.
- People with certain chronic illnesses, such as heart, lung or kidney disease, diabetes and cancer.

Every year, influenza and its complications have a significant effect on the healthcare system. It also affects school or work absenteeism.

How to protect yourself and others against influenza

Choose to immunize

The seasonal influenza vaccine is still available for high risk groups and travelers.

Note: The current seasonal vaccine does not protect against the H1N1 Influenza Virus (Human Swine Influenza).

Pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccine

Pneumonia can sometimes occur after an influenza infection. Pneumococcal vaccine protects against the bacteria that most often causes pneumonia. Alberta Health and Wellness provides this vaccine free-of-charge to those who are at risk, including:

- People aged 65 years and older.
- Residents of long-term care facilities.
- People two years of age and older with certain chronic health conditions.
- People living in homeless or chronically disadvantaged situations.

Most people only need to receive the pneumococcal immunization once in their lifetime. The vaccine can be given at any time of the year and can be administered at the same time as the influenza vaccine. Pneumococcal vaccine for babies is included in Alberta's routine immunization program.

Wash your hands!

Next to immunization, the single most important way to prevent influenza is frequent hand washing.

Wash your hands before:

- Handling or eating food or feeding others.
- Brushing or flossing teeth.
- Putting in or taking out contact lenses.
- Treating wounds or cuts.


Wash your hands after:

- Having any contact with a person who is sick or their immediate environment.
- Going to the toilet, helping someone else use the toilet or changing a diaper.
- Blowing your nose or wiping someone else's nose.
- Coughing or sneezing.
- Treating wounds or cuts.
- Handling garbage.
- Returning home from school, work or shopping.
- Children should wash their hands after playing with toys shared with other children.

Encourage children to wash their hands often:

- Teach by example.
- Help young children wash their hands.
- Make sure the sink, soap and towels are within reach.
- Place hand washing reminders at eye level for children.

How to wash hands with soap and water:

- Use regular soap (liquid or bar soap). Antibacterial soap is not necessary.
 - Wet hands with warm, running water and lather well.
 - Rub the hands together for about the amount of time it would take to sing the song, *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*, (about 15 to 20 seconds).
 - Scrub all over, including the backs of the hands, the wrists, between the fingers and under the finger nails.
 - Rinse under running water (for about 10 seconds).
 - Dry with a clean or disposable towel.
- 
- If using a public restroom, use a disposable towel to turn off the faucet to avoid further contact with the tap.
 - Store liquid soaps in closed containers and do not top up liquid soap containers. When the soap container is empty, it should be washed and dried before refilling with liquid soap.

How to wash hands with alcohol hand rubs (gels, liquids and foams):

- When soap and water are not available, hand rubs are an excellent choice to use.
- Use only alcohol-based hand rubs. They should contain at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Put some of the hand rub (gel, liquid or foam) on the palm of your hand and rub your hands together.
- Cover all surfaces, including fingers and wrists, and rub until dry (about 15 to 25 seconds).
- Hand rubs don't work if hands are soiled. When hands are soiled, wash with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a towelette that contains detergent. Then use the hand rub.
- Young children need help when using hand rubs. This is to make sure that their hands are dry before they touch anything or put their hands in their mouths.

Cover your cough - respiratory etiquette

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve, not on your hands.
- Throw away tissues after wiping your nose or covering a cough.
- Wash hands after coughing, sneezing or using tissues.
- Keep your hands and fingers away from your eyes, nose and mouth.

Other ways to prevent the spread of influenza

- Avoid crowds.
- Visit those who have influenza only if necessary, and stand more than two metres (six feet) away from them.
- Stay home from work, school, running errands and other activities when ill.

- Keep personal items separate if a household member is sick. Clean surfaces around them often with a detergent cleanser.
- Do not share personal items or drinks.
- Clean shared surfaces such as door knobs, light switches, telephones, computer keyboards, etc. frequently.

Be prepared

Everyone should plan ahead in case they become ill with influenza. This is especially important if you live alone, are a single parent or a caregiver.

- Have enough fluids and other supplies, such as tissues, on hand to last one to two weeks.
- Have medication for fever and a thermometer handy.
- Arrange for a backup caregiver for loved ones, in case you are ill.

How to manage influenza in adults

General self-care measures

- Rest.
- Avoid contact with others while contagious (for at least five days) if possible.
- Drink extra fluids.
- Gargle with warm salt water e.g. mix together:
 - One teaspoon (5 ml) of salt.
 - One teaspoon (5ml) of baking soda.
 - Two cups (500 ml) of water.
- Use throat lozenges.
- Use saline nose drops or sprays.
- Use a humidifier with the following conditions:
 - Failure to maintain your humidifier can result in additional health problems.
 - Always follow the manufacturer's directions for the use and proper care of your humidifier.
- Don't smoke. Avoid second hand smoke.
- Talk to others about concerns and ask for help if needed. Keeping in touch by phone or email can help with feelings of loneliness when sick.

Note: If the above suggestions do not work, review the guidelines for over-the-counter (non- prescription) medications provided in this booklet.

Over-the counter medications

General guidelines:

- Before using a product you should know:
 - How to use it (e.g. how much to use and how often).
 - How long to use it.
 - The possible side effects.
 - When to seek medical attention.

Note: Speak with a health care provider if you are unsure about any of these points.

- Follow the instructions on the label. Pay particular attention to when the medication should not be used.
- To prevent adverse reactions or taking extra medication that is not required, use an over- the-counter product that contains the least number of active ingredients required to treat your symptoms.
- Try "regular strength" products before "extra strength" and only take the dose recommended.
- If you are taking more than one medication at a time, check the labels to avoid taking the same ingredient twice.
- Check the expiry date on medications in your home. Take outdated medications to a pharmacy for disposal.
- Keep all medications out of the reach of children.

For muscle pain and fever:

- Use acetaminophen (may be the best choice for some people) or ibuprofen. There are cautions with the use of both of these medications. Speak with a pharmacist or health care provider if you have any questions.

Note: Acetaminophen, when taken in high doses or with other medication or alcohol, may affect the liver or kidneys and ibuprofen may irritate the stomach and cause fluid (water) retention.

For a cough:

You may wish to try a medication with dextromethorphan (DM) for a dry cough that prevents you from sleeping or causes chest discomfort.



For a stuffy nose:

- Try saline nose drops or sprays first.
 - Nose drops or sprays act quickly and may cause fewer side effects than medications taken by mouth.
 - They should only be used for two or three days because with longer use, nose stuffiness (congestion) can actually get worse.
- Try a decongestant if saline nose drops or sprays don't work.
 - Decongestants may cause side effects like rapid heartbeat and sleeping problems and should not be used in some cases.
 - Speak with a pharmacist or health care provider and always read the label carefully before using a decongestant product.

For a sore throat:

- If salt water gargles haven't worked, you may wish to try lozenges or throat sprays.
- Products with dyclonine will numb the throat while other products have a soothing effect.

Complementary medicines:

- Some people may wish to try complementary therapies such as herbal and homeopathic products.
- It is important to find out as much as possible about the product you are thinking of taking as some complementary products should not be used in certain situations.
- Consult with your pharmacist or healthcare provider before taking these products.

When to seek medical care

Seek medical care if you or people in your care:

- Have heart or lung disease.
- Have any other chronic condition that requires regular medical attention.
- Are frail.
- Have a chronic illness.
- Are on treatments that weaken the immune system.

Seek **emergency** medical care if you, or someone in your care, have any of the following symptoms:

- Shortness of breath while resting or doing very little.
- Difficult or painful breathing.
- Coughing up bloody sputum.
- Increased wheezing.
- Chest pain.
- Fever for three or four days without improvement.
- Feeling better then suddenly having a high fever or becoming ill again.
- Extreme drowsiness and difficulty awakening.
- Disorientation or confusion.
- Severe earache.
- Sudden inability to function in a normally independent, elderly person.
- Constant vomiting or diarrhea, especially in an elderly person or young child.

Prescription medications

Antiviral medication:

- Can decrease the length and severity of the illness.
- Must be started within 48 hours after the first symptoms appear in order to work.
- May be prescribed by physicians for people with severe illness or for those at risk of developing severe illness.

Antibiotic medication:

- Not usually prescribed for influenza but your doctor may prescribe these medications for complications such as pneumonia.

Managing influenza in children

Symptoms to look for in children

Influenza is more severe in children younger than five years of age and especially, for those younger than two years of age. Children with influenza may have the same symptoms as adults, but there are some differences in babies and toddlers.

For example:

- A fever may be the only symptom of influenza in babies.
- Some babies may not be able to drink fluids or breast feed.
- Seizures or stiff neck may appear in some babies. Young children may also have headache, vomiting, irritability and sensitive eyes.
- Toddlers and babies usually have higher temperatures, often over 39.5 C (103.1 F).
- About half of the children three years of age or younger have symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach pain.
- Influenza viruses may cause croup, pneumonia or bronchitis in young children.
- Ear infections and red, sore eyes are more frequent in young children. Sore muscles are also common.

Note: Toddlers and babies are not able to tell people they have sore muscles or a headache.

They may be irritable and eat poorly. They sometimes have a hoarse cry and a barking cough.

Children older than five years of age and adolescents usually have the same symptoms as adults.

How to care for a child with influenza

- For fever and muscle aches.
 - Use acetaminophen.
 - Ibuprofen is another option, but it should **not** be used for babies younger than six months of age.
 - Take the child's temperature first.
 - Do not wake the child to give the medication.

Note: Children younger than 18 years of age should **NOT** take acetylsalicylic acid (ASA) or any products containing ASA. Combined with influenza, ASA may cause Reye's syndrome, a very serious condition affecting the nervous system and liver.



- Dress the child in lightweight clothing and keep room temperature at 20 C (68 F).
- Offer water or juice or breast feed infants often while the child is awake.
- Do not use cool baths or alcohol rubs.
- Encourage the child to rest or involve them in quiet activities for approximately five days.
- Try saline nose drops for stuffy nose or cough.
- Elevate the head of the bed; babies may be more comfortable in a car seat or a baby swing.
- Use a humidifier with the following conditions:
 - Failure to maintain your humidifier can result in additional health problems.
 - Always follow the manufacturer's directions for the use and proper care of your humidifier.

Over-the-counter medication

Children younger than six years of age:

- Health Canada recommends that over-the-counter cough and cold medications **should not be used** in children younger than six years of age.
 - These products have not been shown to reduce symptoms in children.
 - There have been reports of overdose, misuse and rare side effects.
 - Some of the serious side effects reported include such symptoms as convulsions, increased heart rate, decreased level of awareness, unusual heart rhythms and hallucinations.
- Do not use VapoRub-type products on children younger than two years of age.

Children six years of age and older:

- Do not give children medications labeled only for use in adults and/or those that do not include instructions for children.
- Over-the-counter medications should only be considered if other measures have not worked.
- Talk to your pharmacist or health care provider before using over-the-counter medications. They will help you to decide:
 - If an over-the-counter medication will lessen your child's symptoms.
 - If the medication is safe for your child to take.
- When using over-the-counter medications to treat children older than six years of age:
 - Talk with your pharmacist or health care provider about:
 - How long the medication should be taken.
 - The dosage.
 - The possible side effects.
 - When the product should not be used.
 - Follow all the instructions carefully including the dosing and length-of-use directions.
 - Use the medication dosing device, if one is included with the product, to ensure accurate dosing.
 - Do not give more than one kind of cough or cold medication to children.

When to seek medical care for a child

Almost all children with influenza have fever. So whether or not a child has a fever is not helpful as a sign of how severe their illness is.


Seek medical care if a child is ill and has any of the following conditions:

- Is younger than six months old.
- Has heart or lung disease or any chronic illness requiring regular medical care.
- Has a disease or is receiving treatments that weaken the immune system.
- Takes ASA regularly for a medical condition.
- Has a change in breathing (such as breathing fast) or difficulty breathing.
- Is very listless and loses interest in playing, watching TV, eating or drinking.
- Is very irritable and cries a lot.
- Urinates less than usual, for example:
 - Has a dry diaper for more than three hours if younger than six months of age.
 - Has a dry diaper for longer than six hours if six to 23 months of age.
 - Goes to the bathroom less often than every six hours while awake if two years of age or older.
- Looks very ill and the care giver is worried.

When to take a child to the emergency room

Call 9-1-1 or go to a hospital emergency room right away if the child:

- Has severe trouble breathing and it is not caused by a stuffy nose.
 - Has blue lips or hands, suddenly becomes pale, or has cold legs up to their knees.
 - Is very tired or unable to move.
 - Is sleepy and doesn't respond when you try to get them up.
- Shows signs of pain, such as headache or stiff neck, especially if they also have fever, are listless and their eyes are sensitive to light.
 - Seems confused.
 - Has a seizure.



**KNOW WHAT TO DO
TO FIGHT THE H1N1
FLU VIRUS**

The H1N1 flu virus (human swine flu) is a respiratory illness that causes symptoms similar to those of the seasonal flu (fever **and** cough, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, fatigue and lack of appetite).

All strains of flu can be dangerous; however, good infection prevention measures can help protect you and others if this virus begins to spread rapidly in Canada.

- ▶ Wash your hands often and thoroughly—for at least 20 seconds—in warm, soapy water or use hand sanitizer.
- ▶ Cough and sneeze in your sleeve, not your hand.
- ▶ Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected.
- ▶ Stay home if you're sick, and call your health care provider if your symptoms get worse.

**KNOWLEDGE IS
YOUR BEST DEFENCE**

For more information on flu prevention, visit
www.fightflu.ca or call **1-800-454-8302**
TTY 1-800-465-7735



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Canada

KNOW WHAT TO DO TO FIGHT THE H1N1 INFLUENZA VIRUS



- ▶ **FLU SYMPTOMS ARE:** cough *and* fever, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, fatigue and lack of appetite.

Protect yourself and others:

- ▶ Clean your hands often and thoroughly in warm, soapy water or use hand sanitizer.
- ▶ Cough and sneeze in your arm, not your hand.
- ▶ Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected.
- ▶ Stay home if you're sick. Contact a health care provider if your symptoms worsen.

KNOWLEDGE IS YOUR BEST DEFENCE

For more information:
www.health.alberta.ca
www.fightflu.ca

Call Health Link Alberta:
Toll-free 1-866-408-LINK (5465)
In Edmonton, call 780-408-LINK (5465)
In Calgary, call 403-943-LINK (5465)

Cover your Cough



Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

or



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.



Put your tissue in the waste basket.

Clean your Hands



Wash with soap and water

or



Clean with waterless hand sanitizer

I. COMMUNICATION TEMPLATES

***SAMPLE MEMO TO STAFF IF PANDEMIC
IS OCCURRING IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY***

This is a draft memo a School Jurisdiction could send to staff if influenza pandemic cases are occurring in other parts of the country. The memo reinforces risk reduction measures and informs employees of the possibility that a school may have to close if the situation worsens.

To: All employees
From:
Date:
Subject: Influenza pandemic cases in other parts of Canada

Health officials have confirmed that cases of influenza pandemic are now occurring in other parts of the Country. It is critical we all work together to reduce the risk to our students and to ourselves.

Students may come down with influenza pandemic-like symptoms while at school. These include fever of more than 38.6°C, and coughing or sore throat, usually combined with muscle aches. Unlike a cold, influenza symptoms usually occur rapidly. If any student exhibits these symptoms, he/she should immediately be sent to the school office and be isolated from other students.

If you have influenza-like symptoms, you should stay home until you no longer have a fever. If symptoms start while you are at work, please report immediately to your school principal for evaluation. Stay at least three feet away from other people, and cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm. Please practice and reinforce good hygiene procedures to minimize the spread of the influenza virus:

Encourage students and your colleagues to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating, and do so yourself.

Remind students to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth, because this practice can transfer the influenza virus from the hands into the body.

Discourage students from sharing food or utensils. This is especially important because it is possible to spread the influenza virus to others before you have symptoms yourself.

If the situation worsens, there is a possibility that schools may be advised to close for a period of time. We will inform you immediately if a decision is made to close schools.

Thank you for your cooperation in a difficult situation.

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #1 (PREVENTION LETTER)

Draft letter to help prepare parents for an influenza pandemic before there are human influenza cases in Canada.

Dear Parents,

This letter will help your family prepare for an influenza pandemic that could make many people sick. At this time, there is no influenza pandemic of any kind in Canada.

Public health officials are worried the Influenza virus may change. If so, it could infect people and spread easily and quickly from person-to-person. This could cause a worldwide influenza outbreak, called a pandemic.

Public health officials would like people to protect themselves against the influenza pandemic. Here are some ways to protect your family:

Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.

Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.

People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.

If you have questions, please contact your healthcare provider. You can get more information from (INSERT NAME OF HEALTH AUTHORITY). Visit online at <http://www.xxx> or call the XX Emergency Information line at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

The federal government website with information on pandemic planning for individuals and families is: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/pandemic_qa_e.html.

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER 2# (EARLY OUTBREAK)

Date

RE: HUMAN SWINE INFLUENZA

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Horizon School Division # 67 has been working closely with the Medical Office of Health for Southwestern Alberta, Dr., to ensure timely and accurate information regarding the Human Swine Influenza outbreak. Swine Flu illness outside Mexico has been mild to date much like usual seasonal influenza, including the two laboratory confirmed cases in Alberta.

In an effort to inform our students and parents, we have attached a Human Swine Influenza question and Answers update. We will continue to work closely with the Health Region and parents to promote safe, healthy schools.

The Human Swine Influenza is a dynamic situation that will be changing quickly. As with all health situations, the Health Regions has the most up to date information and you are encouraged to go to <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca> If you have any further questions, please call your school. There is also contact information on the attached document for health region officials.

Sincerely,

Associate Superintendent of Schools

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #3 (SCHOOL SPECIFIC IDENTIFIED CASE)

Date

Dear Parents:

We have just learned that a student who attends *name of school* had a confirmed case of mild Influenza “A” H1N1. The student had a mild form of the disease and has subsequently fully recovered. As is the case with all health-related issues, we have been in close contact with Alberta Health Services regarding the situation.

H1N1 Influenza Virus questions and answers was sent home previously and if parents would like to access it again, it can be found at (www.horizon.ab.ca) or they can phone the school to get another copy. We have also asked principals to remind students about the importance of cough protocol and effective hand washing.

If you would like more information, or have questions, you can refer to the Horizon home page (<http://www.horizon.ab.ca>) or Health Link Alberta (<http://www.health.alberta.ca>) or call 1-866-408-5465.

Yours truly,

Associate Superintendent

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #4
(INITIAL INFLUENZA PANDEMIC OUTBREAK)

Draft letter to let parents know schools are open

Dear Parents,

This letter will give you information about the influenza outbreak in Alberta. Every year, some people get sick with the influenza during the fall and winter months. This year, there is a new influenza virus that is making people in Alberta sick. Many students and teachers in our school are sick with the influenza. We hope they will all get better quickly.

At this time, the Alberta Health Services tells us students who are not ill can safely come to school. The schools will remain open. We will keep you updated with any important information.

To keep the influenza from spreading to more people, we ask you to keep sick children home. Any children who are sick in school will be sent home.

Here are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness:

Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.

Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

People who are sick should stay home from work or school and stay away from other people until they are better.

Stay away from shopping malls or other places where there are large groups of people.

If you have questions, please contact your healthcare provider. You can call the school hotline (INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER). You can get more information from (INSERT NAME OF HEALTH AUTHORITY). Visit online at <http://www.xxx> or call the XX Emergency Information line at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

If the influenza pandemic continues to spread and more students become ill, schools may close for a few days or weeks. The purpose of closing schools will be to keep children from getting sick. If schools are closed, children should stay at home. We suggest you begin planning now for childcare in your home.

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #5 (School Closure)

Draft letter to inform parents schools are closed

Dear Parents,

The School Jurisdiction has been ordered to close all schools within its jurisdiction. This order is because of the influenza pandemic situation in _____, Alberta. All schools are immediately closed until further notice and children should stay home.

Schools may be closed for days or even weeks to reduce contact among children and stop the spread of the influenza. As soon as we learn when we can reopen the school, we will let you know.

We appreciate that many students and their families are sick. We understand this is a difficult time for our community and we wish those who are ill a speedy recovery.

Because the influenza is easily spread from person-to-person, it is not safe for large groups of people to gather. During this time, both children and adults should stay away from other people and groups as much as possible. They should not gather in other locations such as shopping malls, movie theaters or community centers.

For more information, call your healthcare provider or visit (INSERT NAME OF HEALTH AUTHORITY) website at <http://www.xxx> or call the XX Emergency Information line at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. **[Need to confirm just prior to publication that the number is 1-888-959-9911]**

Again, we will contact you as soon as we have information about when school can reopen.

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #5 (School Re-Opens)

Draft letter to inform parents schools are re-opened.

Dear Parents,

Alberta Health officials have declared the influenza pandemic is under control. Our school will open again on _____ (ADD DATE). At this time, students may safely return to class.

Even though school is opening, there are still some people who are sick from the influenza virus. Health officials say that influenza pandemic outbreaks sometimes happen in waves. This means more people could become sick soon again. If more people get sick, schools may need to close again. If this were to be the case, we would communicate with you.

Because the influenza can still be spread from person-to-person, please keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.

We are looking forward to seeing your children again on _____ (ADD DATE) at the regular start time at school.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE #1

School Authorities may work from this draft press release to announce schools remain open.

For release (DATE)

Contact: (name and number)

School Jurisdiction (name) schools are open but parents should prepare

Our School Jurisdiction schools remain open despite the influenza pandemic outbreak in Alberta. However, parents are asked to prepare for possible closures if the virus continues to spread.

We are working together with health officials to monitor the situation and parents will be updated with any important information.

"At this time, we believe students can safely attend classes and schools will remain open. Our thoughts are with all of our families and children who are affected," said (health official)

If the influenza pandemic continues to spread and more students become ill, health officials say they may need to order schools closed for a period of time. They urged parents to begin planning now for childcare in their home.

Health officials say parents can help protect their children and prevent the spread of influenza pandemic as they would colds and other influenza by taking the following precautions:

Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to avoid proximity with people who are sick, and stay home from work or school if you are sick.

Our recommendations may change during the course of an influenza pandemic outbreak. For school updates, parents can call the School Jurisdiction hotline at (INSERT NUMBER) or (ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES) Emergency Information Line at: (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

For more information on influenza pandemic, visit (INSERT NAME OF HEALTH AUTHORITY) website at <http://www.xxx> or the federal government website at http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/pandemic_qa_e.html.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE #2

School Authorities may work from this draft press release to announce school closures. A similar press release may be issued when school re-opens.

For immediate release (DATE)

Contact: (name and number)

Order of closure of schools in _____

_____ has ordered the closure of schools as a result of the influenza pandemic outbreak in _____.

Schools may be closed for a period of time – several days or even weeks. Because the virus is easily spread from person-to-person, Alberta Health Authorities have also ordered other educational institutions to close. Because it is unsafe for large groups of people to gather, health officials warn people to stay away from shopping malls, community centers and other places where germs can be spread.

"We know this is an anxious time for our community and our thoughts are with those who are ill. We are working closely with the schools to deal with the situation and will keep parents updated with any important information," said (Local Health Official).

According to HEALTH OFFICIAL, the purpose of closing schools is to decrease the risk of staff and students getting sick and to limit the spread of infection.

More information on influenza pandemic is available on (INSERT NAME OF HEALTH AUTHORITY) website at <http://www.xxx> or call the XX Emergency Information line at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

***SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES FOR SCHOOL OFFICIALS
(IN THE EVENT OF A PANDEMIC OUTBREAK)***

We know this is an anxious time for our community and we are concerned about those who are ill. We are working closely with local health officials to deal with the situation and will keep parents updated with any important information.

At this time, under the guidance of Alberta Health Services, we believe students can safely attend classes and schools will remain open.

If the influenza pandemic continues to spread and more students become ill, health officials may need to close schools for an extended period of time (for example, up to _____ weeks).

The purpose of closing schools will be to decrease contact among staff and children in order to decrease their risk of getting sick and to limit the spread of infection. If schools are closed, children should stay at home.

We urge parents to plan now for the possibility of schools closing.

Parents can help protect their children and prevent the spread of influenza pandemic as they would colds and other influenza by taking the following precautions:

Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.

Teach your children to avoid proximity with people who are sick, and stay home from work or school if you are sick.

Recommendations may change during the course of the influenza pandemic. We will make public announcements through the internet, newsletters, and media, and parents can call the School Jurisdiction's hotline at (INSERT HOTLINE).

For more information on influenza pandemic and prevention, visit the website of (ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES) at <http://www.xxx>.

***SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES FOR SCHOOL OFFICIALS
(SCHOOL CLOSURES)***

Schools have been ordered closed in _____, Alberta, effective _____ as a result of the influenza pandemic outbreak in our county.

Schools may be closed for an extended period of time (for example, up to ____ weeks).

We know this is a difficult time for our community and our hearts go out to those who are ill. We are working closely with health officials to deal with the situation and will keep parents updated with any important information.

Because influenza pandemic is easily spread from person-to-person, it is unsafe for large groups of people to gather and children should stay home. The purpose of closing schools is to decrease contact among staff and children in order to decrease their risk of getting sick and to limit the spread of infection.

During this time, children and adults should stay away from other people and groups, as much as possible. Health officials also advise people should not gather in other locations such as homes, shopping malls, movie theaters or community centers.

Parents can help protect their children and prevent the spread of influenza pandemic as they would colds and other influenza by taking the following precautions:

Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.

Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.

Teach your children to stay at least three feet from people who are sick and stay home from work or school if you are sick.

Recommendations may change during the course of the influenza pandemic. We will make public announcements through the media and parents can call the School Jurisdiction's hotline at (INSERT NUMBER)

1. For more information on influenza pandemic and prevention, visit the website of (INSERT NAME OF HEALTH AUTHORITY) at <http://www.xxx>.