

William Penn School District

Pandemic Flu

Emergency Preparations, Response, Recovery

What is the flu?

Flu also called influenza is a contagious disease of the lungs and airways. Usually influenza viruses are spread in droplets of cough and sneezes.

Flu symptoms:

Fever	Headache	Runny Nose
Body Aches	Cough	Stomach and Intestinal Discomfort
Extreme Tiredness	Sore Throat	

How does seasonal flu differ from Pandemic Flu?

Seasonal Flu	Pandemic Flu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurs every year usually in the winter. • For most people, it is an unpleasant but not life-threatening infection. • Affects up to about 10% of the population. • Annual vaccination is available for those at risk of serious illness. • There is usually some protection built up in healthy people from having the flu before. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurs rarely (three times in the 20th century). • It could be a more serious infection for everyone. • May affect around 25% of the population. • Vaccine probably would not be available in the early stages of the pandemic. • Healthy people may be at risk for serious complications.

According to the Department of Health, an epidemic is an outbreak of a disease that occurs in one of several limited areas, like a city, state, or country. Once the disease spreads beyond the borders of several countries and affects many countries across the globe, it is called a pandemic. In the 20th century, several pandemics of influenza occurred – the biggest one in 1918. During that pandemic, at least 500,000 Americans died and it has been estimated that there were as many of 10 million deaths worldwide.

In the case of a pandemic flu event, the district will follow the district’s Infectious Disease Policy and initiate the district planning, response and recovery procedures as follows:

William Penn School District

Infectious Disease Procedures

In order to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases the superintendent shall implement procedures assuring that all school buildings are in compliance with state and local board of health rules and regulations regarding the presence of persons who have or have been exposed to infectious diseases deemed dangerous to the public health. Such procedures shall also prescribe the manner in which safeguards are taken to remove the danger to others. The following procedure should take place when a family or staff member informs us of a possible serious contagious disease: (i.e. flu, pertussis, meningitis)

- The School nurse and/or building administrator will contact the family of the ill child or staff member to gather information and any pertinent sibling information
- School nurse and/or building administrator will contact the Nurse Department Head and supply contact information (name, DOB, phone #'s, name of physician, name of hospital, etc.)
- Nurse Dept. Head and building administrator notifies Superintendent, Student Services Director and School Physician
- Superintendent will communicate with the I.U. and State Board of Health
- Global Connect Message System may be activated by the Superintendent
- Any person with a reportable contagious disease shall produce a note from their physician when they are safe to return to school

The district shall require that the parents or guardian shall complete a medical history form upon enrollment and as needed. The nurse may use such reports to advise the parent of the need for further medical attention and to plan for potential health problems in school.

The principal and/or school nurse shall report the presence of suspected case or cases of any reportable communicable disease to the appropriate local health authority as required by the State Board of Health. Such information concerning a student's present and past health condition shall be treated as **confidential**. The principal shall cooperate with the local health officials to the investigation of the source of the disease.

The fact that a student has been tested for a sexually transmitted disease, the test result, any information relating to the diagnosis or treatment of a sexually transmitted disease, and any information regarding drug or alcohol treatment for a student must be kept strictly confidential. If the district has a release, the information may be disclosed pursuant to the restrictions in the release.

Mitigation/Prevention (before any pandemic flu occurs)

The following are actions to assure that all staff, students and community are informed and understand what is occurring and how they can contribute to making the situation better.

- A. Awareness/Education:
 - a. The District will take proactive procedures to educate staff and students regarding respiratory etiquette and “stop the spread of germs”.
 - i. The District will put up posters illustrating the proper procedures for “covering your cough.”
 - ii. Articles could be placed on the District website regarding signs and symptoms of flu and healthy habits. Healthy habits include frequent and proper hand washing, covering your cough with a tissue or into your arm and staying home when you are sick.
 - iii. During new staff orientation, healthy habit procedures will be discussed.
 - iv. School Nurses at each site will be responsible to educate students and staff about Pandemic Flu. Building Administrators should allow a few minutes at staff meetings to remind staff of healthy procedures and inform staff of any new updates on pandemic flu.

- B. Surveillance:
 - a. School Nurses should continue to track the number of staff and students absent daily and report to the Nurse Department Head if over 20% are absent or when requested.

- C. Infection control:
 - a. Schools will allow students to bring alcohol-based hand gel to be available for those rooms that do not have hand-washing facilities.
 - b. Custodial staff will be responsible for ensuring that bathrooms are supplied with soap and towels for hand washing.

- D. Health Concerns:
 - a. Administrators and staff will learn about psychological first aid (behavioral health emergency preparedness) and specifically the effects of trauma on children.
 - b. School Nurses will begin to work with parents and staff to identify children medically compromised and not able to be present at school once the flu has been identified in the region.

- E. Communication/Collaboration:
 - a. Superintendent’s office will continue to be active with the Delaware County Intermediate Unit and Delaware County Emergency Management.
 - b. Superintendent, Student Services Director and Nurse Department Head will collaborate on all emergency planning, education and pandemic flu updates.

Preparedness (what we should be doing now):

The following are actions that we can and should be doing to be prepared in case of any emergency situation.

A. Awareness/Education:

- a. Information will be sent out to staff to review symptoms of flu and what to look for in order to identify ill students and staff.
- b. Nurse Department Head and Administration will develop template letters and forms about potential school closings and about keeping students home if they are sick.

B. Surveillance:

- a. School Nurses should continue to track the number of staff and students absent daily and report to the Nurse Department Head if over 20% are absent or when requested.

C. Infection control:

- a. School Nurses will continue to encourage students to bring alcohol-based hand gel to be available for those rooms that do not have hand-washing facilities.
- b. Custodial staff will be responsible for ensuring that bathrooms are supplied with soap and towels for hand washing.

D. Health Concerns:

- a. Director of Student Services will review and identify resources available for grief services.
- b. School Nurses will work with parents and staff to identify children medically compromised and not able to be present at school once the flu has been identified in the region.
- c. School administration need to be sure staff and student emergency contact lists are up-to-date.

E. Communication/Collaboration:

- a. Superintendent's office will continue to be active with the Delaware County Intermediate Unit and Delaware County Emergency Management.
- c. Superintendent, Student Services Director and Nurse Department Head will collaborate on all emergency planning, education and pandemic flu updates.
- b. School Administration will implement procedures for communication with State Department of Education and the Department of Public Health.

Response (What we should be doing when the emergency occurs):

The following actions are for various level of emergency depending on the severity and location of the outbreak:

A. Awareness/Education:

- a. The School Nurse, Nurse Department Head and/or School Administrator will finalize and initiate communication to families regarding information on the pandemic flu.
- b. The School Nurse will send information to staff to review the symptoms of flu and what to look for in identifying ill students and other staff.
- c. Web site, district e-mails, staff courier service, direct phone calls to staff, Global Connect System may be activated.

B. Surveillance:

- a. School Nurses should continue to track the number of staff and students absent daily and report to the Nurse Department Head if over 20% are absent or when requested.
- b. To the extent possible, school nurses will monitor the effects of cumulative stress on caregivers.

C. Infection Control:

- a. Extra care will be taken in disinfecting the nurse's suite every day.
- b. Parents or emergency contact will be called immediately.
- c. Area where that student occupied will be cleaned and disinfected.
- d. Custodians will use extra care in disinfecting the cafeteria and bathrooms every day.
- e. Once again, students and staff will be reminded **NOT** to come to school sick.
- f. Implement social distancing, isolation, quarantine as indicated.
- g. Cancel school/events as appropriate.

D. Health Concerns:

- a. Utilize in-school resources to provide for physical and mental health needs.
- b. Arrange for provision of additional resources with the Department of Public Health.

E. Communication/Collaboration:

- a. School Administrator will provide information to parents on prevention procedures, and provide information as to the school status-opened or closed and if closed when reopening.
- b. Implement procedures with the PA Department of Health, the Department of Education, and the Delaware County Intermediate Unit.
- c. Local radio and TV announcements will be posted for school closures.

Recovery (What should be done after the emergency condition passes):

In the case of pandemic flu, this does not necessarily mean that all flu cases will cease, but the high incidence and continuing spread of the disease will have subsided. The following actions are what should be done after the main incident has subsided.

A. Awareness/Education:

- a. The School Nurse should continue to teach students about proper hand washing and cough etiquette.
- b. The School Nurse should inform staff about the extent of the pandemic flu in the community and about any special services that the school will be providing including counseling support.
- c. The School Nurse should provide families with how to support students' recovery from pandemic flu including coping with stress and symptoms of grief and loss.

B. Surveillance

- a. The School Nurse should continue to monitor pandemic flu illness to identify second wave
- b. The School Nurse should identify families and staff who may be in need of physical and/or mental health services.
- c. The School Nurse and School Administrators should monitor the effects of cumulative stress on caregivers.

C. Infection Control

- a. Return to Mitigation/Prevention procedures and activities.

D. Health Concerns:

- a. Urge staff to use Employee Assistance Program for assistance with coping with loss and stress.
- b. Make appropriate health referrals for students and staff who need it.
- c. Monitor the effects of cumulative stress on caregivers such as office staff, school nurses, teachers, aides and school counselors.

E. Communication/Collaboration

- a. Announce counseling services to families.
- b. Follow-up with student/staff referrals to community agencies.
- c. Have debriefings with staff and write up lessons learned.
- d. Update pandemic flu emergency plan with lessons learned information.