

Adopted: 08/28/2008

Revised: 00/00/0000

806.1 PANDEMIC FLU EMERGENCY PLAN

I. HEALTH EMERGENCY:

When the President, Governor, or County Commissioners declare a Pandemic Flu Emergency for the geographic area encompassing the cities of Dassel and Cokato, Dassel-Cokato School District will be considered to be in a Pandemic Flu Emergency (PFE). In the absence of a decision by a higher authority, the School Board may declare a PFE. During a PFE, the school district will make decisions guided by this PFE plan and supporting documents. When the governmental body that declared the emergency which encompasses Dassel-Cokato declares the emergency is over, the emergency is over for Dassel-Cokato School District, unless the school board declares a continuation of the emergency.

II. PHASES OF PANDEMIC ALERT

A. Inter-pandemic: normal conditions (period of time between pandemics).

Phase 1: No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.

Phase 2: No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal subtype poses a substantial risk of disease.

B. Pandemic Alert Period

Phase 3: (current phase). Human infections with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.

Phase 4: Small clusters with limited human to human transmission, but spread is highly localized, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.

Phase 5: Larger clusters but not human-to human spread still localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmittable (substantial pandemic risk).

Phase 6: Pandemic: increased and sustained transmission in general population.

III. MITIGATION AND PREVENTION

A. The District Licensed School Nurse (LSN) will distribute illness prevention signs and flyers for display within all buildings.

B. LSN will provide illness prevention instruction (i.e., cough and sneeze etiquette, clean hands and clean work areas) to all Kindergarten students as part of their health unit. Prevention education materials will be provided to all other grade levels for education by classroom teachers. LSN will be available for consultation.

C. The LSN and Superintendent will provide Pandemic Awareness Training to all district employees. All staff are expected to participate in the trainings and be knowledgeable about the Emergency Plan and their role in the plan. All staff will receive a copy of this plan.

D. The District will provide the opportunity for all staff to receive seasonal flu inoculation.

E. Communication to parents and families will be through the school newsletters, district website, email, meetings, in-services, and handouts. The school district will relay information on expectations and guidelines during a pandemic outbreak. Information may also include educational material on pandemic flu, sign and symptoms, prevention tips, etc...

F. The school will request an annual update of addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses to ensure communication to parents.

G. The school will work in cooperation with local/state governmental agencies to monitor, educate, and support the well being of students, staff and community.

H. Prevention supplies such as masks, soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues and receptacles for disposal will be stocked in each building and available to prevent the spread of the disease.

I. Staff will be expected to create/maintain an emergency plan in their homes.

IV. PREPARATION

- A. The Dassel-Cokato School District will assist State and Local governmental agencies in the collection of data to monitor the different stages of an outbreak. This information will include, but may not be limited to, educational progress, number of cases of illness, availability of food, medicine, heat, etc. Employees will respect confidentiality guidelines as much as possible.
- B. When absences for an illness are twice the typical absence rate of the student population within a building (e.g., 4%-5%), the building nurse shall file the required Minnesota School-based Illness Report with the Department of Health.
- C. Students exhibiting flu-type symptoms will be kept in a separate location from other health room users as designated by building principals.

D. Parents or emergency contacts will be called immediately and requested to pick-up the student exhibiting flu-type symptoms.

1. Cough
Sore throat
Headache
Muscle ache
Fatigue

2. AND/OR fever of 100 or greater.

a. These students will be required to wear surgical masks while on school property.

b. The area and/or cot that the student occupied will be cleaned using a disinfectant after each use.

E. If a person has been exposed to pandemic flu, the person is encouraged to remain home from school for 2 days to avoid the spread of the disease before symptoms occur, as persons are contagious 24 hours before the symptoms begin.

F. Persons with pandemic influenza should be isolated for 14 days.

G. Staff and students will be screened upon returning to school.

H. LSN and health assistants will contact parents of students who are most vulnerable to serious illness (i.e., compromised immune system, chronic illness, etc.) to inform them of the increased risk.

I. LSN notifies all buildings to increase illness prevention measures:

1. Classroom teachers to review illness prevention procedures with all students (i.e., cough and sneeze etiquette, clean hands and clean work areas).
2. Spray bottles of disinfectant are distributed to teachers for use to clean surfaces within their classrooms daily and in between classes.
3. Distribute additional illness prevention signs and flyers for display within all buildings.
4. Discourage the use of shared workspaces.
5. Communicates with staff via email.

J. Director of Buildings and Grounds will meet with the LSN and Superintendent to determine if buildings should be cleaned differently and/or more often.

K. Custodial staff will be trained in cleaning and housekeeping procedures and use of products that will prevent the spread of a pandemic illness.

1. Where possible, increase building ventilation and replace filters frequently.
2. Insure an ample supply of tissues, soap and hand sanitizing gel.
3. Insure all waste receptacles are emptied daily.
4. Follow cleaning procedures for the color level indicated.
 - a. Interpandemic-Phase 2: Standard cleaning procedures, including sanitation and disinfecting high usage areas, are in place. Buildings will be maintained on a regularly scheduled cleaning basis. Employees will receive training on cleaning, disinfecting and disposal of materials to ensure that proper safety precautions are followed.
 - b. Phase 3-4: Areas that are frequently touched by hands, such as door handles (inside and out of the building) light switches, and keyboards are cleaned with a disinfectant solution specifically designed to kill the bacteria from the avian flu. All standard cleaning procedures will also be maintained.
 - c. Phase 5-6: Total and complete cleaning of any hard surfaces in the infected area will be done with a disinfectant solution specially designed to kill the

bacteria from the avian flu. Carpets and upholstered furniture will be thoroughly vacuumed and shampooed as indicated. Other areas in the building will be thoroughly cleaned using the cleaning procedures listed for interpandemic through phase 4.

L. District sends Initial Outbreak Letter to parents. (see Sample Pandemic Letter #1)

1. Superintendent (or their designee) issues press release. (see Sample Pandemic Press Release #1)
2. Building principals monitor staff illness and implement plans for covering classes when the number of staff illnesses exceeds the availability of substitutes.
3. The Superintendent will consult with state and local health officials regarding the need to cancel school events that bring together large groups of students and/or community members (e.g., athletic contests, concerts, plays, etc.).

V. RESPONSE

School Closure:

- A. Upon notification by the MN Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Department of Education or Public Health officials; or upon consultation with the school board regarding a significant risk of spreading the illness and/or lack of staffing to continue the safe operation of the schools; the Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, shall order the schools closed during the duration of the outbreak.
1. The Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, shall implement the Emergency School Closing plan.
 2. A letter will be sent to all parents informing them of school closure. (see Sample Pandemic Letter #2)
 3. Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, issues press release. (see Sample Pandemic Press Release #2)
 4. Information regarding the school closure will be posted on the District website and updated as additional information becomes available and/or situations change.
- B. The Director of Buildings and Grounds, or their designee, shall implement procedures to close all school buildings
1. All surface contact areas are cleaned and disinfected.
 2. Buildings will be readied for reopening of schools.
- C. The Director of Technology, or their designee, will implement procedures to maintain district communication networks.

1. The district website will be kept current with pertinent information as provided by the Superintendent or Acting Superintendent.
 2. District employees will receive pertinent communication via district email.
- D. All non-essential staff will be sent home for the duration of the school closure. Essential staff includes:
1. The Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, of Schools.
 2. Building Principals and Program Directors and their immediate office support staff.
 3. District Office personnel essential to the continued functioning of the District.
 4. Building and grounds staff needed to clean and maintain school property.
 5. Other personnel deemed essential by the Superintendent or Acting Superintendent.
- E. The Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, shall make school facilities available during the pandemic outbreak to Public Health and/or other similar agencies for use as an inoculation center, treatment facility, food preparation site, etc.
- F. Should the Superintendent of Schools be ill or otherwise unavailable during the course of the pandemic crisis, a district administrator licensed as a District Superintendent or a district administrator for whom the district has requested a variance as a District Superintendent, shall immediately assume the role as Acting Superintendent. The following individuals, in the order listed, shall serve as Acting Superintendent until the Superintendent is able to return to duty or a replacement is named by the Board of Education:
1. DCMS Principal
 2. DCHS Principal
 3. Dassel Elementary Principal
 4. Cokato Elementary Principal
- G. During the period of school closure when contact with others must be kept at a minimum, Board of Education meetings shall be conducted electronically by telephone conference call or other audio/visual means. (see M.S. 13D.021 Sec. 1)
1. Should a Board Member be unable to fulfill their duties and attend board meetings for 90 days or more because of illness, the Board may appoint a person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term, or until the ill Member is again able to resume duties as a member of the Board, whichever date is earliest. (see M.S. 123B.09 Subd. 4)

2. Should a vacancy on the Board of Education occur due to the death of a Board Member, the Board shall appoint a person to fill that vacancy consistent with the requirements set forth in M.S. 123B.09 Subd. 5.

VI. RECOVERY

- A. Upon notification by the Department of Education, Public Health or other governmental agency that the pandemic crisis is under control the Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, shall order the schools be reopened.
 1. The Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, shall contact the media outlets identified in the Emergency School Closing procedure, requesting they announce the school reopening.
 2. A letter will be sent to all parents informing them of school reopening. (see Sample Pandemic Letter #3)
 3. The Superintendent, or Acting Superintendent, issues press release. (see Sample Pandemic Press Release #3)
 4. Information regarding the school reopening will be posted on the District website and updated as additional information becomes available.
- B. The Director of Buildings and Grounds, or their designee, shall implement procedures to reopen all school buildings.
- C. The District shall assist staff and students deal with the cumulative stress on caregivers and provide grief counseling, as necessary.
- D. LSN will resume heightened surveillance reporting.

These procedures may be adapted and utilized for non-pandemic outbreaks of infectious disease that require disease control measures up to and including school closure.

Letter #1 please put on Letterhead

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This letter will provide you information about a flu outbreak that is occurring within Dassel-Cokato Public Schools. Each year some people get sick with the flu during the fall and winter months. This year there is a new flu virus that is making many people ill, including many students and teachers.

At this time, the public health officials inform us that students who are not ill can safely come to school. The schools will remain open. However, all athletic events, concerts, plays and other such public events are cancelled until further notice.

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

The school district wants you to protect yourself and your family against the flu. 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 often 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 sneeze 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 stay away from other people until they are better.
- Stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters or other places where there are large groups of people.

For more information, call your healthcare provider, visit the MN Department of Health's website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us>; or visit the federal government's pandemic flu website: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

If the flu continues to spread and more students become ill, schools may close for days or weeks. The purpose of closing schools will be to keep additional children from getting sick. If schools are closed, children should stay at home. Begin planning now for childcare in your home. To help you with this planning, we're enclosing copies of Influenza (flu) Information for Parents and Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals & Families.

We will keep you updated with any important information or as recommendations change during the course of this flu outbreak.

Sincerely,
Jeff Powers

Letter #2 please put on letterhead

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Public Health officials have ordered Dassel-Cokato Public Schools to close because of the pandemic flu outbreak. 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 flu.

We know that many students and their families are very sick. We know this is a hard time for our community and our hearts go out to those who are ill.

Because the flu 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 locations such as shopping malls, movie theaters or community centers.

We know that it may be hard to get a doctor's appointment, go to a clinic or even be seen in a hospital emergency room. Here are some tips for helping those who are sick with the flu:

- Have them drink a lot of liquid (juice, water).
- Keep the sick person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- For adults with fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do Not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
- Keep tissues and a trash bag within reach of the sick person.
- Be sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently.
- Keep the people who are sick with the flu away from the people who are not sick.
- Call your healthcare provider if you are concerned that something does not seem right.

For more information, call your healthcare provider, visit the MN Department of Health's website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us>; or visit the federal government's pandemic flu website: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

We will contact you and post information on the district website as soon as we have information about when school will reopen.

Sincerely,

Jeff Powers

Letter #3 please put on letterhead

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Public health officials have declared the pandemic flu is under control. Dassel-Cokato Public Schools will open again on (DATE). At that time, students may safely return to class.

In preparation for reopening, district buildings and ground staff have done a thorough job of cleaning school buildings and disinfecting those areas students come most closely into contact with.

School counselors, social workers and psychologists will be available within all school buildings to assist students as they readjust to school.

Even though school is opening, there are still some people who are sick with the flu virus. Health officials say that pandemic flu 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. We will continue to give you any important information.

Because the flu 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.

Sincerely,

Jeff Powers

Letter #4 please put on letterhead

For immediate release (DATE)

Contact: (NAME and PHONE #)

Dassel-Cokato Public Schools are open but parents should prepare

Dassel-Cokato Public Schools remain open despite the flu outbreak, but parents are asked to prepare for possible closures if the virus continues to spread. School and public health officials are working together 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 (School Official.)

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

Parents can help protect their children and prevent the spread of pandemic flu as they would colds and other flu 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 stay at least three feet from people who are sick. People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.

Health officials point out recommendations may change during the course of a pandemic flu outbreak. School updates will be posted on the district website: <http://www.dc.k12.mn.us>

For more information on pandemic flu, visit the MN Department of Health’s website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us>; or visit the federal government’s pandemic flu website: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

Letter #5 please put on letterhead

For immediate release (DATE)

Contact: (NAME and PHONE #)

Health officials order closure of Dassel-Cokato Public Schools

Public Health officials have ordered the closure of Dassel-Cokato Public Schools as a result of the pandemic flu outbreak.

Schools will be closed for a period of time – days or even weeks. Because the virus is easily spread from person-to-person, Public Health officials have also ordered colleges, daycare centers and preschools 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.

According to (HEALTH OFFICIAL), the purpose of closing schools is to limit contact among children to decrease their risk of getting sick and to limit the spread of infection.

Because so many people are sick with the flu, health officials acknowledge that it may be hard to get a doctor's appointment, go to a clinic or even be seen in a hospital emergency room. They provided some tips for residents to care for the sick at home:

- Have them drink a lot of liquid (juice, water).
- Keep the sick person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- For adults with fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
- Keep tissues and a trash bag within reach of the sick person.
- Be sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently.
- Keep the people who are sick with the flu away from the people who are not sick.
- Call your healthcare provider if you are concerned that something does not seem right.

More information on pandemic flu is available at the MN Department of Health's website:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us>; or visit the federal government's pandemic flu website:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

Letter #6 please put on letterhead

For release (DATE)

Contact: (NAME and PHONE #)

Dassel-Cokato Public Schools to Reopen

Public Health officials have declared the pandemic flu outbreak is under control. Dassel-Cokato Public Schools will open again on (DATE). At that time, students may safely return to class.

“We are looking forward to seeing the children again” said (SCHOOL OFFICIAL).

In preparation for reopening, district buildings and ground staff have done a thorough job of cleaning school buildings and disinfecting those areas students come most closely into contact with.

School counselors, social workers and psychologists will be available within all school buildings to assist students as they readjust to school.

Even though school is opening, there are still some people who are sick with the flu virus. Health officials say that pandemic flu 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. We will continue to give you any important information.

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

Developing a District Pandemic Health Crisis Plan

1. What is a pandemic health crisis?
 - a. A global outbreak of a viral disease, for which there is little or no immunity in the human population. It causes serious illness, and spreads easily and rapidly person-to-person with no vaccine immediately available.
 - b. Estimates are that 20% - 35% of the world's population will become infected with the disease.
 - c. Death rates among those infected could range from 2.5% to 20% (one source estimates it could be as high as 50% ¹), depending on the virulence of the virus.
 - d. The young, elderly and those with chronic health conditions are considered most at risk. ²
2. A pandemic crisis is not a question of 'if,' but 'when!'
3. Sources of information about a pandemic outbreak.
 - a. US Dept. of Health: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>
 - b. Centers for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/>
 - c. American Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.org/news/ds/panflu/>
 - d. MN Dept. of Public Health: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/index.html>
 - e. MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management: <http://www.hsem.state.mn.us/>
4. How prepared is your city and county?
 - a. Have they developed a comprehensive plan?
 - b. YOYO?
 - c. Are you somewhere in between?
5. Key staff to involve in developing your district plan.
 - a. Administrative team
 - b. School Nurse
 - c. Director of Buildings and Grounds

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- 1 Of the 117 individuals who were infected with virus H5N (avian flu) following direct contact with sick animals. 60 died. This rate is unprecedented in modern history.
 - 2 During the 1918 Pandemic, most deaths occurred among young adults.
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6. The four stages of a pandemic crisis.

- a. Mitigation/prevention
- b. Preparation
- c. Response
- d. Recovery

7. Key issues and questions we discovered in developing Dassel-Cokato's plan.

- a. Staff has minimal knowledge about what a pandemic health crisis entails. How do we bring them up to speed?
- b. Our facilities were designed to enhance student flow – not to isolate infected students. How can we adapt our facilities to isolate infected students?
- c. How do we protect those who are most vulnerable – the young and those with chronic health conditions?
- d. What do we do about extracurricular activities (i.e., sporting events, concerts, plays, etc.) during the initial phase of the outbreak?
- e. What do we do if high numbers of staff elect to stay home during the early stages of a perceived outbreak?
 - i. How do we cover classes if the need for substitutes exceeds the supply?
 - ii. Do we need a vehicle to close school without orders from state or county health officials?
- f. How much disinfectant, masks and other supplies should the district stockpile?
- g. Who is in charge at the state, county and city level during a pandemic crisis?
- h. Who makes decisions should the Superintendent be unavailable? Are there legal requirements as to who can assume the role?
- i. How does the school board continue its governance activities during a pandemic crisis?

- j. How does the board function if there is no longer a quorum?
- k. How does the Superintendent/Acting Superintendent stay abreast of happenings and information during a pandemic crisis?
- l. How does the district communicate with families during the pandemic crisis?
- m. Will the district attempt to continue some type of ongoing education services (i.e., virtual school) during a school closure?
- n. What steps must be taken to maintain and then reopen school facilities.
- o. Upon reopening, how will the district respond to multiple child, family and staff deaths?

Legal References:

42 U.S.C. § 5121 et. seq. (Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.06 (Reports of Dangerous Weapon Incidents in School Zones)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.57 (Crisis Management Policy)

Minn. Stat. § 609.605, Subd. 4 (Trespasses on School Property)

Minn. Stat. Ch. 299F (Fire Marshall)

Minn. Rules, Pt. 3530.4400 to 3530.4700 (Civil Defense)

Minn. Rules, Pt. 7510 (Fire Safety)

Uniform Fire Code

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 407 (Employee Right to Know - Exposure to Hazardous Substances)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 803 (Warning Systems and Emergency Plans) MSBA/MASA

Model Policy 804 (Bomb Threats)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 903 (Visitors to the School District Buildings and Sites)