



## H1N1 PLANNING AND RESPONSE School Board Administration and Operation Continuity Plan

### A. Current Status

- (i) H1N1  
Influenza A (H1N1) virus is a subtype of influenza virus A and the most common cause of influenza in humans. In June 2009, the World Health Organization declared that flue due to a new strain of swine-origin H1N1 was responsible for the 2009 flu pandemic.
- (ii) Most illness has been mild, with low rates of hospitalizations and deaths (1.6/1,000,000 population)

### B. Recognition and Regional Planning of an Influenza Pandemic

- (i) The local Health Units will initiate and implement the Province's *Ontario health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic*. This includes surveillance, investigation, health risk assessment, liaison with hospitals, clinics, schools and other vital agencies, laboratory verification of exposure, vaccination centres, quarantines and public re-location sites.
- (ii) The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario will work closely with local Medical Health Officers as H1N1 unfolds.

### C. Infection Prevention and Control

Infection prevention and control practices are paramount in helping to prevent or reduce the spread of influenza. This is best achieved through:

- (i) Emphasize the importance of proper cleaning techniques and control measures (hand hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette)
- (ii) Regularly disinfecting contact surfaces such as counter tops, door hardware and light switches.
- (iii) Communication to staff and students to remain home if they are sick.

**D. Physical Layout/Supplies**

The most effective line of defence is to adapt the physical environment to reduce the spread of influenza. This can be achieved through:

- (i) Hand washing stations which have running water and an adequate supply of soap and paper towels or hand dryers.
- (ii) Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) is placed where hand washing facilities are not available.
- (iii) A designated area where ill students can be isolated from other students when they are experiencing flu-like symptoms at school.
- (iv) Students bringing their own supplies to class to reduce the need to share.

**E. Managing Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) in Students and Staff**

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Arlene King, has made the following recommendations (*Pandemic H1N1 2-009 Influenza Virus: Guidance for Elementary and Secondary Schools, August 21, 2009*).

- (i) Schools should exclude all staff and students with ILI symptoms.
- (ii) Students who become ill while at school should be separated from other children until they can be picked up.
- (iii) Pregnant women and individuals with a pre-existing chronic disease may suffer complications should they contract the H1N1 virus, though their likelihood of contracting the virus is no different from the general public. These individuals should see their health care provider as soon as possible in the event that they are experiencing ILI symptoms.

**F. Contingency Planning: School Quarantine and High Staff Absenteeism**

- (i) Absence and Quarantine  
During a severe outbreak, as many as one in three people may become ill with influenza. Many infected people will be too ill to go to school or work. These individuals will be encouraged to stay home until they are well.

(ii) Supply Teachers

The CDSBEO currently has 400 qualified teachers on our Supply List. The Human Resources Department is preparing a list of available retired teachers and principals who could be called upon in the event that a teacher shortage exists.

**G. School Closure (Emergency Alternate School Relocation)**

(i) “Given the current epidemiology of H1N1 (mild and self-limiting), school closures are not recommended at present.” (Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Arlene King, August 21, 2009)

(ii) The Director of Education or alternate, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, may initiate an emergency school relocation and closure where insufficient staff is available to supervise and operate a school. Public announcements will be provided to local radio and television stations and placed on the Board web site. Available staff from nearby schools will be directed to attend the emergency alternate school. The Board’s Transportation Department will advise operators of the change in location. Each school’s existing *Emergency Preparedness Plan and Evacuation Procedure Manual* shall be used as a guideline in transitioning to an alternate location.

**H. Communications**

(i) It is important that staff and parents receive frequent communications on H1N1 (for example, when the virus is in the community)

(ii) Information should include:

- Symptoms of ILI
- Infection prevention and control practices
- What to do if staff or students become ill

(ii) Information will be disseminated through the Board web site, via school newsletters, and through each school’s synre-voice system.

**I. Linking with Local Public Health**

(i) Preventative Measures

School staff will be asked to promote information provided by the local Health Units, and institute an intense regimen of hand washing, surface disinfection and an enhanced approach to washroom sanitation with emphasis on chemical contact time, to reduce the likelihood of infection.

- (ii) Communication  
School staff are required to report when school absenteeism rates exceed 10%.
- (iii) Obtaining the Latest Information on H1N1  
At the beginning of this school year, each school in the Board is to receive in-service from the local Health Units on proper cleaning techniques and control measures (hand hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette).

## **SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION CONTINUITY PLAN**

The Continuity Plan describes how the Board will operate during a Pandemic.

### **a. Governance**

Should the Director of Education become ill and is unable to perform his/her duties, the Associate Director of Education will assume all duties and functions of the Director. Should the Associate Director also become incapacitated or be under medical quarantine, the Director of Education, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, shall appoint a Supervisory Officer as the Acting Director of Education, until such time as the Director is able to resume his/her duties.

### **b. Location of Board Administrative Headquarters**

The Board Administrative Headquarters shall remain at the Kemptville Board Office unless the site is unavailable or quarantined. A temporary alternate Headquarters shall be a regional Board Office or a designated school selected by the Director of Education or the senior person in charge (Governance). All emergency personnel and Principals shall be advised of any temporary relocation.

### **c. Financial Control**

The Director, or in his/her absence, the Associate Director, or in his/her absence the senior person in charge shall assume the title "Treasurer", and with the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or elected Trustee designated in their absence or quarantine, is authorized to arrange for all emergency funding as required to maintain the critical services of the Board and assistance to schools.