

## **7.0. Safe Schools**

### **7.40.C. SAFE SCHOOLS – PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS GUIDELINES**

**Adopted:**

**Reviewed by Committee: March 10, 2020**

**Policy Reference:**

**Legal Reference:** Pandemic Influenza: Preparedness Guidelines for Manitoba School Divisions and Schools (K-12), October 2007.

Acknowledgement: These guidelines were developed by adapting information from the Manitoba Health/Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth publication entitled Pandemic Influenza: Preparedness Guidelines for Manitoba School Divisions and Schools (K-12), October 2007 and the River East Transcona Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines.

Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines are meant to be educational and provide Lakeshore School Division with operational guidelines in the event of a pandemic.

### **Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines – Table of Contents**

#### **1.0 PANDEMIC INFLUENZA**

- 1.1 What Is Pandemic Influenza?
- 1.2 How Is Influenza Spread?
- 1.3 What Are The Symptoms?
- 1.4 What is the Impact on Society?
- 1.5 What is the Impact on Schools?

#### **2.0 MANAGEMENT OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA**

- 2.1 Preventative Steps
- 2.2 Vaccine
- 2.3 Building Hygiene
- 2.4 Disease Management

#### **3.0 PANDEMIC CO-ORDINATION**

- 3.1 Government of Manitoba
- 3.2 Municipal Government
- 3.3 Health Service Providers
- 3.4 School Divisions

#### **4.0 PANDEMIC MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 Membership of Pandemic Management Team
- 4.2 Mandate of Pandemic Management Team
- 4.3 Students and Families
  - 4.3.1 Responsibility to Students and Families
  - 4.3.2 Students' Responsibilities

- 4.3.3 Student Illness While at School
- 4.3.4 Potential Spread of Infection at School
- 4.4 Employees
  - 4.4.1 Responsibilities Concerning Environmental Health and Safety
  - 4.4.2 Responsibilities to Employees
  - 4.4.3 Employees' Responsibilities to Schools
  - 4.4.4 Response Plan for Employee Absenteeism
  - 4.4.5 Response Plan for Administration
  - 4.4.6 Response Plan for Teaching Activities
- 4.5 Interruption of Services and Supplies
  - 4.5.1 Services and Supplies
  - 4.5.2 Information Technology
- 4.6 School Closure

## 5.0 BUILDING MAINTENANCE PLAN

- 5.1 Pre-Pandemic
- 5.2 During a Pandemic
- 5.3 Permit Holders
- 5.4 Schools Designated as Emergency Housing
- 5.5 Animals in the School

## 6.0 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## 7.0 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

- 7.1 Sharing LAKESHORE SCHOOL DIVISION's Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines with Employees, Parents and Students
- 7.2 Sharing Pre-Pandemic Information with Employees
- 7.3 Sharing Pre-Pandemic Information with Parents and Students
- 7.4 Sharing Information with Employees during a Pandemic
- 7.5 Sharing Information with Parents and Students during a Pandemic
- 7.6 Sharing Information with the Community and Regional Health Authority during a Pandemic
- 7.7 Sharing Information with Employees, Parents and Students after a Pandemic

## 8.0 BUSINESS PLAN

## 9.0 RECOVERY PLAN

## 10.0 REVIEW OF GUIDELINES

## 11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Contacts

Appendix B – Hand Hygiene (Add Cough and Wash Hands posters)

Appendix C – What can I do to prevent myself from getting infected with influenza during a pandemic?

## **1.0 PANDEMIC INFLUENZA**

### **1.1 What is Pandemic Influenza?**

Pandemic influenza is an epidemic that spreads throughout the world. Influenza A is the type of influenza virus involved in all known influenza pandemics. Influenza A viruses can undergo major changes or shifts in genetic makeup, producing a completely new strain for which most people have little or no specific immunity. As a result, large numbers of individuals become infected as it spreads.

For an influenza virus to be considered a pandemic, it must be a new virus with the ability to spread efficiently among people, causing widespread illness and death.

While we have learned from past pandemics in history (1918-19; 1957-58, and 1968-69), there is much we do not know and research is ongoing.

### **1.2 How is Influenza Spread?**

The influenza virus enters the body through the nose, eyes or throat.

- when people with influenza cough or sneeze, large droplets containing the virus are produced and can travel up to one metre in the air.
- inhaling these droplets or having them come into contact with your mouth, eyes or nose can result in infection. This can occur by:
  - hand-to-hand contact with infected individuals, or
  - by touching surfaces or handling objects contaminated by infected individuals.
- infected persons can be contagious from the day before they develop symptoms and up to seven days afterwards (typically three to five days in healthy adults and up to seven days in children). This timeframe may be longer for children and people with decreased immune system functioning.
- not everyone who comes in contact with influenza virus will become ill. However, they may still spread it to others.

### **1.3 What are the Symptoms?**

Once infected with influenza, it usually takes from one to three days to develop symptoms. Symptoms include fever and a cough, often accompanied by one or more of the following:

- aching muscles and joints
- headache
- severe weakness and fatigue
- sore throat

- runny nose

Children can have gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea but these symptoms are uncommon in adults.

Generally, symptoms can last four to seven days. A cough and general fatigue may persist for several weeks.

Most people recover from influenza without medical intervention. However, some people, particularly the very young or old, and those with compromised immune systems, can develop complications including bacterial infections such as pneumonia, which can result in prolonged illness or even death.

#### **1.4 Impact on Society?**

During a pandemic, it is expected there will be a greater extent of illness and death than experienced during an ordinary influenza season. However, most people who get ill will recover. Public health experts assume that:

- 35 per cent of people could become sick enough to miss at least one-half day or more of work.
- of those who get sick, 0.5 per cent could die.

A pandemic may occur over a two-year period. It may occur in waves with each wave lasting six to eight weeks and separated by three to nine months. A second wave may cause more serious illness and deaths than the first.

It is anticipated there will be three months warning from the time a pandemic is declared by the World Health Organization until the virus arrives in Canada. This is based on the assumption that a pandemic will start elsewhere in the world, then spread to North America. It is possible the warning period will be shorter.

#### **1.5 Impact on Schools?**

Educational continuity in schools could be impacted by:

- employee absenteeism
- student absenteeism
- interruption of services and supplies and reduction in outside supports
- potential school closures
- potential additional duties
- financial losses or incremental costs
- potential spread of infection at school
- staff and students becoming ill at school

***Schools will not automatically close. The working expectation is that schools will continue to operate and provide an environment that is as safe as possible during a pandemic.***

## **2.0 MANAGEMENT OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA**

### **2.1 Preventative Steps**

People should take steps to prevent themselves from becoming infected and from spreading infection to others. These include:

- making efforts to improve your general health status through healthy living behaviors such as exercising eating well, getting enough sleep and not smoking;
- washing your hands often and teaching others to do the same;
- keeping your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes;
- not sharing eating utensils or drinks, or school supplies such as pencils or rulers, or musical instruments with mouthpieces;
- covering your cough;
- getting a vaccine (when available); and
- staying home if you are sick.

These measures are recommended every year for annual influenza outbreaks to reduce your risk of getting or spreading influenza.

See Appendices B, C, D, and E for further information

Appendix B – Hand Hygiene

Appendix C – What can I do to prevent myself from getting infected with influenza during a pandemic?

Appendix D – How can I care for myself when I have the flu?

Appendix E – Building Hygiene

### **2.2 Vaccine**

Vaccination against influenza is the most effective tool to prevent infection with influenza and complications of the disease. Vaccines cause the production of antibodies against the specific strains of influenza virus contained in the vaccine, providing immunity. The vaccine does not contain live virus, so it cannot cause influenza. Influenza vaccines have been used for decades with great success in minimizing the impact of annually circulating influenza viruses as well as for recent pandemics. A new vaccine is produced each year to ensure people are protected against circulating influenza viruses, which undergo minor changes from year to year.

During a pandemic, a completely new influenza virus will be circulating among people around the world. It will be necessary to develop a completely new vaccine to protect people from the pandemic virus. It could take four to six months for a vaccine to be developed and become available. Manitoba Health's goal is to ensure all Manitobans can receive the pandemic vaccine as quickly as possible once the vaccine becomes available.

## **2.3 Building Hygiene**

Although it is impossible to maintain an infection-free building, there are some steps that can minimize and slow the spread of the virus.

A list of specific suggestions is outlined in Appendix E.

## **2.4 Disease Management**

Appendix D provides information on “How can I take care of myself when I have the flu?”

Antiviral Drugs - are used for the prevention and early treatment of influenza. If taken shortly after getting sick (within 48 hours), they can reduce influenza symptoms, shorten the length of the illness and potentially reduce any serious complications. Antivirals work by reducing the ability of the virus to reproduce. However, they do not provide immunity from the virus. Planning for antiviral use during a pandemic is ongoing at the national level; however, it is most likely that antiviral drugs will be used at the beginning of a pandemic to treat people who become ill pending development of a vaccine.

Antibiotics – Influenza is caused by a virus, not a bacteria, so antibiotics cannot be used to treat influenza specifically. However, antibiotics are very useful in treating bacterial complications of influenza such as pneumonia, which can result in prolonged illness or even death. The same will be true during a pandemic.

## **3.0 PANDEMIC CO-ORDINATION**

### **3.1 Government of Manitoba**

The Government of Manitoba will establish an incident Management System (IMS) during an influenza pandemic or any large scale emergency that affects the province.

Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO): EMO will lead the response to an influenza pandemic. Primarily, it will work with government departments at local, provincial and federal levels to help manage the emergency. The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health: will lead public health emergency preparedness and response efforts for pandemic influenza.

The Office of Disaster Management (ODM): This Manitoba Health organization is responsible for providing the framework for the health sector response to a pandemic influenza to ensure a coordinated response within the health sector.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (MECY): MECY is developing business continuity plans to enable important supports to schools to continue during emergencies. MECY will also support school divisions and schools with their pandemic response.

This may include any necessary adaptations for departmental policy and funding issues, assistance in resolving unanticipated difficulties and communicating common education issues to government to ensure the needs of schools are fully understood and addressed. MECY will be involved in facilitating or delivering communications and services from official authorities to divisions and schools, as directed by the province's Incident Management System.

### **3.2 Municipal Government**

The role of a municipal or other local government during an emergency is to continue normal services. The municipal government is obligated to ensure that its citizens' basic humanitarian needs are supported during any emergency. These needs could include emergency social services.

### **3.3 Health Service Providers**

During any emergency, the regional health authorities will continue to provide health services and will provide public health advice to local citizens, businesses and organizations. During a pandemic influenza, the regional health authority will also distribute and administer vaccines and antiviral medications. Each regional health authority has a Medical Officer of Health and public health doctors with expertise in areas such as controlling the spread of communicable diseases and authority to issue orders under The Public Health Act. Medical Officers of Health will have a key leadership role to play during a local response to a pandemic.

### **3.4 School Divisions**

Schools will not be automatically closed. The working expectation is that schools will continue to operate and provide an environment that is as safe as possible during a pandemic. Manitoba Health, Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization, and MECY have the authority to close schools for health, emergency response or educational reasons respectively. MECY has assumed authority for decisions regarding school closures.

See Appendix A for "Contacts" information

## **4.0 PANDEMIC MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Membership of Pandemic Planning Team**

- Divisional safety officer
- Director of Infrastructure and Operations
- Superintendents
- Secretary-Treasurer
- One Trustee (board chair or designate)
- LTA (president or representative)
- CUPE (president or representative)

Each school's Emergency Response Team will act as a school level pandemic planning team when necessary.

#### **4.2 Mandate of Pandemic Planning Team**

The Pandemic Planning Team will meet as necessary upon declaration of a pandemic to fulfill the goals and objectives of the Lakeshore School Division Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines.

##### Goals

1. To minimize the impact of the pandemic on students and staff.
2. To maintain services to students and families as long as it is safe to do so, or until directed otherwise.
3. To respond to outside needs, if required, as determined by a central government authority or local government.

##### Objectives

1. To ensure a safe environment for students and staff (before, during and after a pandemic).
2. To remain operational and maintain instruction and services.
3. To ensure essential services continue during a pandemic (ex: supervision, curricular requirements, building security).
4. To communicate accurately and in a timely manner with management, staff, and students and families regarding operations before, during and after a pandemic period.
5. To track and monitor the activities and additional costs of responding to the pandemic.

#### **4.3 Students and Families**

##### **4.3.1 Responsibility to Students and Families**

1. The interest of students is paramount in the determination of academic concerns in the event of a pandemic.
2. Students will be educated, at an age-appropriate level, about flu prevention and symptoms before a pandemic, and will be encouraged to make appropriate personal health decisions during a pandemic.

3. During a pandemic, every effort will be made to continue to offer school services as normally as possible.
4. Schools will provide students and parents/guardians with timely communication regarding the school's plans and expectations for continued instruction.
5. Where possible, continuation of course work and assignments may be facilitated through independent course work and technology.
6. Decisions on day-to-day instructional matters will be the responsibility of the school principal and Superintendent.
7. Decisions to extend the term, revise exam schedules or alter the academic schedule will be made by the board of trustees and Superintendent.
8. Decisions will be made at the school level regarding students who have missed or not completed work due to illness, class cancellations, or other reasons connected to the pandemic.
9. In the event of a school closure, students may be redeployed to other schools or locations in the division.
10. In the event schools close, schools will provide parents with as much lead time as possible, the reasons for the closure, and a realistic estimate of the duration of the closure.

#### **4.3.2 Students' Responsibilities**

1. Section 262 of The Public Schools Act allows parents to keep children out of school if they are ill.
2. All students will be asked to remain away from school and not attend classes if they are showing flu symptoms. Parents and guardians will be asked to contact the school and inform the office of the reason for the student's absence.
3. If a closure of their school has been announced, students will be expected to:
  - remain away from the school during the closure.
  - monitor the Lakeshore School Division website to determine the state of the alert at the school and establish when they can return. Emergency information will be posted online at [www.lakeshoreschooldivision.mb.ca](http://www.lakeshoreschooldivision.mb.ca) and made available via telephone at 739-2101.
  - monitor television and radio for announcements concerning their school.
4. When a school re-opening has been announced, students will be expected to:
  - report to class on the identified day.

- if unable to report to class because they are in quarantine, nursing an infected person, or are ill with the pandemic influenza, they will be asked to contact the school and inform the office of the reason for their absence.

#### **4.3.3 Student Illness While At School**

Schools will identify an area where children who may become ill at school can be accommodated until their parents can be contacted to take them home. Parents will also be contacted if their child displays symptoms of influenza.

Ill children will stay in a separate area and be kept a meter apart even if they are not displaying characteristic influenza symptoms. This serves to minimize the likelihood of transmission between those with influenza and those ill due to other causes.

Schools will communicate Manitoba Health advice on return-to-school timelines to students and parents.

#### **4.3.4 Potential Spread of Infection at School**

Measures to reduce personal exposure in school buildings will be balanced with the need to maintain normal routines, school operations and societal functioning. Lakeshore School Division will:

- establish a clear and well-communicated message that stresses the need for students and staff to stay home if they are displaying any flu-like symptoms.
- minimize social interaction by:
  - limiting visitor access to the school.
  - limiting face-to-face meetings or number of persons in attendance.
  - considering postponing some events that are open to the public and/or parents, including travel for intramural school activities.
  - increasing distance education and work-at-home options.
- promote personal hygiene practices by educating and reminding students and others of the importance of preventive measures.

#### **4.4 Employees**

Health experts estimate that 35 per cent of the population could become ill enough to miss at least half a day of work.

During a pandemic, Lakeshore School Division will implement measures to minimize or slow the spread of influenza within its facilities. Clear, well-communicated messages will stress that coming to work while sick is discouraged. Messages will also focus on compensation issues and assurances a system is in place to cover the work of those who are ill.

Lakeshore School Division will communicate Manitoba Health advice on return to school and work timelines to staff, students and parents.

#### **4.4.1 Responsibilities Concerning Environmental Health and Safety**

1. The school division will continue, as far as reasonably practical, to provide a safe and healthy environment in which to carry on the division's affairs during a pandemic.
2. The school division will rely on the appropriate public health authorities (e.g. Public Health Agency of Canada, Manitoba Health, Interlake Regional Health Authority) to provide advice, guidance, and support to the division on safety, health and environmental matters as resources permit during a pandemic.
3. The school division will liaise with its schools and work sites regarding pandemic mitigation, preparedness, and response and recovery action.
4. The school division will respond to requests for assistance based on a prioritized risk assessment of the issue/hazards.
5. The school division will evaluate and promote measures that are proven effective during a pandemic in protecting employees as endorsed by the public health authorities of Manitoba.

#### **4.4.2 Responsibilities to Employees**

1. Initially, if the school division is shut down, regular employees who would be scheduled to work might continue to be paid. This decision will be reviewed as the duration of the shutdown is assessed.
2. Employees will be educated on flu symptoms and will be required to stay home if displaying symptoms of influenza.
3. In the event of a school closure, employees will be reassigned to other schools/facilities within the division. This decision will be reviewed as the duration of the school closure is being assessed.
4. Administration will work with employees and their union/association representatives to develop an efficient and appropriate reassignment process. The division retains the right to change assignments as needed.
5. Employees who are unable to attend work due to illness will be covered by the existing sick leave provisions in appropriate collective agreements or division policies and procedures unless extenuating circumstances or Provincial directives indicate otherwise.

6. Where appropriate, employees may be requested to work from home.
7. Maintenance of payroll, pension and benefits will be given priority. In instances where inaccurate disbursements are being made, the division will take corrective steps in the post pandemic stage.
8. In the event of a divisional or school closure, employee income and benefit information will be available to the affected employees.
9. In the event of a divisional or school closure, Lakeshore School Division may consider deferring staff leaves for non-health reasons, for example professional development, vacation or other reasons, if staff members are needed to cover for absent employees.

#### **4.4.3 Employees' Responsibilities**

1. Employees will be expected to:
  - a. immediately contact their supervisor if they are experiencing any influenza symptoms.
  - b. follow the directions of their supervisor, including immediately departing the school or work site and contacting their physician by telephone.
2. If a school or work site closure has been announced while the employees are at work, employees will be expected to:
  - a. report to their supervisors prior to leaving the school or work site.
  - b. follow their supervisor's directions, such as reporting to a temporary reassignment, or remaining away from work until notified.
  - c. keep in contact with their supervisor by phone or e-mail to determine the state of alert and establish when they are to return.
3. Once a school or work site re-opening has been announced, employees will be expected to:
  - a. report to work on the identified day, unless they have been advised otherwise by their supervisor.
  - b. if they are unable to report, they are to contact their supervisor to indicate the reason (e.g. under quarantine or are ill with the pandemic influenza, etc.)

#### **4.4.4 Response Plan for Employee Absenteeism**

If the pandemic causes illness in 35 per cent of the population, employers should expect up to 25 per cent of their staff to be away from work during the peak two weeks of a pandemic wave of activity. Public health officials are using 25 per cent absenteeism rates for planning purposes. Absenteeism among staff may be due to either personal or family illness.

Lakeshore School Division may consider these measures in response to high rates of employee absenteeism:

- designate backups for key decision makers and arrange for delegation of decision making and financial authority if they are unavailable.
- discuss possible response measures with the staff currently filling key roles.
- document all employees' teaching, administrative or other skills and knowledge in order to determine how they can be used to backfill employees providing key services.
- establish a system for tracking the availability of all employees for the purposes of managing and re-assigning personnel as needed.

#### **4.4.5 Response Plan for Administration**

Lakeshore School Division may consider these strategies for addressing periods of high administration absenteeism:

- document any administrative activities that might be added during a pandemic or might increase in terms of workload (i.e. contacting the parents of absent children, compiling and disseminating absentee information, etc.)
- cross-train staff on any specialized or technical activities.
- prepare written instructions so that partially trained employees or volunteers can complete essential tasks.
- document location of key information and means of access (e.g. passwords, keys).
- prepare to report excessive absenteeism to health officials for pandemic surveillance purposes. At a time of pandemic, Manitoba Health will provide absenteeism reporting guidelines.

#### **4.4.6 Response Plan for Teaching Activities**

Lakeshore School Division may consider these strategies for addressing periods of high teacher absenteeism:

- a. Replacement Personnel
  - Draw from the substitute pool.
  - Use administrative personnel, retired teachers, parents, volunteers or education students to assist teachers. Have criminal record checks done well in advance.
  - Have some people licensed on temporary permits in advance of the pandemic. Complete criminal record checks well in advance.
  - Where it is reasonably anticipated that the existing substitute pool will be depleted and no other qualified, certified teachers are available, consider applying in advance to the Professional Certification and Student Records Unit of the Department for substitute teaching permits for

persons who might potentially be called upon to temporarily replace ill staff.

- b. **Alternative Service Delivery**
- Combine similar grades, since student absenteeism will likely reduce class sizes.
  - Provide alternate activities that can be accommodated by fewer teaching staff.
  - Be prepared to temporarily combine schools.
  - Continue instruction for students who are home and well enough to do school work, including home work and/or virtual instruction on the internet with phone contact.
  - Consider Saturday classes or vacation school when conditions improve to make up for lost instruction.
- c. **Scale Back Services**
- Postpone or cancel classes or events when necessary.

## **4.5 Interruption of Services and Supplies**

### **4.5.1 Services and Supplies**

Suppliers are likely to experience operational, production and shipping difficulties and the demand for certain types of supplies may increase dramatically. Some supplies may not be available at all. Costs may also rise.

Suppliers, where possible, will continue to provide normal functions and support during all phases of a pandemic. It is expected that utilities including electricity, natural gas and telephone services will not be disrupted.

It is recommended that the Maintenance Department:

- talk to suppliers to determine if they have plans to deal with emergency conditions.
- locate suitable service providers as a backup in case regular suppliers are not available.
- build an inventory of critical supplies (ex: for a pandemic.– hand soap, cleaning supplies, tissues, hand wipes).
- have maintenance inspections and repair work done in advance (eg: during the warning period before a pandemic arrives in Manitoba).
- determine how long some systems that require periodic maintenance can operate without inspection.
- determine beforehand whom to contact in government for regulatory and public health issues (see Appendix A for more information).

### **4.5.2 Information Technology**

In the event of a pandemic, the Lakeshore School Division Information Technology Department will:

1. Keep the web space, data network, e-mail and other systems running.
2. In the case of school closures, servers and network infrastructure can normally run without on-site staff for two weeks. After that time, staff will come to work to perform some maintenance functions.

#### **4.6 School Closure**

*Schools will not automatically close. The working expectation is that schools will continue to operate and provide an environment that is as safe as possible during a pandemic.*

It is possible a school or schools in Lakeshore School Division may close if Manitoba public health officials order the temporary closure of all public facilities where people congregate, including schools, in the early stages of a pandemic, in an attempt to slow the spread and impact of the disease.

It is possible circumstances may cause a temporary, incidental closure of a school. This could be due to excessive employee absenteeism or a critical building system failure that results in the inability to maintain a safe environment for students. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (MECY) or other government authorities could potentially ask a school to close if the building is required for other purposes during a pandemic. Such a decision would be made with the school division.

Manitoba Health, Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization, and MECY have the authority to close schools for health, emergency response or educational reasons respectively. MECY has assumed authority for decisions regarding school closures.

## **5.0 BUILDING MAINTENANCE PLAN**

### **5.1 Pre-Pandemic**

Before a pandemic, the Lakeshore School Division Maintenance Department may:

- document and review building maintenance activities and prioritize maintenance functions by the length of recovery time (a day, a week, two weeks, a month).
- identify essential services to be continued in the event of a closure (heat, security).
- consider any changes to maintenance during a pandemic (e.g. increased cleaning),
- cross-train maintenance staff with regard to any specialized or technical activities, including cross-training staff who normally perform other functions and work in other buildings.

- prepare written instructions so that untrained employees or volunteers can complete some essential tasks.
- document the locations of critical equipment, building systems (service panels) and means of accessing them (e.g. passwords, keys).

## **5.2 During a Pandemic**

In the event of a pandemic, the Lakeshore School Division Maintenance Department will:

- maintain services as long as possible provided there are adequate supplies and staffing levels. Cleaning of washrooms and public areas will be a priority.
- promote building hygiene by following the measures outlined in Appendix E: Building Hygiene.
- in the event of a closure, will maintain only essential services. Minimal or no snow clearing, maintenance, etc. will be done. Buildings will be monitored.

## **5.3 Permit Holders**

All weekend and evening activities held in Lakeshore School Division schools may be postponed or cancelled for the duration of the pandemic.

Depending on the severity of the pandemic, Lakeshore School Division will determine whether daytime permit holders, such as childcare facilities, should be permitted to continue to operate.

Lakeshore School Division will advise permit holders of school closure plans and clarify their responsibility for alternative relocation.

## **5.4 Schools Designated as Emergency Housing**

In some situations, schools are an emergency housing alternative for other organizations (eg. for a senior citizen residence).

## **5.5 Animals in the School**

If there are animals in the school (e.g. classroom pets, lab animals), schools will make the same kinds of arrangements that occur during holiday breaks.

## **6.0 TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

In the event of a pandemic, the Lakeshore School Division Transportation Department will make every effort to continue busing services for students. Reduced or suspended services will be communicated to students, parents and schools.

Cleaning of buses will follow the guidelines outlined in the Building Maintenance section of these guidelines. See Appendix E.

## **7.0 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

In the event of a pandemic all school division communications will come from the Superintendent's department. The Superintendent will be the official spokesperson through which information from the Lakeshore School Division's Pandemic Planning Committee will be communicated. Pandemic information will be obtained by consulting Manitoba Health and MECY. Pandemic information may be communicated by:

- the Lakeshore School Division website,
- written communications such as memos, posters, etc.
- email or telephone,
- radio and television for public service announcements,
- school signs and reader boards

### **7.1 Sharing Lakeshore School Division's Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines with Employees, Parents and Students**

Upon completion of the Lakeshore School Division Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines, the Superintendent's department will:

- obtain Board approval
- present an overview of the guidelines to the Lakeshore Leadership Team. Principals will then share the information with their respective staff members.
- provide an article for publication in school newsletters, informing parents and students that pandemic preparedness guidelines are in place and will be activated if a pandemic is declared.

### **7.2 Sharing Pre-Pandemic Information with Employees**

Once a pandemic has been declared but not yet arrived in Manitoba (the pre-pandemic stage), Lakeshore School Division will review its pandemic preparedness guidelines with its staff through orientation sessions.

Lakeshore School Division will provide its employees with reliable sources where they can find information on how to prepare themselves and their families for a pandemic and what to do if they become infected.

These sources include:

Manitoba Health: [www.gov.mb.ca/health/odm/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/odm/index.html)

Government of Manitoba: [www.gov.mb.ca/influenza/pandemic](http://www.gov.mb.ca/influenza/pandemic)

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy)

Government of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi)

World Health Organization: [www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en)

See Appendix A for further information.

### **7.3 Sharing Pre-Pandemic Information with Parents and Students**

Using information provided by the Superintendent, Lakeshore School Division schools will provide parents and students with reliable sources on where to find information on preparing themselves for a pandemic and what to do if they become infected.

Using the communication plan the division will:

- communicate the measures they are taking to remain operational and to provide a safe and healthy environment for their employees and students,
- explain how closures and other changes will be communicated.

### **7.4 Sharing Information with Employees During a Pandemic**

Using the communication plan the division will:

- share critical information about the pandemic with its schools and worksites.
- keep employees informed of operational changes within the school division.

### **7.5 Sharing Information with Parents and Students During a Pandemic**

Using information provided by the Superintendent, Lakeshore School Division schools will:

- reinforce messages from the pre-pandemic phase.
- keep parents and students informed of operational changes to school services.

Public information sessions (eg. with public health nurses) will only be considered if approved by public health.

This messaging will provide concise, factual information regarding:

- the impact of the pandemic on schools/school division.
- what students/parents can expect from their school.
- what they can do to work with their school.
- when reduced or suspended services will be restored.

### **7.6 Sharing Information with the Community and Interlake Health Authority During a Pandemic**

Lakeshore School Division will designate a contact who will communicate as necessary with the community and regional health authority regarding issues, needs identification, and support that schools may be able to provide.

### **7.7 Sharing Information with Employees, Parents and Students After a Pandemic**

Following a pandemic, Lakeshore School Division and its schools will:

- continue to communicate with employees, parents and students regarding the return to normal operations.
- help students and their families by identifying community resources to help cope with loss and stress.

- consider in-class supports to help students deal with stress and the impact of the pandemic.
- communicate strategies for catching up on missed instructional time or backlogged work.

## **8.0 BUSINESS PLAN**

In the event of a pandemic, there may be a variety of financial implications for schools. These could include:

- Incremental costs associated with preparing for, responding to and recovering from the emergency. This could include the cost of substitute staff, additional supplies, alternate instruction venues, counselling and communication associated with emergency responsibilities for the school population. If extended hours for child care centres located in schools are required, there may be additional overtime costs for caretakers.
- Extra costs associated with duties assigned for the broader community (if any.)

Lakeshore School Division will include emergency preparedness in its financial management processes. This will include:

- Budgeting processes
- Tracking preparation, response, and recovery activities and costs for:
  - Legal issues that may arise.
  - Reimbursement of eligible costs under any announced disaster recovery programs.
  - School insurance policies that may include business continuity insurance which normally covers temporary costs (e.g. temporary space) that arise from a disaster.

The school division will track incremental costs (the extra costs due to pandemic activities, less any savings from not having to provide some services). This will be useful for planning purposes in future as well as in the event there is any level of compensation made available from the various levels of government.

Funding - MECY will continue to fund school divisions during an emergency. However, funding will be contingent on a number of factors including reasonable efforts to maintain contact with students, continue instruction and provide opportunity for student learning and progress.

## **9.0 RECOVERY PLAN**

A pandemic may come in two or more waves and last up to two years. It will impact the school division in a variety of ways, including:

- significant loss of instructional time and backlog of work postponed due to the pandemic,
- disruption of communication with students, families and others,

- psychological stress and low morale. Individuals' coping abilities will be challenged by a variety of issues such as: deaths of colleagues, friends and loved ones, financial hardship associated with unemployment, incomplete schooling and other issues,
- additional costs to the school,
- permanent loss of employees and their corporate knowledge due to death or disability.

Lakeshore School Division will consider the following as part of its schools' recovery plans:

- strategies for catching up on missed instructional time or backlogged work, continued communications with employees, parents and students regarding the return to normal operations,
- implementing in-class supports for students and staff to help them deal with stress and the impacts of the pandemic,
- identifying resources for stress counselling for employees, students and families,
- recruiting and training of replacement employees and the temporary or permanent reassignment of employees to maintain operations,
- rebuilding corporate knowledge of school and division processes or systems,
- compiling necessary information to participate in any financial recovery programs.

## **11.0 PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS - APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### Contacts

#### **Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth**

Emergency Response Co-ordination Director  
Finance and Administration Branch  
Winnipeg, MB R3E 3J5  
(204) 945-0668

Administration Services Director  
Education Administration Services Branch  
1181 Portage Ave.  
Winnipeg MB R3G 0T3  
(204) 945- 8664

#### **Manitoba Health**

Health Service Delivery  
Pandemic Influenza Director  
Office of Disaster Management  
(204) 945-1444  
Website [www.gov.mb.ca/health/odm/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/odm/index.html)

Public Health  
Pandemic Influenza Information  
Critical Issues Co-ordinator  
Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health  
(204) 788-6666

#### **Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade**

Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization  
1525-405 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3L6  
(204) 945-3050  
Website [www.manitobaemo.ca](http://www.manitobaemo.ca)

#### **Website information:**

Manitoba Health: [www.gov.mb.ca/health/odm/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/odm/index.html)

Government of Manitoba: [www.gov.mb.ca/influenza/pandemic](http://www.gov.mb.ca/influenza/pandemic)

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/policy)

Government of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cpip-pclcpi)

World Health Organization: [www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en)

## Appendix B

### Hand Hygiene

Hand washing/hand hygiene reduces the number of micro-organisms on the hands and is the most important practice to prevent the spread of infection.

**When:**

**Before:**

- Direct hands-on care of others.
- Preparing, handling, serving or eating food.
- Feeding others.

**After:**

- Contact with items known or considered to be contaminated.
- Personal use of toilet, wiping nose or coughing.

**Products:**

**Plain soap and water:**

- Recommended for routine hand washing.

**Alcohol-based hand rubs:**

- Products containing a minimum of 60 per cent alcohol are an alternative when plain soap and water are not available, except if hands are visibly soiled.
- If hands are visibly soiled, heavy soiling should be removed before using alcohol-based hand rubs for maximum effectiveness.

**How to wash your hands:**

**Using plain soap and water:**

- Wet hands under warm running water. Use either liquid or bar soap.
- Apply soap and distribute over hands.
- Rub hands together vigorously for 10 to 15 seconds to create a good lather.
- Using friction, cover all hand surfaces including wrists, fingernails, web spaces, thumbs and palms.
- Rinse under warm running water.
- Dry hands gently and thoroughly with a disposable towel.
- Turn off faucet using a clean disposable towel.

**Using an alcohol-based hand rub:**

- Apply two to three millilitres of the product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together covering all surfaces including, wrists, fingernails, web spaces, thumbs and palms.
- The product generally dries within 15 to 20 seconds.

- Ensure hands are completely dry before performing another task.

Note: *Alcohol-based products are flammable.*

## Appendix C

### **What can I do to prevent myself from getting infected with influenza during a pandemic?**

Public health officials expect that if a new type of influenza emerges and causes a pandemic, this virus will spread in a similar fashion to the influenza viruses that cause outbreaks each winter. Influenza is highly contagious so it spreads quickly in families and communities. There are, however, some steps you can take to reduce your risk of infection.

#### **Improve your overall health.**

In general, healthier people are better at fighting off disease. To stay healthy, you should eat healthy foods, get plenty of sleep, exercise and not smoke. Avoid heavy alcohol consumption and try to maintain a positive and balanced outlook.

#### **Wash your hands often.**

Washing hands is the most effective way of preventing the spread of disease. Get into the habit of washing your hands often with soap and warm water, scrubbing your wrists, palms, web spaces, thumbs, fingers and nails for 10 to 15 seconds. Rinse and dry with a clean towel. This should be done especially before meals, after using the toilet and after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose. Teach your children to do the same.

#### **Avoid visiting people who have the flu if practical to do so.**

This will help to prevent you from becoming infected. This advice must be balanced with the need to provide support and care to sick people. Caregivers looking after sick people should wear a mask when coming face-to-face with a coughing individual to minimize influenza transmission.

#### **Avoid large crowds.**

Remember that large crowds are ideal for the spread of influenza, so consider staying at home. Wearing masks to prevent transmission of influenza is not helpful when it is circulating in the community.

#### **Don't share eating utensils or drinks.**

If a family member is sick, keep their personal items (ex: towels and toothbrushes) separate from those of the rest of the family.

#### **Get a vaccine when available.**

Vaccination is the principal measure for preventing influenza and reducing the impact of epidemics. Various types of influenza vaccines have been available and used for more than 60 years.

### **Take antivirals if recommended by your doctor.**

Antivirals are drugs used for the prevention and early treatment of influenza. If taken shortly after getting sick (within 48 hours), they can reduce influenza symptoms, shorten the length of the illness and potentially reduce any serious complications. Antivirals work by reducing the ability of the virus to reproduce; however, they do not provide immunity from the virus.

Antiviral drugs, given at the onset of the disease, may assist but are not likely to be available in sufficient quantities to treat the majority of the population. Planning for antiviral use during a pandemic is ongoing at the national level, however, it is most likely that antiviral drugs will be used at the beginning of a pandemic to treat people who become ill pending the development of a vaccine.

### **What if I think I have the flu?**

Most people with influenza recover without any serious problems. The disease can last for four to seven days and leave a cough and tiredness for several weeks. In general, there is no specific treatment for influenza. Antivirals may occasionally be prescribed by your doctor. Antibiotics are not effective against the influenza virus, although, they will be effective against complications caused by bacteria such as pneumonia. Avoid going to work or social gatherings if you are ill. Wear a mask if you need to visit your doctor. At the time of a pandemic, Manitoba Health will provide information on steps you can take to help care for yourself if you have influenza.

### **What if my child is sick?**

Like with adults, most children get better from influenza without any specific treatment. Sick children should be kept home from school and daycare. At the time of a pandemic, Manitoba Health will provide information on steps you can take to help care for your children if they have influenza.

### **DURING A PANDEMIC, IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO:**

- Follow directions given by public health. These may change as more information becomes available about the characteristics of the particular virus causing the outbreak.
- Follow infection control procedures if caring for a person with influenza. Providing care to an individual with an influenza-like illness will be common during a pandemic. The likelihood of transmitting the disease is reduced by following basic precautions. Watch the Manitoba Health website for updates at [www.gov.mb.ca/health](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health).

See also Questions and Answers: *Public Health Measures, Vaccines and Antivirals during a pandemic*, online at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/influenza/pandemic>

## Appendix D

### How can I care for myself when I have the flu?

- Stay home and rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Take medication for your symptoms.

NOTE: Do not give children or teenagers any products containing aspirin or ASA (acetylsalicylic acid) as it can cause a very serious illness called Reye's syndrome, which affects the nervous system and liver.

- For a sore throat, gargle a glass of warm water mixed with a half-teaspoon of salt. Throat lozenges are also effective for relieving a sore throat.
- For a stuffy nose adults can take a decongestant, but consult with a health care professional such as a pharmacist, nurse or doctor. Children can be given saline nose drops.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Ask for help – you may need to ask for help at home until you are feeling better.
- If you require further advice call **Health Links-Info Santé at 788-8200** (in Winnipeg) or toll-free **1-88-315-9257** (outside Winnipeg) or a health care provider.

### Should I wear a mask?

- Ill people or those caring for them may be advised to wear a surgical mask to reduce the spread of disease.
- Wearing of masks by well people in the community is not recommended as a general measure. This is because it is unlikely to be sustainable for the entire duration of a pandemic. In addition, masks can provide false security and can lead to contamination unless properly handled.

### When should I see a doctor?

- If you or your child experiences any of the following:
  - shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
  - chest pain or pressure,
  - coughing up dark-coloured or bloody sputum,
  - wheezing,
  - extreme ear pain,
  - fever for three or more days that is not going down or if you do not start feeling better in a few days,
  - you have started to feel better and suddenly feel much worse,
  - confusion, extreme drowsiness or difficulty waking up.

## **Appendix E**

### **Building Hygiene**

The following steps are recommended to maximize hygiene in schools during a pandemic. They focus on reducing the spread of viral infection. Most of these activities are standard in schools and should be undertaken routinely. These activities will be equally important during a pandemic. Building hygiene should be addressed in school contingency plans, including supply and human resource management.

#### **General**

- Surfaces must not show any visible soil before they are sanitized.
- Cleaning equipment should be maintained in a clean, dry state after use. Cloths, mop heads and other supplies should have single purpose use (floors or walls or furnishings only) and be changed when soiled after use.
- Waste baskets for disposal of soiled tissues are needed throughout the school, close to the point of use.

#### **Products for Cleaning and Sanitizing**

- Clean surfaces with a division approved disinfectant.
- Liquid soap containers should not be “topped up”; instead, liquid soap should be supplied in disposable bags in wall containers by sinks or in small, non-refillable containers to avoid product contamination.
- Disposable (paper) towels should be used in public washrooms. If possible, install dispensers that require no hand contact to remove a towel. Individual cloth towels should not be shared.
- Provide a waste basket for towels used to open washroom doors upon exiting, or leave washroom doors open.

## **Cleaning Methods**

- Cleaning should proceed from least to most soiled. Cleaning solutions should be changed when they appear dirty and/or after a spill cleanup.
- Cleaning primarily involves horizontal surfaces (ex: desks, countertops, table tops, floors) and surfaces that are frequently handled (ex: door knobs, telephones, bathroom fixtures).

## **Cleaning Schedules**

Cleaning schedules should be established according to the type of surface to be cleaned and the type of soiling that occurs. For example:

- spills – clean immediately.
- surfaces used for food preparation or diapering – clean after each use.
- kitchen, bathrooms, playroom – clean daily and as necessary.
- offices, countertops, computer keyboards, phones, appliances – clean weekly and as necessary.
- furniture, walls and carpets – follow a rotating schedule (monthly/yearly) and as necessary.
- sports equipment such as balls for games – clean weekly.
- reusable gloves – clean after each use.

## **Adequate Supplies**

Schools should plan in advance for maintaining adequate resources for infection prevention and control in schools (soap, paper towels) as there may be an interruption of supply availability.