EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

The Board of Education recognizes that a pandemic/epidemic outbreak is a serious health threat that stands to affect students, staff, and the community as a whole. With this consideration in mind, the Board establishes this policy in the event the town/municipality and/or school district is affected by a pandemic/epidemic outbreak. At all times the health, safety and welfare of the students shall be the first priority.

Planning and Coordination

The Superintendent shall designate one or more staff members to serve as a liaison between the school district and local and state health officials. This designee is responsible for connecting with health officials to identify local hazards, determine what crisis plans exist in the school district and community, and to establish procedures to account for student well-being and safety during a crisis. The designee shall work with local health officials to coordinate their pandemic/ epidemic plans with that of the school district.

The Principals and/or school nurse or other designee shall develop a curriculum component to health classes that is designed to teach students about preventing and limiting the spread of communicable diseases.

With fiscal concerns in mind, the District shall purchase and store supplies necessary for an epidemic/pandemic outbreak, including but not limited to disinfectant products, face masks, water, examination gloves, and other supplies as recommended by the school nurse and/or School Medical Advisor.

Infection Control

Decisions related to exclusion from school for any student or staff member will be based on the most current information and recommendations of federal, state and local medical and health officials. These decisions will be balanced between the importance of maintaining high quality instructional services and overall school safety. Any student or staff member found to meet the criteria established in the administrative regulations will be excluded from school for the recommended period and return as soon as possible based on the recommendations of these same federal, state and local medical and health officials.

Students with excessive absences due to a communicable disease shall be given a reprieve from other Board policies relative to excessive student absences. Efforts will be made by the staff to determine what, if any, school work the student can complete while absent.

Staff members who are forced to miss excessive days of work shall first use any leave entitled to them through the Family and Medical Leave Act and/or accrued sick leave. If a staff member still has not received medical clearance to resume his/her work duties, absences in excess of a staff member's allotted leave will not affect the employee's right to continued employment.

EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS (Continued…)

Continuation of Education

The Superintendent shall develop a plan of alternate means of educating students in the event of prolonged school closings and/or extended absences. Such a plan may include providing students with assignments via mail, local access cable television, or the school district's website.

The Superintendent in consultation with the Board of Education may amend the traditional class schedule of days. Such a plan may include extending the school day, having school days on Saturdays, the use of previously scheduled vacation days, and/or extend the school year beyond the previously established end of school year, within applicable statutory requirements.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to carry out this policy (see attached).

(cf. 5141.22 – Communicable/Infectious Diseases)
(cf. 5141.6 – Crisis Management Plan)
(cf. 6114 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness)
(cf. 6114.6 – Emergency Closings)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-154a Professional communications between teacher or nurse or student.
10-207 Duties of medical advisors.
10-209 Records not to be public.
10-210 Notice of disease to be given parent or guardian.
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules.
19a-221 Quarantine of certain persons.
52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, 45 C.F.R. 99.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. A flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity. The disease spreads easily person-to-person, causes various levels of illness, and can sweep across the country and around the world in a very short time. Although pandemic events are extremely rare, the current global mobility of our population raises the possibility of a future event and the school district should plan accordingly.

In consultation with Health District officials and other medical advisors and area school administrators, the following administrative guidelines have been developed. It is expected that these guidelines will need to be reviewed regularly and modified as necessary as additional knowledge and understanding of pandemic events is expanded.

The purpose of these administrative guidelines is to establish clear information and procedures that are the core of a coordinated plan in order to plan for, respond to, mitigate, and recover from a possible pandemic event.

In the event of a pandemic flu, a **four level system** is proposed to be used with guidelines to provide interventions and activities in which the district shall engage. These activities involve areas such as communication with parents and students, field trips and other school activities, school closings or modified school schedules, school access and instructional issues. Although it is important that staff be trained in and employ these procedures, it should also be understood that the administration may need to make changes on a case by case basis as new information or events rapidly evolve. In addition, in the event of a pandemic episode, it will vital that all administrators and other key staff identify back-up staff to cover for them should they also become ill. These back-up staff should be appropriately trained.

It is important that all plans be coordinated and aligned as much as possible with Region 7 schools and other neighboring districts. However, some specific interventions may be tailored to a particular school or district.

In terms of the difficult decision to close schools, there are two main reasons for this action:

First, there could be levels of absenteeism among staff and/or students that make it difficult to achieve the education mission of the school. Superintendents in the Region 7 districts will be in constant communication regarding the status of each school district after examining absenteeism among students, staff, transportation drivers and related service personnel. While the decision to close school on this basis is an individual district decision, a final closing decision will happen only after consultation among all Region 7 Superintendents in conjunction with the school board of education, the school medical advisor and local health departments.

Superintendents in the neighboring districts will work cooperatively to make decisions on how each school's closing impacts the other schools, in terms of safety, transportation, child care, instruction, and family issues. In the event that a superintendent is ill or unavailable, a designee for making these decisions will be identified at the beginning of the school year.

Second, schools could close specifically to slow the spread of influenza. Close contact among many persons in schools make them a center for respiratory disease transmission. If school closing for this purpose is to be effective, it should be done early in an epidemic before absenteeism rates climb very high and in concert with other schools and agencies. In addition, to be effective, students and staff must stay apart from each other when they are not in school. A decision for school closing for this reason is usually made under advice or command from state agencies. The length of school closing is also made under guidance from these agencies and varies from several days to several weeks.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

In the event of an outbreak of Pandemic Flu, the **incident coordination system** would be implemented and would involve the following **Four Response Levels**. Regional School District No. 7 would rely heavily on the advice of the local health districts who, in turn, would be in communication with the State Department of Health. In addition, as stated previously, every effort would be made to closely coordinate and align these interventions with the neighboring school districts and communication among the superintendents would be frequent and ongoing.

For the School District, the following individuals would be involved (with back up staff as appropriate):

Incident Coordinator: Superintendent

Building Operations: Principals and Nurses

Planning/Information: Health Director, Local Health District Officials, Designated Office Staff

Logistics: Principals, Housemasters, Department Heads, Admin. Clerical Staff

Finance/Administration: Business Administrator

Other Important Contacts:

Commissioner, Department of Public Health		J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H.	(860) 509-7101
State Police		----------	(860) 824-5457
Winsted Police Department	Chief	Nicholas Guerriero	379-2179

Farmington Valley Health District:

Director	Richard Matheny	676-1953

Torrington Area Health District

Director	James Rokos	489-0436

Northwestern Regional School Nursing Staff:

School Nurses	Margaret Barra/Kaye Sweeney	379-8525

School Medical Advisor: Anne Milanese 545-8591

Communications:

Media communication would normally be handled through the superintendent's office. The District would communicate to the public via its website, through press releases, written notices/factsheets, and the Alert Now Notification System.

Surveillance Protocols:

During a pandemic, the Connecticut Department of Public Health will be monitoring hospital admissions, emergency department visits, deaths and, potentially, school and workplace absenteeism. The District will monitor student absenteeism through its attendance module and report to Farmington Valley Health District and the State, as appropriate.

In addition, when directed by the administration, the school secretaries will initiate procedures for screening calls to the school related to student absences (see form A) and staff absences (see Form B). Based on the results of these questions, the information may be forwarded to one of the school nurses for additional questioning. Once initiated, this information will be collected daily and copies sent to the superintendent.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA RESPONSE LEVELS (FOUR):

LEVEL 1

LOW RISK – SITUATION:
First pandemic flu case reported in country. No reported cases in local community. School community (employees, students, parents) are encouraged to take temperature regularly as recommended by the school nurse. If temperature is 100 °F or 37.7°C or greater, students or staff will be required to stay home.
School hours will remain on regular schedule.

Communication:
Preventative information will be shared with parents and the school community through the website, factsheets, newsletters, and the Alert Now System.

School Access:
Access to school grounds per normal school policy.

Educational Delivery:
Regular school programming. Homework will be provided by teachers for any student staying at home per BOE policy.

Co-curricular Program:
All regularly scheduled activities allowed.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel:
Field trips allowed, as per normal school policy.

Personnel:
Normal working conditions. All school employees returning from affected areas have their health monitored for 10 days.

Specific School Protocol Related to this Level:
Nurses implement steps to minimize potential influenza outbreak through education/information such as encouragement of hand washing. Nurse staff also stockpile personal protective supplies as appropriate, e.g., masks, gloves, alcohol, hygienic soap, etc.

School Provided Transportation:
All bus routes run as usual.

School Operations/Cafeteria:
Normal cleaning and maintenance. Continual disinfecting by cleaning personnel. Review food handling procedures with staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

LEVEL 2

MODERATE RISK – SITUATION:
First pandemic flu case reported in town. Increasing number of cases reported in country. School community (employees, students, parents) are strongly encouraged to take temperature daily. If temperature is 100°F or 37.7°C or greater, students or staff will be required to stay home. School hours will remain on regular schedule.

Communication:

Periodic updates will be made by the superintendent to the community on status of pandemic flu in country and impact on school program. In-class instruction to insure students understand protocol and proper hygiene.

Communication with parents will require those students with a fever of 100°F or 37.7°C or greater to remain home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever of 100°F or 37.7°C, or sign of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Please note that these specific recommendations for return to school are subject to changed based on updated information from federal, state, and local medical and health officials.

Data Collection procedures by secretaries and nurses should be initiated at this level (See FORM A and B)

School Access:

School open to staff, students, parents only. Anyone else by appointment only to minimize visitors. Any individual from the community with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C, report to school health office and will be required to leave the building immediately. Nursing staff will monitor any student or staff member with a persistent cough or sore throat and make recommendations regarding return to home.

Educational Delivery:

Regular school program.

Daily homework will be provided to students ill per BOE policy. Every effort will be made, within the bounds of practicality, to assist students in staying current with their schoolwork.

Co-curricular Program:

All scheduled co-curricular programs allowed, except to affected areas, or visitors from affected areas.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel:

All events will be reviewed. Events may be cancelled for risk exposure on a case by case basis.

Personnel:

Normal working conditions. All faculty and staff report to work after assessing temperature at home. Administrators and other critical support staff (e.g., nurses) identify and train back-up individuals.

Specific School Protocol Related to this Level:

Students who enter school with a temperature of 100°F or 37.7°C will be required to wait for parent/ guardian transportation home in an isolated location that is safe, comfortable and monitored by staff (e.g., nurses' back office).

The school Nurse in concert with Health District Officials will determine whether any individual who has recovered from flu can return to school. The current standard is that students and staff may return to school after at least 24 hours after they are free of fever of 100°F or 37.7°C, or sign of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. However, the final decision regarding return to school will be based on current recommendations of the federal, state, and local medical and health officials.

School Provided Transportation:

All bus routes run as usual. Parents must not send students to school with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C.

School Operations/Cafeteria:

All Food Service workers must wear gloves/mask. Continual disinfecting throughout the day. Full disinfection every three days.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

LEVEL 3

MEDIUM RISK – SITUATION:

First pandemic flu reported in school community. Increased spread of pandemic flu in town and transfer in public places. Staff or students with temperature of 100°F or 37.7°C or greater, MUST stay home.

Communication:

Regular updates to faculty and community by superintendent through Alert Now System.

STRICT CARE TAKEN TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY PROTOCOLS.

Daily classroom instruction to explain situation and to emphasize proper hygiene.

School Access:

Anyone with temperature 100°F or 37.7°C or greater are required to stay home. Visitors must report to Nurse to assess temperature. Any individual from the community with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C, will be required to leave the building immediately. Nursing staff will monitor any student or staff member with a persistent cough or sore throat and make recommendations regarding return to home.

Educational Delivery:

School hours will remain on regular schedule but after school programming/activities will be canceled on a case by case basis in consultation with medical and health department officials. Work will be provided to students ill at home per BOE policy. Every effort will be made, within the bounds of practicality, to assist students in staying current with their schoolwork.

Co-curricular Program:

Co-curricular programs are suspended on a case by case basis. Large gatherings are discouraged and may be canceled by the administration as necessary and in consultation with the health officials.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel:

All special events, field trips, travel, etc. discontinued on a case by case basis. Large faculty or staff gatherings discontinued without permission of administration. Field trips discontinued unless special permission provided by administration.

Personnel:

All faculty and staff report to work after assessing temperature at home. Incident Command Team meets to determine how best to continue school operation.
Administrators and other critical support staff (e.g., nurses) identify and train back-up individuals.

Specific School Protocol Related to this Level :

Students who enter school with a temperature of 100°F or 37.7°C will be required to wait for parent/ guardian transportation home in an isolated location that is safe, comfortable and monitored by staff (e.g., nurses' back office).
The School Nurse in concert with Health District Officials will determine whether any individual who has recovered from flu can return to school. The current standard is that students and staff may return to school after at least 24 hours after they are free of fever of 100°F or 37.7°C, or sign of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. However, the final decision regarding return to school will be based on current recommendations of the federal, state, and local medical and health officials.

School Provided Transportation:

Parents must not send students to school with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C. Some level of bus service may be modified and/or interrupted at this level.

School Operations/Cafeteria:

Some form of Food Services in place for staff and students who are attending school. Continual disinfecting throughout the day.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

LEVEL 4

HIGH RISK – SITUATION:
Spread of pandemic flu within the school community. Government directs the schools to close OR superintendent closes school due to level of absenteeism and interruption of instruction.

Communication:
Daily updates by superintendent through the Alert Now System. Further communication via website.

School Access:
No classes held on campus. School facility closed to all but essential personnel (administrators/ custodians/secretaries) for indeterminate period of time. School quarantine, no visitors.

Educational Delivery:
In the event of that school is closed, it is likely that a number of the teaching staff will be ill as well as students. If this degree of disruption occurs, then it will be impossible for staff to deliver high quality instruction regardless of the technology available or alternate delivery systems available. For this reason, school will remain closed for both students and staff and school days/hours will be made up through other means with the building is re-opened.

Co-curricular Program:
School facility closed.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel:
School facility closed.

Personnel:
Safety Committee Team reviews process of school closure and academic support.

Specific School Protocol Related to this Level :
School facility closed. Decision on time and procedure for reopening will be based on federal, state, and local health and medical recommendations and current information.
Prepare for possible use of schools for vaccination procedures.

School Provided Transportation:
School facility closed.

School Operations/Cafeteria:
School facility closed. Complete all necessary cleaning and maintenance.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO POLICY 6114.8
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS – FOR PANDEMIC FLU

POST PANDEMIC FLU EVENT PLAN:

- Determine criteria and timing for re-opening of school(s),
- Determine impact on school calendar and need for possible changes,
- Determine impact on student instruction and need for additional or compensatory instruction,
- Determine what steps necessary to ensure staff are in place and prepared for the return of students,
- Determine what kinds of mental health support may be necessary for students and staff,

Regional School District No. 7 **FORM A**

Northwestern Regional Schools Illness Report

Date:_____
Student Name:_____ Grade _____

Secretaries: Please ask the following questions when a parent/guardian calls into the school stating that their student will not be attending on a regularly-scheduled school day **DUE TO ILLNESS ONLY.** Please fill in and check the appropriate answers. Thank you.

1) Is your student ill? ____ YES ___ NO (If yes, refer to nurse.)
2) Do they have a fever? ____ YES ___ NO
3) Contact Name_____
4) Telephone Number_____

The Health Office Nurses may call you back to obtain more details. This is a precautionary measure our school is taking due to potential contagious diseases. Thank you. Please submit this form to the Health Office and include the daily absence list.

* *

HEALTH OFFICE FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Date: _____ Time _____ Contact Person_____
Fever ___ Yes ___ No Temperature_____ Date of Onset_____
Cough ___ Yes ___ No Vomiting/Diarrhea ___ Yes ___ No Sore Throat ___ Yes ___ No
Body Aches/Chills ___ Yes ___ No
Seen by MD or MD appointment. Date:_____

Instructions to the Parent/Guardian by school nurse after gathering above information:

1) **If your child has:** Fever (100ºF or 37.7ºC) or greater, must remain at home and may return to school after at least 24 hours after they are free of fever of 100°F or 37.7°C, or sign of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
2) **But if your child has only:** Vomiting or diarrhea, **OR** sore throat **OR** new persistent cough with no fever, then you must keep your child home until symptoms are gone for 24 hours.
3) Please remember to call into school every day your child will be absent.
4) Northwestern Regional Schools will be monitoring for influenza-like illness in the school. This our effort to assure you that we have the health and safety of your children as our number one priority, Thank you for helping us to keep the school environment as healthy as possible for all students and staff.
5) Guidance on how long to keep a child with influenza-like symptoms home is subject to change. Our information is obtained from the Connecticut Flu Watch website http:/www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch

Heath Office Nurses: You may have to use the back of this form to follow-up with this child's daily absences and progress concerning health issues. Please remember to document date, time, contact person and pertinent information such as symptoms, underlying chronic diseases, and other family members who may become ill. All information is confidential according to CT State Laws and the Department Health and Education.

IMMEDIATE DISPOSITION_____
_____
_____

(Please send copy of this form to Superintendent on the date of contact) **8/27/09**

Regional School District No. 7 **FORM B**

Northwestern Regional Schools Illness Report
For **ALL** Regional School District No. 7 Staff/Employees

Date:_____

Staff Member Name:_____

Contact Number:_____

Secretaries: Please fill out the top of this page for all staff members/employees of Regional School District No. 7 who are regularly scheduled to work and have called into school due to illness or unknown. Please forward to the Health Office, daily, for further follow up.

HEALTH OFFICE FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Date:_____ Time:_____

Fever: ___ Yes ___ No Temperature: ___ Yes ___ No Date of onset: _____

Cough: ___ Yes ___ No Vomiting/Diarrhea: ___Yes ___ No

Sore Throat: ___Yes ___ No Body Aches/Chills: ___ Yes ___ No

Seen by MD or MD appointment Date:_____

Recommendations/Instructions to Employees:

1) **If you have: A fever (100ºF or 37.7ºC) or greater, you must remain at home and may return to work after at least 24 hours free of fever of 100ºF or 37.7ºC, or sign of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.**

2) **But, if you have only: Vomiting or diarrhea, or sore throat or new persistent cough with no fever, we are asking you to stay home until your symptoms are gone for 24 hours.**

3) **NWR7 will be monitoring for influenza-like illness in the school. This is our effort to assure you that we have your health and safety as our priority. Thank you for helping us to keep our school environment as healthy as possible for all employees and students.**

Immediate Disposition:_____

_____

(Please send copy of this form to Superintendent on the date of contact) updated 8/27/09