

**Frequently Asked Questions
K-12
Updated 9/16/09**

School Dismissal and Closure

Question	CDC Guidance	State or Local Responsibility	Idaho Specific Additional Information
What is the process for a school closure?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	<p>Follow standard closure protocol. Refer to http://www.sde.idaho.gov/ for a copy of the school closure form. Submit to Gregory Berg and assure certification. The Department of Education and Department of Health and Welfare will report school closures to the Centers for Disease Control upon the receipt of a certified closure form.</p> <p>Also refer to the State Department of Education website for sample letters. Letter to parents, staff and superintendents are available now for novel H1N1 pandemic flu planning and preparation. For sample closure letters, refer to the Communication Toolkit for Schools.</p>
What is the threshold for school closure	<p>1. Reactive Closure: A significant proportion of students have fever or flu like symptoms while at school</p> <p>2. Preemptive Closure: Used as measure to decrease the spread of flu (as indicated by fed or state health depts.)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	<p>The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare is currently working on developing a tool to help schools make decisions on when to close. More information will be posted www.panfluidaho.gov as it becomes available.</p>

How long should the school remained closed?	5-7 calendar days and reassess		Utilize CDC guidance. Local Health Districts should also be included in planning when re-opening schools that have been closed.
Are there provisions for school lunches while the facility is closed?	Yes. Per USDA Summer Food Service Program or National School Lunch's Seamless Summer Option can provide food, as can School Food Authorities or community org with an agreement with the SDE .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> LEA	1) Go to the Idaho Child Nutrition Program Website http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/ 2) Click the State Guidance Button 3) Click under the CNP FY09 Button In this area you will find <u>Responding to School Closing for H1N1 Outbreaks</u> Policy Memo SP-31-2009
Will schools lose funding during a closure?	Per Idaho Statute 33-1003.A, during a school closure necessitated to maintain public health, the attendance will be considered the same as non-impacted days. Schools with closures for more than 10 days may count homebound children in daily attendance if instruction is given.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> LEA	Refer to the Idaho State Department of Education at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/ for the full Idaho Statute citation and additional guidance.
Will staff be paid during closures or in the event that they must refrain from attending school?	Schools will continue to receive ADA funding, and thereby payment for staff, during a closure upon the submission of a certified school closure form to the State Department of Education.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> LEA	Refer to the Idaho State Department of Education at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/ for the school closure form and a sample district dismissal policy. Also refer to your local education agency (LEA) dismissal policy.
How to guarantee students continue to	Consider dismissals when possible to allow staff to use school facilities to send emails,	<input type="checkbox"/> State	Refer to your LEA to assess the needs and resources for your school.

learn	deliver lessons via teleconference, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	
What about senior graduation requirements?	Per Idaho Statute 33-512.1f, a senior can miss up to eleven (11) hours of instruction. Anything over would be to me made up.		

Exclusions & Absences

Question	CDC Guidance	State or Local Responsibility	Idaho-Specific Additional Information
What accommodations should be made for high risk students and staff that choose to stay home?	High risk populations are defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 5 years of age • Pregnant women • Anyone with chronic medical conditions • Anyone with immunosuppression 	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	Accommodations for high risk populations should be made by LEA's in accordance with IDEA and Title IV.
Can or should a school mandate that staff stay home if they are part of the high risk group or have flu-like symptoms?	See above	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	Each LEA or school will have to develop a policy or practice to require staff to stay home.
What are the criteria for an exclusion period?	Stay home for at least 24 hours after symptoms subside without fever reducing medication (usually 3-7 days).	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	Refer to your LEA policy regarding exclusions or ill children returning to school. If your LEA does not have a policy, consider developing a contingency plan for students returning from an exclusion period. This may conduct active screening of the child for flu-like symptoms upon
What should the school do if a child returns to school and is still ill.	Extended exclusions are recommended for high risk populations.		

			their return.
What does active screening mean?		<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	Active screening could be taking a child or staff's temperature to assure there is no fever, and doing an exam or asking questions about other symptoms related to influenza to assure the person has recovered from illness.
Schools currently allow a child to miss up to 9 days of school per semester. Will this be increased in the event of a pan flu diagnosis?		<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	Refer to your LEA policy for absences and how they impact school credits. The district may define excused versus unexcused absences, and the student may be required to obtain a physician's note. Each LEA may consider extending their threshold for absences in the event of a pan flu diagnosis.
What is the recommendation for using masks for students and staff that have been isolated with influenza-like illness?	<p>When possible and if the sick person can tolerate it, he or she should wear a surgical mask when near other persons.</p> <p>School nurses, and other staff who act in this capacity, are likely to come into close contact with students and staff with influenza-like illness. CDC recommends that staff who provide care for persons with known, probable or suspected influenza or influenza-like illness use appropriate personal protective equipment.</p> <p>http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	

Vaccinations

Question	Guidance	State or Local Responsibility	Idaho-Specific Additional Information
<p>If the vaccine is available and sufficient, are there any considerations of vaccinating students at school?</p>	<p>Seasonal flu vaccinations are recommended for everyone.</p> <p>H1N1 vaccinations are recommended for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant women • Persons who live with or provide care for infants under the age of 6 months • Health care and emergency service workers • Persons aged 6 months-24 years • Persons aged 25 years-64 years with medical conditions that put them at high risk for influenza-related complications 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> State</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA</p>	<p>Contact your local Health District for community vaccine availability and distribution locations.</p>
<p>Do individuals providing vaccinations in the school have to have a background check?</p>	<p>Per Idaho Statute 33-152 “(16) To maintain a safe environment for students by developing a system that cross-checks all contractors or other persons who have irregular contact with students against the statewide sex offender register.”</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> LEA</p>	<p>Background checks would not be necessary for someone with infrequent contact with students; however provider names should be checked against the Idaho Sex Offender Registry.</p>
<p>How can we assure there will be enough for all school staff and students?</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> State</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA</p>	<p>Information will be released by the Department of Health and Welfare as is becomes available.</p>

What liabilities would we need to consider?			Liabilities will be addressed within the memorandums of understanding between the local Health District and community vaccine distribution locations.
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Misc

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What are some social distancing examples schools can implement?	<p>If frequency or severity of pandemic flu cases increases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the amount of space between students and staff. CDC recommends keeping 6 feet between people. • Keep the same class of students in one classroom and have teachers rotate through. • Discontinue the combining of multiple classrooms for activities • Move desks apart or move to a larger space for classes 	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LEA	Instead of having communal supplies in the classroom, consider grouping supplies for each child.

Please submit additional questions to: panfluidaho@dhw.idaho.gov , and use the words “School Questions” in the subject line.