

# **Greenville I. S. D.**

## **Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan**

**Revised 2009-2010**

### **This Plan**

- is designed to link and correlate with the District's Emergency Operations Plan.
- incorporates prevention-mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery of the pandemic influenza.
- addresses other communicable diseases.
- was developed, and is annually reviewed and modified by the district's School Health Advisory Council.

## **Table of Contents:**

- I. Introduction/Purpose
- II. Prevention - Mitigation and Control of Communicable Diseases
  - Definitions of Common Terms used in a Disease Investigation
- III. Preparedness
  - Educational Efforts
  - Planning and Coordination
- IV. Response
  - Reporting
  - Communication
  - Campus Access
  - Educational Delivery
  - Co-Curricular Delivery
  - Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel
  - Personnel
  - Emergency Care
  - School Provided Transport
  - School Operations/Food Services
- V. Recovery
- VI. Resources
- VII. Attachments:
  - Influenza Surveillance and School Absenteeism Tracking (Form)
  - Sample Parent Letter #1 (Use before flu reaches U.S.)
  - Sample Parent Letter #2 (Use after 1<sup>st</sup> case in U.S.)
  - Sample Parent Letter #3 (Use when flu outbreak is in our county,  
but schools are still open.)
  - Tips for Parents on Coping (Home Information Flyer)
  - Sample Parent Letter #4 (Schools closed)
  - Sample Parent Letter #5 (Schools re-open)
  - GISD's Reporting and Communication Responses to the  
Pandemic Flu (Flow Chart)
  - Pandemic Response Matrix

# **Pandemic Influenza and other Communicable Disease Preparedness**

## **I. Introduction/Purpose**

The outbreak of infectious diseases around the world has aroused and generated grave concern about the possible significant impact on our health, livelihood, economy, and education system as well as that of the world. With the selfless service of our medical workers and the concerted efforts of all sectors, the preventive campaign has become an all people's movement. Citizens have not only increased their awareness of the dangers of infectious diseases, including influenza, but many have also been actively taking precautionary measures. With the development of guidelines for the immediate implementation of series of monitoring and quarantine measures, there could be immediate stabilization of new cases when they occur. Nevertheless, we must continue to be on the alert and reinforce personal and household hygiene.

Prevention is better than cure. While we hope for new breakthroughs in the medical diagnosis and treatment, educators must be actively involved in teaching our next generation how to cope with the changes of emerging diseases. We should not only take the lead in stepping up the precautionary measures in the personal, family, school and social aspects of prevention and hygiene, but should also set a good example of fulfilling our social and civic obligations formulating school contingency measures. We should base our professional decisions on the benefits and learning needs of our students. We should make full use of this special learning opportunity to increase student and parent awareness of communicable diseases through various means, and further develop and strengthen their sense of responsibility towards the community.

## **II. Prevention - Mitigation and Control of Communicable Diseases**

Communicable diseases are those diseases that can be transmitted person to person. The transmission of an organism is dependent upon many factors, including the type of organism, the dose of organism one receives, route of the transfer of organism, and the physical condition of the receiving host. Any interruption of this process decreases the likelihood of illness from the organism. Both students and staff have a responsibility in the prevention of transmission of communicable diseases.

The following general preventative measures should be communicated to, adhered to, and reviewed frequently by both students and staff.

- **Vaccinations** - Vaccinations against the influenza each fall remains the primary way to prevent this disease. Influenza vaccine is now recommended for everyone. School nurses should communicate and recommend vaccinations to parents, students and staff.
- **Hand Hygiene** - Hands should be, cleaned at anytime they are visibly soiled, before preparing or eating food or beverages, after coughing or sneezing, and after using the restroom. Facilities and supplies should be readily available for both students and staff to accomplish this. Everyone should use soap and water or a 60% alcohol-based hand rub when soap and water are not available. The goal is to limit the transfer of organism to the environment and from human contact.
- **Respiratory Hygiene** - Some infections are spread when a person coughs or sneezes causing respiratory droplets to be propelled into the surrounding air. Once in the air they can be inhaled and possibly infect others. The goal is to break the transmission cycle by controlling the droplets propelled in the air. Using tissue is an effective means of decreasing the respiratory droplets into the air. Everyone should cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, and put their tissue in a wastebasket. Tissues should be available in all classrooms, common areas and rooms where meals are provided.
- **Good House Keeping** - Normal cleaning and maintenance of facilities should be maintained with high standards. Increased disinfecting may be required.
- **Universal Precautions** - This is the practice where blood and all body fluids are considered infectious and therefore barrier protection should be used and materials handled cautiously. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be used when handling or cleaning up blood and/or body fluids.

- **Separation and Grouping** - This is the practice of keeping the well from the ill. Ideally this is accomplished in separate physical spaces however if this cannot be done then separation is accomplished by placing as much physical distance between the groups as possible within the current space. The basic concept would also include staying home when ill. Each campus administrator and school nurse should identify locations for isolation.

### **Definitions of Common Terms used in a Disease Investigation:**

**Index Case** - This term pertains to the initial person identified with a specific illness.

**Close Contacts** - A term used to describe those individuals that have cared for, or have lived with, or had direct contact with respiratory secretions and/or body fluids of a person diagnosed with a communicable disease such as influenza or pertussis.

**Line List** - A list of names and other pertinent information that is gathered during the investigation of a cluster of illness or symptoms. Information requested will vary with the nature of the illness being investigated.

**Outbreak** - A sudden increase in the incidence of an illness or disease.

**Endemic** - An illness or disease that is prevalent to a particular area or population.

**Epidemic** - An illness affecting a population, community or region in excess of normal expectancy.

**Pandemic** - A disease that is affecting or attacking the population of a large geographic region, country, or continent; extensively epidemic.

**Quarantine** - The separation of people who are not ill, but have been exposed to a communicable disease from the general population, as they may or may not be infected. This restriction of movement is intended to stop the spread of that illness. People may be quarantined at home or other specific locations.

**Isolation** - The restriction of the movement of known infected individual or group in order to keep them separated from the uninfected in an attempt to stop the spread of an illness, such as influenza. Individuals may be isolated at home, the hospital or other specified locations.

**Symptoms** - Symptoms of influenza include fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea also can occur, and are much more common among children than adults.

**Spread of Influenza** - The main way that influenza is spread is from person to person through coughing and sneezing. This can happen when droplets from the cough or sneeze of an infected person travel through the air and reach the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes influenza can be spread when a person touches droplets, nasal drainage or saliva from an infected person, or soiled object, and then touches one's own (or someone else's) nose or mouth before washing hands.

### **III. Preparedness**

#### **Educational Efforts:**

Everyone has the responsibility for combating infectious diseases, such as influenza. Parental participation is essential to an effective prevention and control program. Parental education should take place through PTA meetings, fact sheets, and newsletters. Explanations of home quarantine and isolation should be discussed with parents. Parents need to be aware of their child's current immunization status for vaccine preventable diseases and keep abreast of their child's day-to-day health. If their child is sick they should not be sent to school and parents should seek medical attention for the child from their health provider.

Breaking the transmission cycle will be the key to controlling an outbreak of communicable disease, such as influenza. Parents should understand their responsibility to notify the school immediately if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school will then notify the Hunt County Health Department and begin to gather contact information if requested by HCHD. In some cases, such as influenza, a child may be kept at home, on home quarantine or isolation, for a specific period of time,

usually until the period of communicability has passed. This time frame varies with each disease.

The **Hunt County Health Department** is responsible for the investigation of communicable diseases within Hunt County.

If the school nurses believe that a student or staff member has a communicable disease then they should contact HCHD at 903-455-4433. They should be prepared to give specific information. (Attached: Influenza Surveillance and School Absenteeism Tracking Form)

- Educational efforts will target common means of transmission such as:
  - Sharing common towels
  - Sharing food, beverages or utensils
  - Failure to wash hands prior to preparing food and/or beverages and after using the toilet
  - Failure to cover a cough or sneeze or to wash hands afterwards
  - Infrequent cleaning and disinfecting of common use items or equipment
- Strategies for communicating influenza information will include:
  - Use of student/teacher class time
  - Signage throughout school, educating about good hygiene
  - Newsletters
  - Web sites
  - Employee training
  - Parent and school employee meetings
  - Translation of information to non-English speaking families

**Attached are sample flyers and parent letters for home communication.**

## **Planning and Coordination:**

- This plan of action for the pandemic flu will annually be updated by the School Health Advisory Council.
- In the event of a pandemic flu crisis the emergency operations team, under the direction of the superintendent, will coordinate response and recovery efforts with recommendations from the recognized Health Authorities.
  - Hunt County Health Department
  - Texas Department of State Health Services
  - Centers for Disease Control
- As a part of the district's Emergency Operations Plan, pandemic influenza preparedness involves stakeholders from local public health and emergency response agencies, district administrators, school health, counselors, teachers, food and child nutrition services and parent representatives.

## **IV. Response**

Attached: GISD's Reporting and Communication Responses to the Pandemic Flu, Flow Chart.

Attached: GISD's Pandemic Response Matrix for different severity levels of the pandemic influenza cases reported within the school community.

The response matrix includes:

- Communication
- Campus Access
- Educational Delivery
- Co-Curricular Program
- Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel
- Personnel
- Emergency Care
- School Provided Transport
- School Operations/Food Services

## **V. Recovery**

The goal of recovery is to return to learning and restore the infrastructure of the school as quickly as possible while providing a caring and supportive environment.

The following strategies and activities are recommended:

- Pre-planning for recovery: Identify and pre-screen health and grief service providers.
- Monitor students for the emotional impact of the crisis and provide information on support services that are available.
- Utilize Employee Assistance Programs for assistance with coping with loss and stress.
- Identify potential and/or continuing hazards of pandemic influenza affecting students and staff.
- Continue public health surveillance until discontinued by health authority.
- Capture "lessons learned" and incorporate them into revisions and training.
- Conduct debriefings with staff and first responders.
- Communication: Keep students, families, community and media informed of steps taken.
- Plan how anniversaries of events will be commemorated.
- Compile reports for local, state and federal officials.

## **VI. Resources:**

U.S. Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov>

Flu Information and Resources

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/flu-resources.html>

World Health Organization

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

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Influenza

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

U.S Department of State Bureau of Administration, Pandemic Response Matrix

<http://www.state.gov/m/a/os/c17204.htm>

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

Washington Department of Health, Flu News:

[www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/](http://www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/)

Washington Department of Health, Flu Materials in Multiple Languages

[www.doh.wa.Gov/FluNews/#external](http://www.doh.wa.Gov/FluNews/#external)

Teachers Guidelines for Crisis Response

[www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)

Caring for Kids after Trauma, Disaster and Death: A guide for Parents and Professionals

[http://www.aboutourkids.org/files/articles/crisis\\_guide02.pdf](http://www.aboutourkids.org/files/articles/crisis_guide02.pdf)

TX Dept. of State Health Services Flu Information

<http://www.texasflu.org>

Hunt County Health Dept.

<http://www.huntcountyhealth.com>

## **VII. Attachments:**

- Influenza Surveillance and School Absenteeism Tracking (Form)
- Sample Parent Letter #1 (Use before flu reaches U.S.)
- Sample Parent Letter #2 (Use after 1<sup>st</sup> case in U.S.)
- Sample Parent Letter #3 (Use when flu outbreak is in Hunt County, but schools are still open.)
- Tips for Parents on Coping (Home Information Flyer)
- Sample Parent Letter #4 (Schools Closed)
- Sample Parent Letter #5 (Schools Re-Opened) .
- GISD's Reporting and Communication Response to the Pandemic Flu (Flow Chart)
- Pandemic Response Matrix

**SAMPLE STATE HEALTH SERVICES  
INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM**

**SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM TRACKING FORM**

<b>Date of Report</b> _____	<i>❖ Please send reports on Monday of each week.</i>
School District	Greenville I. S. D.
School Name	
20__ -20__ School Population	
Person Reporting! Title	
Email Address	

**FAX EACH MONDAY TO: 817-264-4557**

Week of	MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
	Total Absent	*Flu-Like Absences								

**\*FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS**

- Symptoms include: temperature > 100°, malaise, muscle aches, cough, runny nose, sore throat, chills, and headache.

## SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #1 Prevention Letter

Use this letter to help prepare parents for pandemic flu - before there are human pandemic flu cases in the U.S.

Dear Parents,

This letter will help your family prepare for a flu pandemic that could make many people sick.

It is important to note at this time, there is no pandemic flu in the United States. Public health officials are worried a flu virus may change so that it can infect people and easily spread. This would cause a worldwide flu outbreak, called a pandemic.

Health officials want people to protect themselves against pandemic flu. Here are some ways to protect your family:

- Keep children who are sick at home.
- Teach your children to wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.
- Those who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.

Attached is a checklist to help families get ready for a pandemic flu outbreak. If you have questions, please contact your school nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school at (insert number). More information is also available at:

[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #2 FIRST CASE: Use this letter to help prepare parents for pandemic flu after first case is found in United States.

Dear Parents,

Health officials are worried that a flu virus may change so that people can get sick from it. If that happens, it could spread from person to person. This would cause a worldwide flu outbreak, called pandemic.

Below are some ways to protect your family from getting sick:

- Keep children who are sick at home.
- Teach your children to wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.
- Keep children home from work or school until they are better.

Attached is a checklist to help families prepare for a pandemic flu outbreak. If you have questions, contact your school nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school at (insert number).

You may also find more information at the following websites:

[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

[www/redcross.org](http://www/redcross.org)

### SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS #3

Initial Pandemic Flu Outbreak: Use this letter to let parents know schools are open

Dear Parents,

Each year, it is common for people to get sick with the flu during fall and winter months. This year, a new flu virus is making many people in Hunt County sick.

Enough people are ill in Hunt County and around the nation that health officials call it a "pandemic." Many of our students and teachers are sick with the flu, but the county health department tells us students who are not ill can safely come to school. Therefore, schools will remain open.

Any children who are sick at school will be sent home. We will keep you updated with any important information.

Below are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness.

- Keep children who are sick at home.
- Teach your children to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Teach your children to wash hands before eating, after going to the restroom, and after coughing, sneezing or wiping nose.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- Stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters or other places with large groups of people.

Attached are tips for taking care of your family members should they become ill. If you have questions, contact your School Nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school at (insert number).

If the pandemic flu continues to spread and more become ill, schools may close for days or weeks. Recommendations may change during the course of a pandemic flu outbreak.

**\*\* Please keep children with flu-like symptoms at home.**

**\*\* Children should not return to school until free of fever for 24-48 hours.**

**\*\* "Free of fever" means without the use of fever-reducing medication.**

Tips for Parents on coping with pandemic flu (Send home Tips with each parent letter.)

### **Plan for an extended stay at home during a flu pandemic.**

- Ask your employer about how business will continue during a pandemic.
- Ask your employer if you can work from home during a flu pandemic.
- Plan for a possible reduction or loss of income, if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.
- Check with your employer or union about leave policies.
- Plan home learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand. Plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.

### **Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home.**

- Health and emergency supplies
- Ready to eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, soups, protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola, peanut butter and jelly, dried fruit, nuts, trail mix crackers
- Canned juices, Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food, baby formula
- Pet food, prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring, soap and water or alcohol-based hand wash
- Medicines for fever such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin)
- Thermometer, vitamins, fluids with electrolytes, such as Pedialyte
- Flashlight with extra batteries, portable radio with extra batteries, manual can opener
- Garbage bags, tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers

### **If someone in your home develops flu symptoms (fever, cough, aches):**

- Encourage plenty of fluids to drink.
- Keep the ill person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- For adults with fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- Do not use aspirin in children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness
- Sponging with tepid (wrist-temperature) water lowers fever only during the period of sponging. Do not sponge with alcohol.
- Keep tissues and a trash bag for their disposal within reach of the patient.
- All members of the household should wash their hands frequently.
- Keep other family members and visitors away from the person who is ill.
- Contact a healthcare provider for further advice. If the ill person is having difficulty breathing or is getting worse, contact the healthcare provider.
- More information is available at [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS #4: School closure: Use this letter to inform parents schools are closed

Dear Parents,

Because of the pandemic flu situation, all schools in Greenville I.S.D. will be closed until further notice, and the students should stay home.

Schools may be closed for days or even weeks to reduce contact among children and stop the spread of the flu.

Because the flu is easily spread, children and adults should stay away from other people and groups and avoid gathering in locations such as shopping malls, movie theaters or community centers. It may be difficult to get doctor's appointments, go to a clinic or even be seen in a hospital emergency room.

Here are some tips for helping those who are sick with the flu:

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

We will contact you as soon as we have additional information.

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS #5: School Re-Opens Use this letter to inform parents schools are re-opened.

Dear Parents,

Greenville I.S.D. officials have determined the pandemic flu is under control. Our Schools will open again on \_\_\_\_\_.

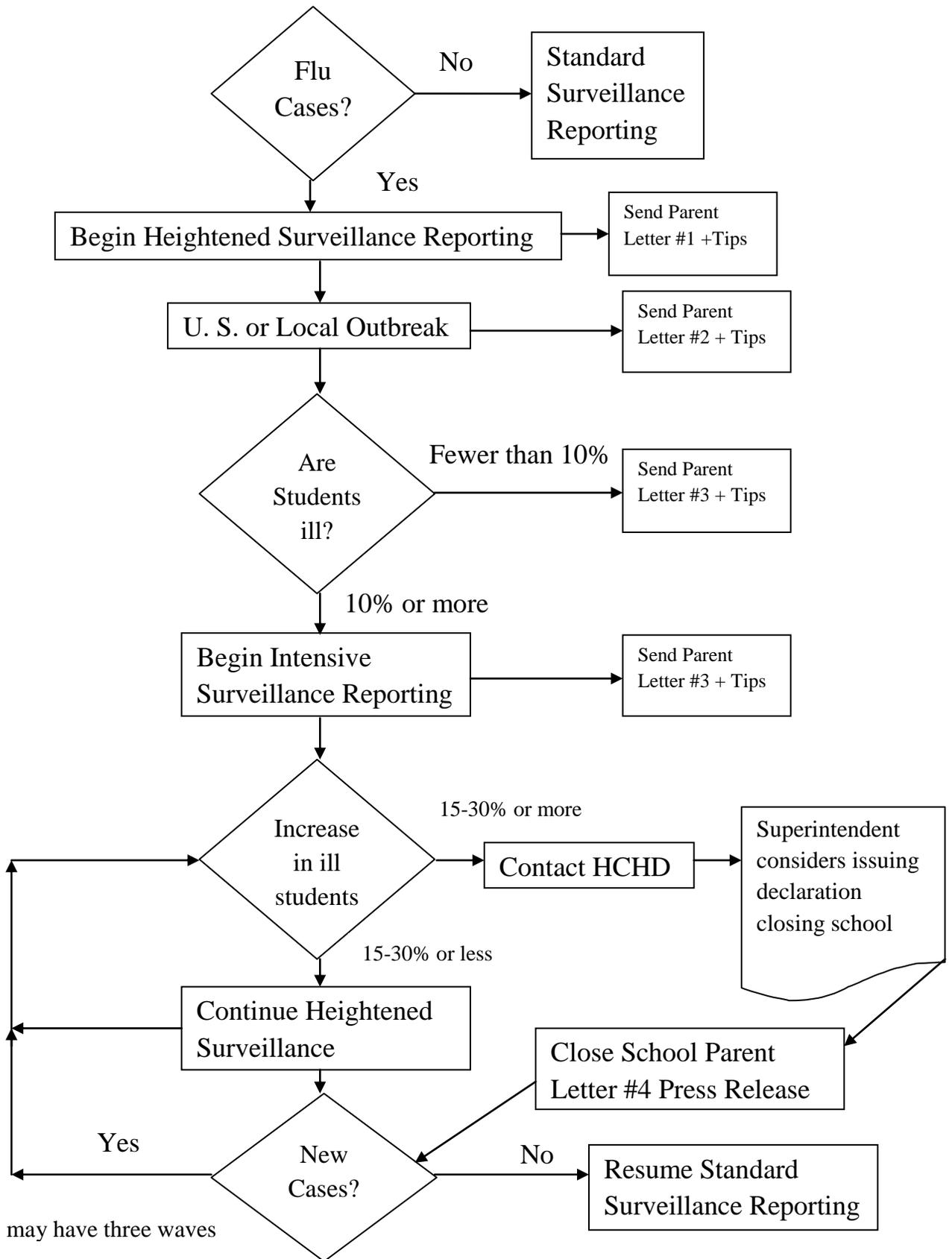
At that time, students may safely return to class.

While school is opening again, some are still sick from the flu virus. Health officials say that pandemic flu outbreaks sometimes occur in waves. This means more could become sick, which could result in schools closing again.

We will continue to provide any important information. Because the flu can be spread from person to person, please keep children who are sick at home.

We are looking forward to seeing your children again.

Greenville I. S. D.  
 School Reporting and Communication to Pandemic Flu  
 Flow Chart



Pandemic may have three waves

# Pandemic Response Matrix Greenville ISD

Levels are defined by the presence of the following within the school locality.	Communication (Pandemic information from district crisis response team only)	Campus Access	Educational Delivery	Co-curricular program	Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel	Personnel	Emergency Care	School Provided Transport	School Operations/Food Service
<b>Level One (low risk)</b> -First pandemic flu case reported in country. Schools may be closed upon recommendation of medical officials. -No reported cases in local community. -School community (employees, students, parents) requested to take temperature twice daily at home and stay home if 100.4F or more.	-Use of periodic email to community. -Use of daily bulletin and/or website to provide information.	-Access to campus per normal school policy.	-Regular school program. -Daily homework provided by teachers for any students staying at home, if possible.	-All regularly scheduled activities allowed.	-Field trips allowed per normal school policy.	-Normal working conditions. -All school employees returning from affected areas have their health monitored for 10 days.	-See health care provider if temperature is over 100.4F.  Encourage hand washing and healthy living.	-All bus routes run as usual.	-Normal cleaning and maintenance. -Continual disinfecting by cleaning personnel. -Review food handling procedures with staff.
<b>Level Two (Moderate Risk)</b> - First pandemic flu case reported in state. Schools may be closed upon recommendation of medical officials. -Increasing number of cases reported in country). -School community (employees, students, parents) requested to take temperature twice daily at home. If 100.4F or more please stay home	-Daily updates to community on status of pandemic flu in country and impact on school program. -In-class instruction to ensure students understand protocol and proper hygiene.	-School open to staff, students, parents. School community with temp over 100.4 report to the school health office.	-Regular school program. -Daily homework provided by teachers for any student staying at home, if possible.	-All scheduled co-curricular programs allowed, except to affected areas or visitors from affected areas.	-All events may be cancelled.	-Normal working conditions. -All faculty and staff report to work after assessing temperature at home.	-Health office will determine whether individual who has recovered from flu can return to school. -If temperature over 100.4F individual must return to home ASAP.	-All bus routes run as usual. -Bus access may be denied for those with temperature over 100.4F.	All food service workers must wear gloves. -Continual disinfecting throughout the day. -Full disinfection every 3 days. Masks will be worn by staff if required for particular flu strain.
<b>Level Three (Medium risk)</b> -First pandemic case reported within school community. Schools may be closed upon recommendation of medical officials. -Increased spread of pandemic flu in area with transfer in public places. -Take temperature twice daily at home. If 100.4F or over please stay home.	-Daily updates to faculty and community. -Daily classroom instruction to explain situation and to emphasize proper hygiene.	Closed campus; nobody allowed off campus during the day. No non-school visitors, no exceptions.	-Daily homework provided by teacher for any student staying at home, if possible. -All students exit campus by 3:30.	-Co-curricular programs suspended. -Large gatherings not allowed.	-All special events, field trips, travel etc. discontinued. -No large faculty or staff gatherings. -Field trips discontinued.	-All faculty & staff report to work after assessing temps at home. -Crisis response team meets to determine how best to continue school operation.	-Health office determines if individual who has recovered from flu can return to school. -If temp over 100.4F, individual must go home.	-All bus routes run as usual. -Bus access may be denied for those with temp over 100.4F	-Some form of food services in place for staff and students who are attending school. -Continual disinfecting throughout the day. -Full disinfection every 3 days.
<b>Level Four (High risk)</b> -Spread of pandemic flu within the school community. School district or government direct schools to close.	-Daily updates. -Further communication using virtual school delivery system.	-No classes held on campus. -School facility closed to all but essential personnel for indeterminate period of time.		-N/A, school facility closed.	-N/A, school facility closed.	-Crisis response team reviews process of school closure.	-N/A, school facility closed.	-N/A, school facility closed.	-Necessary cleaning and maintenance.