

Bloomington Board of Education

**Superintendent of Schools
Walter T. Bergen School
225 Glenwild Avenue
Bloomington, New Jersey 07403**

Dr. Fredda Rosenberg
Superintendent of Schools
TEL: (973) 838-3282
FAX: (973) 838-6397

George J. Hagl
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
TEL: (973) 838-0555
FAX: (973) 838-1922

School Closure Guidance

Increasing numbers of swine influenza cases continue to be identified in the United States and internationally. The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJSHSS) is providing guidance to schools that is consistent with that issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/mitigation.htm>. As this situation is evolving, the following recommendations regarding community mitigation measures are subject to change:

School Dismissal:

- Dismissal of ill students should be strongly encouraged. In Bloomington schools students with fevers will be sent home promptly.
- Decisions regarding broader school dismissal within these communities should be left to local authorities, taking into account the extent of influenza-like (ILI) in the community.
- If the school dismisses students for the day(s) they should also cancel all school related gatherings and encourage parents and students to avoid congregating outside of the school.
- Schools in unaffected areas should begin to prepare for the possibility of school dismissal or closure. This includes asking teachers, parents and officials in charge of critical school-associated programs (such as meals services) to make contingency plans.

Other Social Distancing Interventions:

- Large gatherings linked to settings or institutions with CDC laboratory-confirmed cases should be cancelled. For example, a school event linked to a school with confirmed cases. Other large gatherings in the community may not need to be cancelled at this time.
- Additional social distancing measures are currently not recommended.
- Asymptomatic individuals, even those with a travel history to an area with identified cases, should not be excluded.

- Persons with underlying medical conditions who are at high risk for complications of influenza may wish to consider avoiding large gatherings.

The Decision to Close a School

The Current Situation:

In the event that the State and/or department have not made a decision on school closures, chief school administrators have the authority to close schools. However, it is expected that this decision will be made in consultation with their County Superintendent of Schools, local health departments and NJDHSS.

Procedure Defined in NJ State Pandemic Plan New Jersey Department of Education

Policy Process for School Closure and the Communication Plan:

It is important to stress that school administrators need to make these decisions in consultation with their county superintendent, local health department and office of emergency management.

Criteria Determining When/If School Closure Will Occur:

- Schools will be closed if ordered by the Governor.
- If the Governor has not ordered school closures, but the New Jersey Pandemic Influenza Response Task Force (PIRT) or the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) recommends closure, the Commissioner of Education will convene the department's essential staff (see below) to assess and make recommendations about the needed response. The department in consultation with the governor's office, PIRT and DHSS will determine if all or some school districts should be directed to close and implement their continuity plans.

List of individuals with authorities, roles and responsibilities to officially declare schools closed and authorize their reopening; and,

- The Governor may order the Commissioner of Education to close some or all schools.

The Commissioner of Education will convene the department's essential staff to assess the situation and make recommendations about the needed response to the Governor. Essential staff is identified in the Department of Education's Governmental Operations Continuity Plan.