



Pandemic Protocol

Updated: March 12, 2020

In a pandemic-level event, Grand Erie District School Board will:

- Work with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board and the Brantford, Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk municipalities to coordinate inter-agency planning
- Establish an Operations Committee chaired by the Director of Education

At all times, the health, safety, and well-being of staff and students will be closely monitored. If health and safety becomes a concern, it is possible that the Ontario Medical Officer of Health may recommend the closure of individual schools or all schools in Grand Erie.

It should be noted that, while the schools are open during a declared pandemic, normal program expectations and service levels may not be met.

OPERATIONS – ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In the event of a pandemic being declared by the Ministry of Health and/or the local health units, a special Operations Committee will be formed. It will consist of:

- The Director of Education
- Superintendents of Education
- Superintendent of Business and Treasurer
- Two Ontario Principal Council (OPC) Representatives
- Manager of Human Resources
- Manager of Communications and Community Relations
- Manager of Business Services
- Manager of Facility Services
- Division Manager of Operations/Health and Safety
- Manager of Transportation
- Manager of Information Technology

Role of the Operations Committee

1. To monitor and provide direction to the overall operation of the system
2. To make a clear and complete assessment of situations that may arise
3. To determine what needs to be communicated to the system and our school communities.

Operational Mode

1. By 9 a.m. each day: update reports from all Superintendents/Managers, including employee absenteeism, will be submitted through a designated process. Student absenteeism will be submitted through a designated process.
2. The Operations Committee will review the data, assess the situation, and develop next steps. The Operations Committee will also direct communications.

Once a pandemic is declared, the following will occur:

- **After Hours School Permits** – will be cancelled
- **Before and After School Programs** – each location's program will be reviewed, but would close if schools are closed.
- **Board Meetings** – will be held, as scheduled
- **Child Care Providers** – each location's program will be reviewed, but would close if schools are closed.
- **Community Use of Schools Permits** – will be cancelled
- **Continuing Education** – night school, summer school and international language programs will be reviewed
- **Courier** – will operate, as usual, if schools are open
- **EarlyON Programs** – each location's program will be reviewed but would close if schools are closed.
- **Traumatic Events Response Teams** – may not be deployed in the usual manner
- **Extracurricular Activities** – will be cancelled
- **Field Trips/Excursions** – will be cancelled
- **Food Programs** – will be cancelled
- **Garbage Collection** – if possible, the normal process will be maintained
- **Home Instruction** – will be cancelled
- **Instruction/Evaluation/Reporting** – will continue, where possible
- **Maintenance** – normal procedures will continue (i.e., emergency calls will be directed to Maintenance Services, with a follow-up to the Facilities Manager as soon as possible). Maintenance items that are not emergencies will be put on hold
- **Meetings** – that take administrators or staff out of schools will be cancelled
- **Printing** – the Mail Room will continue to operate as normal, provided staff is available
- **Professional Development Activities** – will be cancelled along with attendance at conferences

- **School Councils** – meetings will be cancelled. Principals will have a plan for on-going communication with the School Council Chair
- **Security of Facilities** – while schools are open, security of facilities will continue in accordance with current procedures
- **Student Transportation** –buses will maintain their regular schedule, while schools are open and bus drivers are available
- **Supplies Orders** – the normal process for ordering and delivery will be maintained, where possible
- **Volunteers** – will be cancelled

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A pandemic occurs when there is a novel virus which is virulent, easily transmitted and it infects humans. There have been many illnesses in the last century such as SARS, H1N1 and the current Coronavirus (COVID-19).

To activate Grand Erie's pandemic protocol, a pandemic must be declared by federal or provincial health agencies. The impact of a pandemic-level virus in the communities that Grand Erie serves (City of Brantford and the Counties of Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk), based on a population of 248,000 and a 35 per cent attack rate could be 86,800 people affected, either ill and unable to work, hospitalized or, in some cases, death.

The Board should consider the following predictions during its planning:

- The possibility that 40-60 per cent of staff will be absent at some point during the course of the pandemic
- A one to two per cent death rate among staff and students who contract the virus
- Two distinct waves of illness, three to nine months apart and each lasting six to eight weeks