

CCHS Response to Pandemic Flu- Student Dismissals

Pandemic Severity – The driver of local response

To better predict the impact of a pandemic and to provide local decision-makers with recommendations that are matched to the severity of the pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has developed a Pandemic Severity Index. This index uses the case fatality ratio (the proportion of deaths among critically ill persons) as the basis for determining the severity of a pandemic. The categories range from a 1 to a 5, with 1 being the least severe and 5 being the most. **A severe pandemic may indicate the need for more extreme measures to help prevent the spread of disease and loss of life.** Therefore, Contra Costa County will base its actions on the severity of the pandemic as defined by the **CDC Pandemic Severity Index** below.

For example, in a severe pandemic, the Contra Costa County Health Officer in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) may decide to dismiss students as soon as the first human case of pandemic flu is confirmed in California. While in the case of mild pandemic students may not be dismissed at all, or dismissed only if more than 30 percent of students are absent due to illness.

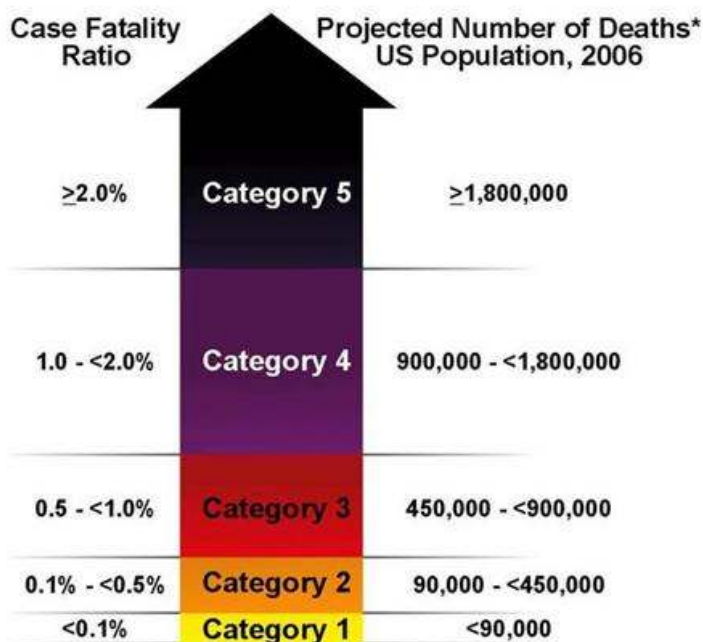
CCHS may take the following actions for the Severity Index categories:

Pandemic Severity Index Category 1: CCHS is unlikely to recommend dismissal of students from classes or school-based activities (unless absenteeism reaches about 30%).

Pandemic Severity Index Category 2-3: CCHS may consider short-term student dismissals (less than 4 weeks) based on the characteristics of the pandemic strain, the age-specific illness rate, the geographic locations of the cases and the adverse impacts of dismissal. Dismissals could include schools, colleges, school-based activities and child care programs with six or more children.

Pandemic Severity Index Category 4-5: All students at schools and day care programs may be dismissed for up to 12 weeks or longer (Schools and day cares may be dismissed statewide).

CDC Pandemic Severity Index



*Assumes 30% illness rate and unmitigated pandemic without interventions