

recommendations (3). In the early periods of an outbreak, when infection is not widespread, a “proactive school closure plan” will be put into effect; school closure for 5–7 days will be implemented as soon as the first infection is detected in a school. If the outbreak is already spreading through the community, “reactive school closure” is considered sufficient. This closure has been performed during seasonal influenza outbreaks in Japan, closing classes when many students were absent from school. Most schools now close when >10% infection-related absenteeism is reached. Our study, which provides a refinement of thresholds predictive of serious outbreaks in schools, may support this plan in Japan and provide schools worldwide

with an approach to considering the timing of school closures.

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DOI: 10.3201/eid1602.091719

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ANOTHER DIMENSION

Personal Log, Stardate 42552.6

Curi Kim

Awaiting the alien delegation from Sarona VIII  
To scan them for communicable space disease,  
I think of history and can’t help but now speculate  
If our ancestral officers in duty were at ease  
At their own quarantining stations, earthbound ports of entry,  
There watchful for all ancient scourges crossing borders  
(tuberculosis ... measles ... influenza ... coxsackie),  
Assessing travelers sans medical tricorders,  
But using only judgment and with epi skills equip’d  
To help determine meaning in a cough, a rash;  
And knowing what they saw was barely the berg’s tip  
Considering all the infected travelers they didn’t “catch”—  
Ah, the delegates just beamed aboard to be met;  
Let’s see what interstellar parasites we detect!

Dr Kim is a quarantine medical officer at the CDC Detroit Quarantine Station, Detroit, Michigan. Her primary research interest is traveler’s health.

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