

School District No. 69 (Qualicum)

PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1. The World Health Organization (WHO) has determined that the COVID-19 virus is a pandemic, based on the WHO's pandemic definition. A pandemic may occur when a novel virus is introduced or a virus radically changes and can easily infect humans, and against which people have little or no immunity. It occurs over a larger geographical area, often worldwide, affecting a large proportion of the population with elevated mortality rates.
2. At this time, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as high for Canada, due to the increasing number of cases in Canada. Public health risk is continually reassessed as new information becomes available.
3. The District's pandemic plan outlines the steps that will be taken to ensure coordinated pandemic measures and continuity of work, and should be read in conjunction with the School District's Exposure Control Plan, safe working procedures and site specific measures for COVID-19.
4. This plan is fluid and serves as guidance for conditions that are changing rapidly. In all matters related to the pandemic, School District 69 will follow the guidance and directions of our Provincial and National Health Officers, the Ministry of Education, and WorkSafe BC. The public health officials in BC will determine measures in controlling the transmission and impact of COVID-19. For the most up to date information on COVID-19, please follow the links below.
 - BC Government:
<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
 - BC Centre for Disease Control:
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>
 - School District 69:
<http://www.sd69.bc.ca>

ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

5. The main body of this plan is organized in three sections, which outline the key roles and responsibilities of School District 69 in each of the three pandemic phases:
 - a) **Pre-pandemic Period:** This is the critical stage for pandemic preparedness. The pre-pandemic phase is NOW, and planning efforts need to focus on education, business continuity and infection control.
 - b) **Pandemic Period:** The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) will declare when it is time to activate plans for the pandemic phase. We cannot anticipate exactly what will happen. Plans will need to be adapted to reflect circumstances and situations as they arise.

During this phase, the key goals will be to:

- Minimize rates and spread of infection, and illness,
 - Minimize educational and business disruptions.
- c) **Post-pandemic Period:** The post-pandemic period begins when the Provincial Health Officer declares that the influenza pandemic is over. The primary focus of work at this time is to restore normal services, de-activate pandemic response activities, review their impact, and use the lessons learned to guide future planning activities.
6. Each period in the Pandemic Response Plan addresses the following key components:
- a) planning and coordination;
 - b) infection control policies and procedures;
 - c) education of staff/student/families;
 - d) core operations;
 - e) continuity of student learning;
 - f) communication planning – including reporting elevated absenteeism;
 - g) employee work policies; and,
 - h) transportation.

CONTINUITY PLAN – CURRENT STATUS

7. The District is currently working through the pandemic phase of this plan and is planning responses that are aligned with the possible continuum of outbreak severity.

Staff Responsibility

8. Staff, parents, and guardians have been requested to check the COVID-19 information located on the School District 69 portal to receive updates and instructions from the District.

Travel monitoring

9. The Board of Education has currently cancelled all international field trips. All other field trips are subject to change or cancellation depending on developing circumstances.

Medically fragile students

10. Principals must know their medically fragile students conditions and keep students parents informed if the school has any concerns that a student has been in direct contact with another person at school who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19. Principals should encourage the family of a medically fragile students to contact their physician and discuss plans for their student's safe engagement in the school learning community. The Principals and parents/guardians will develop a safety plan for the student.

School Closure Decision Making Process

11. The Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the regional Medical Officer, the Ministry of Education and the school principal, will determine whether the school be closed, or will operate on an altered basis, based on the criteria established by the Ministry of Education as outlined in the *School Closure Guidelines* developed by the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Superintendent of Schools (or designate)

- a) Serve as the District's Pandemic Plan Team Lead;
- b) Coordinate the District's Pandemic Plan;
- c) Direct school closures as per directives of the Ministry of Education and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer;
- d) Lead in the planning related to altered school operation including suspension of instruction and provision of services to limited numbers of students;
- e) Serve as the key spokesperson for school and district related pandemic issues; and,
- f) Provide ongoing communication to employee groups and DPAC.

Director of Instruction and Associate Superintendent of Schools

- a) Develop and maintain education plans for implementation if schools are closed or programming is altered, and/or teaching or support staff, critical to program delivery, are away due to pandemic influenza;
- b) Support schools in planning during times of altered operations including in support of students moving toward graduation;
- c) Support school principals and supervisors in the implementation of the pandemic plan; and,
- d) Liaise with General Manager of Operations (Health and Safety Lead) and local Public Health Officer.

Principals and Supervisors

- a) Educate all staff and students about exposure control measures;
- b) Educate and encourage students and staff to practice hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette and signpost to resources available on the COVID-19 area of the District website;
- c) Advise parents, students and staff that if they have symptoms of COVID-19 they should stay at home and seek medical advice.
- d) Send sick students and staff, who have symptoms, home. Move students, teachers, and staff to a separate room if they become sick at school/work until they can be sent home;
- e) Limit the number of staff who take care of the sick person and provide a mask for the sick person to wear if they can tolerate it;
- f) Discuss pandemic planning at monthly safety committee meetings;
- g) Ensure that parents/guardians have provided up to date contact information to the school;
- h) Advise PAC and parents about district plans for COVID-19, including website communications and personal preparedness;
- i) Stay in regular communication with District and local public health officials. If greater than 10% of the school population is away, report to the School Public Health Nurse and to the Director of Instruction; and,
- j) Ensure that rigorous cleaning and infection control practices are happening in the schools and facilities.

General Manager of Operations and Maintenance

- a) Transportation plan for students if a school is closed;
- b) Ensure drivers follow procedures for transporting sick children;
- c) General oversight of all operational areas as it relates to the pandemic response plan.

Assistant Manager of Operations and Maintenance

- a) Ensure custodial staff are trained in the safety requirements and the contact disinfection techniques for all three pandemic phases;
- b) Ensure custodial staff has necessary personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies to prevent transmission and cross contamination during all three phases of pandemic planning;
- c) Ensure adequate supply of soap for increased hand washing vigilance during all three pandemic phases;
- d) Audit the infection control program;
- e) Continuation of core building functions;
- f) Continuation of information and education to be given to custodial staff; and,
- g) Continue communication with District Health and Safety Committee.

Information Technology Manager

- a) Develop and maintain electronic communication.

Secretary Treasurer

- a) Develop and implement key financial functions.

Director of Human Resources

- a) Coordinate employment arrangements for all teachers, support staff and administrators including in relation to leaves or absences related to COVID-19;
- b) Assist departments with the development and implementation of cross training strategies;
- c) Develop and implement specific employee work practices for use during a pandemic.

COMMUNICATION

- 12. The Superintendent of Schools (or designate) is the spokesperson for all *school district* related pandemic issues.
- 13. The Regional Medical Health Officer is the spokesperson for all pandemic health issues.
- 14. The School District Website will be continuously updated with new information as it becomes available.
- 15. The District will use established communication systems across the district and at schools and worksites.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 16. Using established procedures, principals will contact the school public health nurse and the Associate Superintendent when, in their opinion, the school absenteeism rate is significantly

increased. A guideline for determining 'significantly increased' is approximately 10% above the normal rate of absenteeism for time of year.

17. To minimize the spread of infection, School Principals can contact the Assistant Manager of Operations to request a deep clean/disinfection of a classroom when there are absences in excess of 10% due to similar symptoms.
18. The Public Health Official will contact the school district to inform of any employees who have been instructed to isolate following a test result confirming novel coronavirus diagnosis. All people that have been directly exposed will be contacted with detailed instructions from the Public Health Officials.

PANDEMIC PLANNING

19. Roles and responsibilities are organized across all 3 phases of a pandemic and grouped in the following categories:
 1. planning and coordination;
 2. continuity of student learning and core operations;
 3. infection control policies and procedures;
 4. communication planning; and,
 5. educate staff/students/families.

1. Planning and Coordination

Pre-Pandemic Period	Pandemic Period	Post Pandemic Period	Responsibilities
Responsibility for SD69 plan activation			Superintendent of Schools
Incorporate responsibilities and authorities of Ministry of Health/VIHA and Ministry of Education in development and implementation of Pandemic Response Plan			Superintendent, O&M Manager
	Closing or alteration of schools may be required.		Superintendent, Principals
	Bus routes may need to be combined, altered or cancelled.		Superintendent, Transportation Manager
	School trips and school evening user groups may be cancelled.		Superintendent, Principals, Facilities Rental Clerk
	If school trips are planned, determine how children will be isolated and sent home should they become ill with flu like symptoms		O&M Manager, Principals (See <i>Separating Ill staff and Students</i>)
Advise staff of pandemic plan in conjunction with <i>Emergency Procedure</i> .			Principal/Vice Principals, Managers
Plan for an isolation room for staff and students that become ill with flu-like symptoms while at work/school (See also <i>Separating Ill Students and Staff</i>)			Principal/Vice Principals, Managers
Educate and equip person(s) to care for ill students until parent arrives (See <i>Separating Ill Students and Staff</i>)			Principal/Vice Principals
	Depending on staffing or student shortages, classes may need to be combined	Depending on staff shortages, classes may need to be combined	Principals
		Reopening of schools	ERT, Principals/Vice Principals
		Resumption of business activities	O&M Manager

2. CONTINUITY OF LEARNING AND CORE OPERATIONS

Pre-Pandemic Period	Pandemic Period	Post Pandemic Period	Responsibilities
	School Trips may be cancelled		Superintendent, Principals
		Communications (IT) Resumption of schools, classes and activities	Superintendent, IT Manager, Superintendent, Principals/Vice Principals
Consider and develop a continuity of operations for essential services:			ERT
i) Education	i) Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations		Director of Instruction
ii) Payroll	ii) Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations		Secretary Treasurer
iii) Custodial	iii) Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations		O&M Manager / Assistant Manager of Operations
iv) Communications (IT)	iv) Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations		Superintendent/ IT Manager
v) Transportation	v) Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations		O&M Manager
Develop cross training plans for essential services			HR
Consider impact of varying levels of student and staff absences and school closures			Director of Instruction, Principals/Vice Principals, Managers
Consider and develop alternative procedures to ensure continuity of education	Evaluate capability of student learning continuity; adjust as needed	Evaluate capability of student learning continuity; adjust as needed. May take some time for schools to be reopened.	Director of Instruction, Principals/Vice Principals
	Schools may be closed		Principals (under advisement of Superintendent or designate)

3. INFECTION CONTROL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Pre-Pandemic Period	Pandemic Period	Post Pandemic Period	Responsibilities
Implement infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infections	Continued use of infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection	Continue with infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection	O&M Manager / Assistant Manager of Operations
	Audit infection control practices	Continue to audit infection control practices	O&M Manager / Assistant Manager of Operations
Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels	Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels	Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels	O&M Manager / Assistant Manager of Operations
Order additional cleaning supplies and ensure custodial staff are trained in pandemic cleaning procedures	Rigorous cleaning of schools and contact surfaces		O&M Manager / Assistant Manager of Operations
	Separation of ill students and staff until they can be sent home	Separate ill students and staff	Director of Instruction, Principals, Supervisors
	Plan for children away on school trips to be isolated and/or sent home if they become ill		Principals/Vice Principals, General Manager of Operations/Health and Safety (See separating Ill Students and Staff)
Advise staff and students that are sick with flu like symptoms to remain at home	Advise Staff and students that are sick with flu like symptoms to remain at home	Advise staff and students that are sick with flu like symptoms to remain at home.	Principals/Vice Principals, Supervisors
	Restrictions of community, volunteer and visitors to schools and facilities		Principals/Vice Principals, Supervisors
Education children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette	Ongoing education for children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette	Ongoing education for children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette.	Principals/Vice Principals, Teachers, Supervisors
Maintain a healthy work environment by posting tips on how to stop the spread of germs	Maintain a healthy work environment by posting tips on how to stop the spread of germs	Maintain a healthy work environment by posting tips on how to stop the spread of germs	Principals/Vice Principals, Teachers, Supervisors
Advise the district office and the school public health nurse when ≥ 10% of school population is away ill	Advise the school public health nurse when ≥ 10% of school population is away ill	Advise the district office and the school public health nurse when ≥ 10% of school population is away ill	Principals/Vice Principals, Director of Instruction

4. COMMUNICATION PLANNING

Pre-Pandemic Period	Pandemic Period	Post Pandemic Period	Responsibilities
Develop and maintain contacts with MHO, Ministry of Education	Maintain contacts with MHO, Ministry of Education		Superintendent,
	Maintain and evaluate SD69 website for information on Pandemic Planning	Maintain and evaluate SD69 website for information on Pandemic Planning	IT Manager/O&M Manager
	Continue to provide Boards of Education, Managers, and School Administration with information on influenza surveillance and preventative measures	Continue to provide Boards of Education, Managers, and School Administration with information on health surveillance and preventative measures	Superintendent, Director of Instruction
	Continue to work closely with MHO, Ministry of Education		ERT
		Prepare for Critical Incident Response if there have been deaths among students and staff	Superintendent, Student Support Services, Critical Incident Response Team, Principals
Media communications	Media communications	Media communications	Superintendent or designate
		Continue to work closely with MHO, Ministry of Education, and City Officials	ERT
Post relevant information on the District Website on Pandemic Planning	Post relevant information SD69 Website on Pandemic Planning	Maintain and evaluate SD69 Website for information on Post-Pandemic Recovery Phase	District Administrator for IT, O&M Manager
Advise Board of Education, Managers and School Administration on health monitoring, reporting, and preventative measures			ERT
Monthly topic at District Occupational Health and Safety Committee meeting		Monthly topic at District Health and Safety Committee meeting	Principals/Vice Principals, Assistant Manager of Operations
Establish lines of communication with students and families to receive immediate information if child needs to be sent home or if school or facility is closing	Maintain method of communication with students and families to receive immediate information if child needs to be sent home or if school or facility is closing	Maintain lines of communication with students and families to receive immediate information if child needs to be sent home or if school or facility is closing	Superintendent /Principals
Discuss Pandemic Plan with staff at your health and safety committee meetings/staff meetings	Remind staff, students, volunteers and families of SD69 Website		Principals/Vice Principals, Supervisors
Advise staff, students and families of SD69 Website	Advise staff, students and families of SD69 Website	Advise staff, students and families of SD69 Website	Principals/Vice Principals, Supervisors
Ensure that parents/guardians have provided school with correct contact information			Principals/Vice Principals
	If school is open, provide information in school newsletters		Principals

5. EDUCATE STAFF/FAMILIES/STUDENTS

Pre-Pandemic Period	Pandemic Period	Post Pandemic Period	Responsibilities
Personal Planning articles, home hygiene, etc. Emergency contact information given to schools.			Principals/Vice Principals, Supervisors
		Direct staff, students and families to information on SD69 Website	Principals, Supervisors
Keep staff informed	Keep staff informed	Keep staff informed	Principals, Supervisors (through Safety Committee meetings and Staff meetings)
	If school is open, increase awareness by informing through bulletins, etc., advise of School District Website, communicate with DPAC	Use school newsletter to provide information to students and families	Principals