

SAMPLE School District Pandemic Plan

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1. **BACKGROUND**

A. Purpose

This plan provides guidance to the school district to prepare and respond to pandemic outbreaks. The plan includes guidance for outbreaks ranging from endemics, to outbreaks of greater severity including a pandemic. Information in this plan supplements the school district's existing emergency plans.

B. Goals

- Minimize the spread of the pandemic organism.
- Maintain essential school services.
- Maintain continuity of learning for all students.
- Minimize social disruption for families and staff.
- Minimize economic losses for families and staff.
- Coordinate efforts with partners.

C. Authority

The school district will implement this plan under authority of the School Board and is subject to state laws.

D. Assumptions

- Susceptibility to the pandemic organism will be universal.
- Most likely a pandemic will be caused by a novel (new) virus.
- In an affected community, a pandemic outbreak may last several weeks. Depending on the organism multiple pandemic disease waves may occur. Following the pandemic, the new viral subtype is likely to continue circulating and to contribute to disease.
- The clinical disease attack rate may be 30% or higher in the overall population during a pandemic. Depending on the organism illness rates may be highest among school-aged children (about 40%) and decline with age. Among working adults, an average of 20% will become ill during a community outbreak.
- During an outbreak of increased severity, absenteeism attributable to illness, the need to care for ill family members and fear of infection may increase during the peak weeks of a community outbreak, with lower rates of absenteeism during the weeks before and after the peak.
- Rates of absenteeism will depend on the severity of the pandemic.
- There may likely be significant disruption of public and privately owned critical infrastructure including transportation, commerce, utilities, public safety and communications, food supply, health care and fuel supplies.
- Risk Communication will be critical during all phases of planning and implementation of a pandemic response. The general public, health care system, response agencies, and elected leaders will need continuous updates on the status of the pandemic outbreak, impacts on critical services, the steps being taken to address the incident, and steps the public can take to protect themselves.

2. PLAN MANAGEMENT

Existing emergency plans and lines of authority should be applied during a pandemic outbreak. This plan outlines operational priorities and responsibilities for making decisions necessary to manage an outbreak. This includes responsibility for preparing and maintaining the plan, making policy decisions, coordinating tasks, and mobilizing additional resources.

A. Steering Committee

The steering committee has primary responsibility for developing and managing the plan. Coordinate with external partners and manage public information. Serve as liaison with local health departments and key response partners. Coordinate the distribution of public information with the local health departments. Recommended committee members:

- District Administrator (chair)
- Principal
- School board member
- Teacher
- School nurse
- Health department
- District public information officer
- Pupil Services Director

B. Operations

Responsible for the core operations necessary to support the school district's management of a pandemic outbreak. Coordinate surveillance activity with local health department. Implement infection control practices to prevent spread of disease.

Recommended committee members:

- School Nurse (chair)
- Principal
- Teacher
- Office Support Staff
- Health department

C. Planning

Develop and maintain district plan. Update plan during outbreak as guidance changes and as situation requires. Coordinate training and exercise of staff on plan. Prepare alternative plans for providing instruction during periods of increased severity. Prepare staffing and curriculum options based on conditions. And plan for the special needs of all students throughout district. Special needs are considered those that will prevent a student or family from being able to respond to the outbreak without additional assistance. Recommended committee members:

- Curriculum Director (chair)
- 2 Teachers (including 1 special education teacher)
- Human Resources
- Principal
- Pupil Services staff

D. Logistics

Manage delivery of services to support operations and goals during an outbreak. Includes services necessary to maintain school facilities, food services, transportation and communication. Recommended committee members:

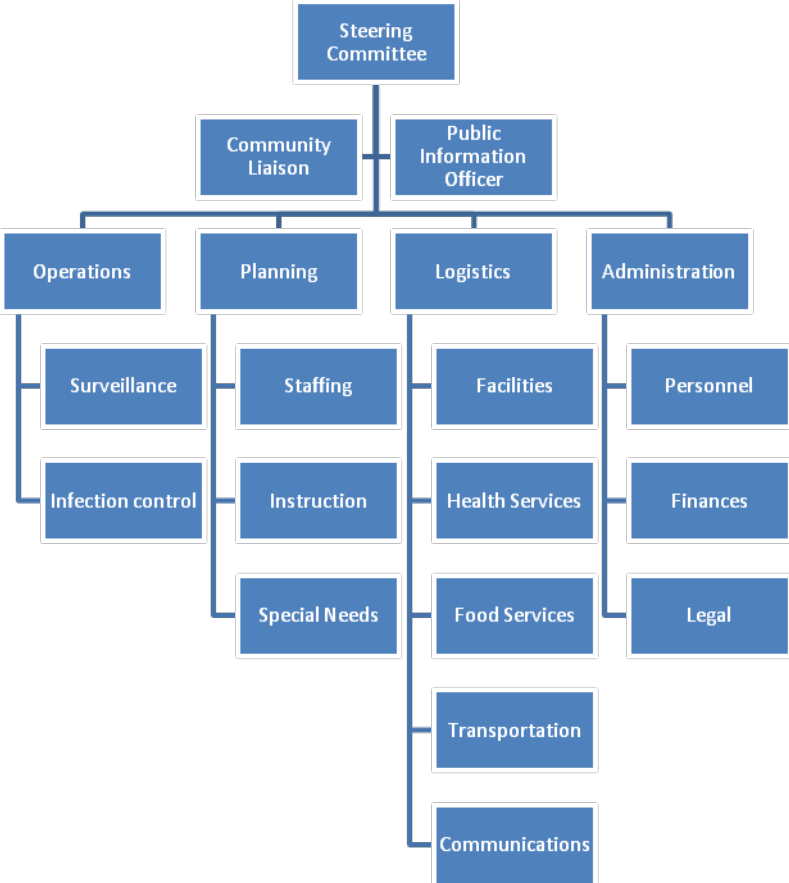
- Facilities manager
- Transportation service
- Nutrition services
- Information Technology
- Director of Student Services.

E. Administration

Assure continuity of operations continue by managing personnel related issues, and review and manage school policies that directly support response to outbreaks. Also manage school finances. Recommended committee members:

- Finance Director (chair)
- Human Resources
- Teacher

Sample Committee Structure



3. STRATEGIES

The district's efforts to manage a pandemic outbreak requires the close coordination of a variety of strategies. Each strategy is described below. The level and degree to which these strategies are implemented will vary by the unique circumstances and conditions of each outbreak.

A. **Surveillance**

Surveillance systems should be enhanced prior to the start of a pandemic to assure that demand for timely information can be met. Key surveillance priorities during a pandemic will fall in two main categories: 1) detection of the novel strain, and 2) disease monitoring.

B. **Communication**

Key activities include the preparation of materials and distribution of information. Information will be available from several sources including the CDC, DPH and DPI. This will likely include basic communication materials (such as question and answer sheets and fact sheets) on pandemic and general preventive measures. This material should be used whenever available. Specific needs and questions should be anticipated and addressed.

C. **Infection Control**

Vaccine has served as the primary preventive strategy during traditional influenza seasons. This strategy will be limited during a pandemic due to the number of people affected, time required to develop a vaccine and the limited supply capabilities. Vaccine will need to be manufactured and distributed throughout the country.

D. **Continuity of Learning**

School districts will determine whether and to what extent they will provide continuing education for all students during a prolonged closure.

E. **Continuity of Operations**

Unlike a typical natural disaster during which critical components of the physical infrastructure may be threatened or destroyed, a pandemic may also pose significant threats to the human infrastructure responsible for critical community services due to widespread absenteeism. This may impact distribution of supplies and resources, food, home meal deliveries, day care, garbage collection and other critical services. Planners will develop strategies to maintain essential school district operations during an outbreak.

4. SCENARIOS

The severity of a pandemic outbreak may vary depending on a number of factors. As an outbreak develops, planners may update their response based on the local severity. The level and degree to which a strategy is implemented will vary as the severity of an outbreak varies.

5. PLANS

Committee	Function	Tasks
Steering Committee	Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training on plan. • Exercise plan. • Communicate with neighboring school districts to plan how to work together and share information. • Participate in updates and coordinate information with Department of Public Instruction. • Review and recommend implementation of new guidelines as released. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the effectiveness of the district’s pandemic plan and modify as needed based upon lessons learned.
	Community Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify lead person for two-way communication with community stakeholders. • Implement plan to suspend co-curricular and other building use activities in the event of a school closure. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer students and families as well as staff to community resources to support long term physical and mental health support.
	Public Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Health Department to set up public communication procedures during a pandemic. • Provide education to families about pandemic and the school’s pandemic plan. • Develop media releases and family communications. • Coordinate media updates with local health departments. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education to families about pandemic recovery and return to school.
Operations	Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor student and staff absences in conjunction with the Health Department. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue surveillance of student and staff illnesses.
	Infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate students on prevention strategies – including

Committee	Function	Tasks
	Control	<p>hand washing, cough etiquette, staying home when sick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate families, students, and staff on when to go home ill. • Develop a plan for isolation of identified ill students prior to release of the student to the parents. • Send ill students and staff home as necessary.
Planning	Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide cross training to staff in preparation for a potential change in roles. • Assure staffing levels are available to provide instruction in a safe learning environment. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate staffing needs.
	Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for continuity of learning during a prolonged school closure. • Create a plan to assess student learning following a prolonged closure. • Update plans for continuity of learning during a prolonged school closure. • Implement continuity of learning plan in the event of a prolonged school closure. • Update plan to assess student learning following a prolonged closure. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current learning level of students. • Assess need to adjust length of school day/year. • Dialogue with post secondary education representatives to determine any changes in admission standards, etc. • Accept students and staff back in accordance with Health Department recommendations.
	Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update existing school district plans to assure they can be implemented during a more severe outbreak. • Identify staff member to assist with translating information and serving as an interpreter for non-English speaking students/families. • Implement plans to address the special needs of students in the district.

Committee	Function	Tasks
<p>Logistics</p>	<p>Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply rooms with soap and water for hand washing or alcohol-based hand washing products. • Develop and implement facility disinfection procedures. • Maintain an inventory of supplies for disinfection procedures and handling of ill students and staff, hand sanitizers, tissues, soap, face masks. • Utilize building to assist with community pandemic efforts such as a vaccination site. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement facility disinfection procedures. • Maintain an inventory of supplies for disinfection procedures and handling of ill students and staff, hand sanitizers, tissues, soap, face masks.
	<p>Health Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students and staff to receive their pandemic vaccination. • Review and update existing school district plans to provide mental health services using school and community resources. • Consider offering school based pandemic vaccination clinics. • Implement plans to provide mental health services as necessary. Utilize school and community resources. • Utilize school and community resources to provide mental health counseling services for students, families and staff. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish “safe room” for counseling services to be provided as needed. • Provide counseling support services to students and staff.
	<p>Food Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage food services staff to get their vaccination. • Maintain food and nutrition services. Consider unique circumstances and commitments in community beyond school operations. • Connect with community agencies to assist families through community resources if school food services are not available.
	<p>Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage transportation services staff to get their vaccination.

Committee	Function	Tasks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with transportation providers to assure continued operations during outbreak. • Assure transportation services are following appropriate infection control practices.
	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for communicating with families, staff, and community stakeholders in the event of a pandemic including a possible school closure. • Share pandemic information on the district’s web site. • Prepare scripted messages for front line staff to share with families and others. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with students, families, and staff regarding the return to regular school routine, actions taken to make the environment safe, and any changes in district procedures. • Provide students, families, and staff with health and grief service provider information. • Provide educational materials to students and families, including recovery from pandemic and common symptoms of loss and grief and constructive ways to cope with stress. • Provide information to students, families, and staff on possible reoccurring waves of illness.
Administration	Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review student and staff absence policies and guidelines. • Meet with staff union representatives to discuss issues that might be involve in a school closure such as sick leave options, alternative work schedules, alternative assignments. • Review policies on sick leave options, alternative work schedules, and alternative assignments. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training for school staff regarding grief and possible mental health problems.
	Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate whether or not additional financial resources may be necessary to support response to the outbreak.
	Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address requirements for days and hours of instruction.

Planning Notes