

SD84 (Vancouver Island West)
Pandemic Response Plan
DRAFT

September 29, 2009

Emergency Response Team (ERT)

- Lawrence Tarasoff, Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer (S/ST)
- Annie James, Human Resources Administrator (HRA)
- Peter Skilton, Operations Supervisor (OS)
- Sheldon Lee, Director of the Business Operation Centre (DBOC)
- School Principals (P)
- District Vice-Principal (VP)

Pre-Pandemic Activities (Responsibilities)

1. Planning and Coordination

- a. Responsibility for SD84 plan implementation, communication, and activation (S/ST)
- b. Update Emergency Procedures Manual to include a section on pandemics (HRA)
- c. Advise staff of pandemic plan (P, HRA, OS)
- d. Plan for an isolation room for staff and students that become ill with flu-like symptoms while at work/school (P)
- e. Educate and equip person(s) to care for ill students until parent arrives (P)

2. Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations

- a. Consider impact of varying levels of student and staff absences and school closures (S/ST)
- b. Consider and develop alternative procedures to ensure continuity of education (S/ST, P)
- c. Develop cross training plans for essential services (HRA)
- d. Develop a continuity of operations (S/ST, HRA, OS, DBOC)

3. Infection Control Policies and Procedures

- a. Implement infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection (OS)
- b. Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels (OS)
- c. Order additional cleaning supplies and ensure custodial staff are trained in pandemic cleaning procedures (OS)
- d. Advise staff and students that are sick with flu like symptoms to remain at home (P)
- e. Educate children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette (P)
- f. Maintain a healthy work environment by posting tips on how to stop the spread of germs (P)
- g. Advise the Superintendent and public health when $\geq 10\%$ of school population is away ill (P)

4. Communication Planning

- a. Develop and maintain contacts with other agencies (S/ST)
- b. Post relevant information on SD84 website on Pandemic Planning (S/ST)
- c. Establish 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 (P)
- d. Monthly topic at Health and Safety Committee meetings at worksites (HRA)
- e. Agenda topic for District OH&S Committee meetings (HRA)
- f. Ensure that parents/guardians have provided up-to-date contact information to the school (P)
- g. Discuss Pandemic Influenza with staff including prevention, signs, symptoms and family preparedness at staff meetings (P)
- h. Media communications (S/ST)

5. Educate Staff / Student / Families

- a. Personal Planning articles, home hygiene, etc. in school newsletter (P)

Pandemic Activities (Responsibilities)

1. Planning and Coordination

- a. If school trips are planned, determine how children will be isolated and sent home should they become ill with flu-like symptoms (P)
- b. Closing of schools may be required (S/ST)
- c. School trips and school evening user groups may be cancelled (S/ST, P)
- d. Schools may be used by officials for clinics, hospitals, daycare centres, etc. (S/ST)
- e. Depending on staffing or student shortages, classes may need to be combined (P)
- f. Bus routes may need to be combined due to driver and/or student shortages (OS)

2. Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations

- a. Evaluate capability of student learning continuity: adjust as needed (P)
- b. Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations (HRA)
 - i. Education
 - ii. Payroll
 - iii. Custodial
 - iv. Communications
- c. Schools may be closed (S/ST)
- d. School trips may be cancelled (S/ST, P)

3. Infection Control Policies and Procedures

- a. Continued use of infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection (OS)
- b. Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels (OS)
- c. Advise staff and students that are sick with flu-like symptoms to remain at home (P)

- d. Restriction of community, volunteer and visitors to schools and facilities (P)
- e. Rigorous cleaning of schools and contact surfaces (OS)
- f. Audit infection control practices (OS)
- g. Plan for children away on school trips to be isolated and/ or sent home if they become ill (P)
- h. Ongoing education for children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette (P)
- i. Advise the Superintendent and public health when $\geq 10\%$ of school population is away ill (P)
- j. Separation of ill students and staff until they can be sent home (P)

4. Communication Planning

- a. Media communications (S/ST)
- b. Continue to work closely with outside agencies (S/ST)
- c. Maintain and evaluate SD84 website for information on Pandemic Planning (S/ST)
- d. 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 (P)
- e. Continue to provide the Board of Education, Managers and School Administrators with information on influenza surveillance and preventative measures (S/ST)
- f. Remind staff, students, volunteers and families of SD84 website (P)
- g. If school is open, provide information in school newsletters (P)

5. Educate Staff/Student/Families

- a. If school is open, increase awareness by informing through bulletins etc., advise of School District website, communicate with DPAC (P)

Post-Pandemic Activities Responsibilities

1. Planning and Coordination

- a. Re-opening of schools (S/ST)
- b. Resumption of business activities (DBOC, HRA)
- c. Depending on staffing shortages, classes may need to be combined (P)
- d. Plan for bus driver shortages and combining routes (OS)

2. Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations

- a. Evaluate capability of student learning continuity: adjust as needed. May take some time for schools to be re-opened (S/ST)
- b. Communications (S/ST)
- c. Resumption of school classes and activities (P)

3. Infection Control Policies and Procedures

- a. Continue with infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection (OS)

- b. Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels (OS)
- c. Advise staff and students that are sick with flu-like symptoms to remain at home (P)
- d. Continue to audit infection control (OS)
- e. Ongoing education for children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette (P)
- f. Advise the Superintendent and public health when $\geq 10\%$ of school population is away ill (P)
- g. Separate ill students and staff (P)

4. Communication Planning

- a. Media communications (S/ST)
- b. Continue to work closely with outside agencies (S/ST)
- c. Maintain and evaluate SD84 website for information on Post-Pandemic Recovery Phase (S/ST)
- d. 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 (P)
- e. Prepare for Critical Incident Response (SD 84's "SCAP" – School Crisis Action Plan) if there have been deaths among students and staff (P/VP)

5. Educate Staff / Student / Families

- a. Direct staff, students and families to information on SD84 website (P)
- b. Use school newsletter to provide information to students and families (P)
- c. Keep staff informed (P)

Separating Ill Students and Staff

1. Sick students and staff should always be required to stay home. Students and staff who appear to have an influenza-like illness at arrival or become ill during the day must be promptly separated from other students and staff and sent home.
2. Schools should update parent/guardian and emergency contact information as needed to ensure quick contact when a child becomes ill at school.
3. Recognizing that space is often in short supply, early planning on the location for a sick room is essential. This room should not be one commonly used for other purposes; for example, the lunchroom during non-meal times. It should not be a space through which others regularly pass. It is not necessary for this room to have a separate air supply (HVAC) system. Ill persons should be placed in well ventilated areas and placed in areas where at least two metres of distance can be maintained between the ill person and others.
4. A limited number of staff should be designated to care for ill persons until they can be sent home. These caregivers should not be at increased risk of influenza complications (for example, pregnant women or persons that have a chronic illness) and they should be familiar with infection control recommendations to prevent spread of influenza.

5. When possible and if the sick person can tolerate it, he or she should wear a surgical mask when near other persons.
6. Staff who act in this capacity are likely to come into close contact with students and staff with influenza-like illness. It is recommended that staff who provide care for persons with known, probable or suspected influenza or influenza-like illness use appropriate personal protective equipment (masks, gloves).

Personal and Family Preparedness

What can you and your family do to minimize the chance of coming into contact with the agent that causes the pandemic influenza?

1. Wash hands often. When soap and water are not available, use alcohol based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers.
2. Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing or cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Wash hands after you cough or sneeze.
3. Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth. A person can become ill by touching a contaminated surface and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.
4. If you or a family member becomes sick with flu like symptoms, stay at home, get plenty of rest and contact a health care provider as needed.
5. Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage stress, drink plenty of fluids, eat nutritious foods and avoid smoking which may increase the risk of serious consequences if you do contract the flu.

What can you do to ensure your family is prepared?

1. Food - 2-week supply minimum
 - a. No refrigeration, preparation or cooking
 - b. Formula for infants or special nutritional needs
2. Pets
 - a. Food, medication, water
3. Water - 2-4 litres/ person/day
 - a. Use clean plastic containers
 - b. No milk cartons or glass bottles
4. Medical
 - a. Have extra prescription and non-prescription drugs and supplies
 - b. Store health/cleaning supplies
5. Talk to your family about how they would be cared for if they get sick
6. Find out now about your child's school/day-care emergency policies.

Note: You can call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1, 24 hours/day, seven days/week to speak to a nurse if you have more questions or if you are feeling ill.

Hand Washing Education

Washing your hands properly consists of the following steps:

1. Remove jewellery and watches from fingers and wrists.
2. Wet hands under warm running water.
3. Apply soap and rub hands together for 10 seconds to produce lather.
4. Wash all surfaces thoroughly, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, between fingers and thumbs, and under finger nails, for 20 seconds.
5. Rinse hands with fingers pointing downward.
6. Dry hands with a clean or disposable towel.
7. Turn off the water with the same towel used to dry your hands. Do not turn off the taps with solely your hands as this will only re-contaminate them.
8. If single use, dispose of the towel in the nearest waste basket.

Sanitizing your hands with an alcohol based sanitizer ($\geq 60\%$ alcohol) consists of the following steps:

1. Remove jewellery and watches from your fingers and wrists.
2. Apply an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to your hands.
3. Rub all surfaces thoroughly, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, between fingers.