



**Chilliwack  
School District**

# **PANDEMIC PLAN**

September 2009

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### **Emergency Response Team**

The district has an emergency/crisis response plan in place for all emergencies.

A copy of the plan is attached to this document. If a situation arises where the spread of the H1N1 flu virus significantly impacts district operations or in the event of serious illness or fatalities the emergency response protocol would be implemented. Contact with Public Health and the Ministry of Education are part of this process.

All district sites and schools have updated emergency contact lists for staff and an up to date fan-out process.

The district contact for all H1N1 communication is the Superintendent or designate.

### **Communication Plan**

Communication will be ongoing and designed to keep all staff, students and parents informed. District staff will continue to consult with Ministry staff and Public Health to ensure current and accurate information is communicated.

Current plans include:

- Late August/early September – electronic information brochures have been distributed to all schools and posted on the district website. This information includes a link to the Government of Canada H1N1 information site. Schools will post the information on their websites and distribute appropriate information to students. Principals will ensure that school based preschool and after school programs have the appropriate information.
- The Manager of Custodial Services will ensure that all external groups using school facilities have the appropriate information.
- School Start-up – a message to all staff was distributed by the Superintendent to managers and principals based on information from the meeting with Fraser Valley Public Health. This information will be shared with all staff.
- September – Posters will be provided to all schools around the important factors in prevention. (Communications)
- A letter to parents providing additional information will be considered later in September. (Superintendent)

- School closures will only be considered on the advice of Public Health and in consultation with Ministry of Education officials. These are considered to be unlikely this fall and winter. (Superintendent)
- Inclement weather protocols will be used to notify staff, students and parents of any closures or cancellations.
- In the case of an emergency, communication will follow the protocols in the district emergency/crisis response plan.
- The Superintendent will be the media contact for H1N1 related issues.
- Ongoing communication will be maintained as follows:
  - Regular communication and updates will be provided to staff through the Superintendent's memo and the district website. (Communications)
  - Principals will be updated on any new information at regular principal meetings. (Superintendent)
  - Trustees and partner groups will be updated on a regular basis. (Superintendent)
  - Parents will receive any important updates through school and district websites and newsletters.

## **Continuity of Instruction**

- Teacher on call and support staff protocols are in place that provide first priority for coverage for teachers and support staff with illness. This will ensure the maximum number of replacement staff to provide continuity of instruction. Staff absences will be monitored by the Director of Human Resources.
- In the event of the illness of school based administration, each school has an identified Teacher in Charge to manage ongoing instruction. The appropriate Assistant Superintendent/Director of Instruction should be notified so that additional support can be provided.
- For most students who contract the flu and are absent for short periods of time, continuity of instruction will be provided by the school staff. In the case where a student is absent for a significant period of time the district has a home-bound teacher who can provide additional support. (District Principal Student Services)
- In the case where large numbers of staff in a single school become ill the principal will be in the best position to determine how to redistribute staff and students to provide meaningful instruction to all students in attendance. The principal will work in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent/Director of Instruction and the Director of Human Resources to develop a workable plan.

- If there is a prolonged school closure, plans will be established through Fraser Valley Distance Education to support student learning during the closure. There is a large contingent of educators trained in online delivery at Fraser Valley Distance Education and they are experienced at working with classroom teachers as support. (Principal Fraser Valley Distance Education/Superintendent)

## **Transportation**

- Buses will be disinfected daily at the end of the first run and after the noon hour kindergarten run during any period of increased concern about the spread of H1N1.
- If a shortage of drivers occurs drivers will be re-designated to rural routes and city runs will be staffed when drivers become available. (Manager of Transportation)
- Protocols are in place for bus cancellations for inclement weather. The same protocols will apply for bus cancellations due to pandemic issues.

## **Janitorial Services**

- Hand sanitizers are not recommended by Public Health except in areas where hand washing facilities are not easily accessible. District staff will review all sites to determine where a need may exist. (Manager of Custodial Services)
- Schools considering purchasing hand sanitizers must consult with the Manager of Custodial Services to ensure effective products are purchased and proper safety processes are in place.
- No changes to current cleaning practices are anticipated at this time. Current cleaning includes the use of anti-viral agents.
- Staff wishing to do midday sanitizing of personal work spaces should notify their supervisor. The Manager of Custodial Services will work with the supervisor to provide the necessary supplies and instructions on use of products.
- No externally purchased cleaning products may be used in district facilities.

## **Employee Work Policies**

- All employees with underlying health issues and pregnant women should consult with their physician proactively (i.e. before they get ill) to determine the best course of action in the case where H1N1 symptoms appear.
- All employees who are ill should stay at home.

- Board policy provides reimbursement to all staff for flu shots.
- Current replacement practices for all staff groups will continue. There are currently contingency plans in place for situations where there is a shortage of staff.
- As required by FOIPPA all personal information about staff and student medical conditions is confidential and will not be shared except as directed by Public Health officials and with the approval of the Superintendent.

## **Separation, Supervision and Transportation of Sick Students**

- Students who become ill at school should be provided with a supervised place to wait until a parent or guardian can be contacted. For younger students, staff will need to make arrangements to have the student picked up and taken home or to a designated caregiver location. For older students it is important to establish a process for notifying parents.
- Students who are ill should not be asked to wait in the main office. Supervision should be set up in a way that minimizes the contact between sick students and other students and staff.
- Parents should be made aware of school protocols for students who become ill during the day.
- All emergency contact and medical information on students should be checked to ensure that it is accurate and up to date.
- All schools should emphasize with parents that children who are ill should be kept at home.
- There must be a plan for emergency child care if a child becomes ill during the day. If a parent or guardian cannot be available to pick up a student who is ill the school must be provided with the name and contact information for an alternate adult. School staff should record alternate arrangements in an easily accessible location.
- School staff should not be transporting students who are not well to their home or to the doctor.

## **Reporting Elevated Absenteeism and Outbreaks**

- Principals will continue to report high levels of absenteeism to the Manager of Custodial Services who will forward this report to Public Health officials. This should occur automatically when the percentage of students absent exceeds 10% of the total student population for the school. Since testing for H1N1 will not be done it will

not be possible for schools to identify the source of absenteeism. Thus reporting is to be based on numbers of absences only.

- Principals and Managers should report high levels of staff absenteeism to the Director of Human Resources. Attendance in these situations will be closely monitored.
- The Superintendent will maintain contact with the appropriate Public Health officials in the event of elevated levels of student or staff illness.

## **Other Unique Considerations**

- **Students with Special Needs:**  
Special attention should be paid to the hygiene arrangements for students with special needs and their school based support. Principals should review protocols and practices with support staff and teachers and forward any questions or concerns to Student Services. (Susan Edgcombe)
- **Students with underlying medical issues and compromised immune systems:**  
Schools should review student medical information and advise parents of students who have underlying medical conditions, (especially respiratory or cardiac conditions) and compromised immune systems to see their physician proactively (before the student becomes ill). The physician will recommend a course of action to be followed in the event of illness and/or exposure. This advice should be collected and kept on file by the school.
- **School meal programs:**  
Schools should review hygiene arrangements with meal program providers and ensure that students are practicing good hygiene in these programs. Principals should have plans in place in the event of disruption of these programs. The District Principal for Student Services will assist in dealing with disruptions to meal programs.
- **Onsite daycares, StrongStart centers:**  
The Manager of Custodial Services and the host principal will review communication, cleaning, emergency and hygiene requirements with onsite child care programs. Contact information for key staff in these centers should be part of the school fan-out system.
- **Community Users and Alternative use of schools during a pandemic:**  
All community use of district facilities will continue as usual. The Manager of Custodial Services will ensure that community users are provided with the appropriate H1N1 information and advised of any additional cleaning requirements. Use of school facilities for Public Health purposes including vaccinations will be booked using normal district procedures. If it becomes necessary to cancel community use, the Manager of Custodial Services will notify users at the earliest possible opportunity.

- **Access to psychological services**  
Should psychological services be required they will be provided as outlined in the district emergency/crisis response plan. (District Principal Student Services)
- **Confidentiality of student health information and how this confidentiality is maintained while ensuring that the response to potential risk is adequate.**  
Personal student information must be kept confidential at all times and should only be shared on an as needed basis. Public Health officials and district staff will only request student information that is required to ensure student and staff safety.

In the event that a manager or supervisor becomes aware that an employee has been diagnosed with H1N1, they must obtain the Superintendents approval to disclose any personal information to another person without the express consent of the employee. Prior to agreeing to the release of any information, the Superintendent will ensure the facts are accurate, consult with the district FOIPPA director, and consult with Public Health.

In the event that there is information released regarding the diagnosis of a case of H1N1 the Superintendent will work with public health officials and district staff to ensure effective hygiene practices are put in place to prevent the spread of the virus.

## **Return to Normal Plan**

Throughout the fall and winter communications and health and safety staff will meet on a regular basis to assess the effectiveness of the plan and the spread of the flu. If necessary the plan will be supplemented or revised to meet emerging circumstance. Once the pandemic is declared over we will review the plan and its effectiveness in dealing with this flu pandemic. The review will capture what worked well, what did not and lessons learned.