



School District 10 (Arrow Lakes)

Pandemic Response Plan

March 2020

Updated: May 2020

Note: This plan is fluid and serves as a guideline for situations in which conditions that can/are changing rapidly. In all matters related to a pandemic, the District will follow the directions of Provincial and National Health Officials and the Ministry of Education.

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Introduction

A pandemic is worldwide spread of a new disease, often affecting a large proportion of the population with elevated rates of illness. The impact of a Pandemic on a School District can include absenteeism of staff and students and closure of schools. Contingency planning is essential for a safe, timely, measured, and effective response to disruptions and increased risk to health and safety of school communities.

Definitions

A pandemic is an outbreak occurring over a large geographical area, often worldwide, affecting a large proportion of the population with elevated mortality rates. A pandemic may occur when a novel virus is introduced or a virus radically changes and can easily infect humans, and which people have little or no immunity against.

An epidemic on the other hand, is a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time. This could be an infectious disease such as measles or whooping cough.

Purpose

The District is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and learning environment for all staff and students. The scope of this Pandemic Response Plan is to assist us in preparing and responding to the pandemic. A combination of response measures and contingency planning is essential for an effective response to a pandemic. This plan will clarify roles and responsibilities and outline the steps School District 10 (Arrow Lakes) will take to ensure coordinated pandemic response measures and where possible, continuity of work.

Response Plan Review

The Pandemic/Epidemic Response Plan will be reviewed and updated as required or as new information becomes available.

Authority

This School District Pandemic Response Plan was developed to address the guidelines outlined in the Ministry of Education's 2009 *Pandemic Response Framework and Decision and 2009 Communication Guidelines about British Columbia Schools and Day closures in Response to a Novel Influenza A*. This plan aligns with the *School Act* [section 73](#) and [sections 89-91](#), the *Public Health Act* [Section 73](#), and the *Workers Compensation Act Occupational Health and Safety* [Regulation 6.34](#).

School Closure Decision-Making Process

(from BC Ministry of Education Pandemic Response Framework)

The legal authority to close a school for public health reasons falls under the purview of the local Medical Health Officer and the Provincial Health Officer.

- The School Act requires health authorities to designate a school medical health officer for each school district in order to liaise between the health authority and the school district.

- The Medical Health Officer can require a Board of Education to close a school if there is a health risk to students.
- The Medical Health Officer must consult the Board of Education and the Provincial Health Officer prior to making his/her advice public.
- The Public Health Act also provides powers for the Provincial Health Officer and Medical Health Officers which may be used in the event of a serious pandemic to order closure of schools and other public places.
- A Board of Education has the authority to close a school on a required day of instruction if it believes the health or safety of students is endangered.
- A superintendent or principal may suspend an employee or student from a school for public health reasons subject to review by a school medical officer when the superintendent or principal believes the presence of the employee or student poses a danger or risk. A teacher may suspend a student for these same reasons in the same circumstances.

Pandemic Response Planning Team

Under the direction and leadership of the Superintendent of Schools, the SD10 Pandemic Response Planning Team will be made up of Senior District staff, and School Principals and Vice Principals, whose focus is planning for effective educational and operational continuity in the event of a pandemic.

Organization and Structure of the Plan

This plan is organized into 4 sections starting with the School District's Communication Plan, followed by the three phases of a pandemic (summarized below): Pre-pandemic period, Pandemic period, and Post-pandemic period.

Pandemic Phases and Response Plan

- 1. Pre-pandemic/Epidemic Period:** This is the critical stage for plan preparedness and planning efforts needed to focus on education, business continuity, and infection control.
- 2. Pandemic/Epidemic Period:** The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) will declare when it is time to activate Plans for the pandemic/epidemic phase. Plans will adapt 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
- 3. Post-pandemic/Epidemic Period:** The post-pandemic/epidemic period begins when the Provincial Health Officer declares that the pandemic/epidemic is over. The primary focus of work at this time is to restore normal services, de-activate pandemic/epidemic response activities, review their impact, and use the lessons learned to guide future planning activities.

Communication Plan

At the first occurrence of an illness outbreak, and its subsequent spread to “Pandemic” status, there is heightened public concern for the possibility of future outbreaks, particularly among children involved in the school environment. As a result, public expectations for clear communications and direction both to *avoid* a future crisis and to *deal with* any outbreak as it might arise, is very high. Knowing this, communications planning and follow-through is essential to assist in managing any pandemic outbreak in the School District.

Objectives of the Communication Plan

1. To reduce anxiety amongst staff, students and families through clear, directional information appropriate for the pre-pandemic period, the pandemic period and the post-pandemic period.
2. To ensure awareness and understanding of proper procedures and protocols allowing staff to manage operations through a pandemic outbreak.
3. To address media inquiries with factual information.
4. To identify key connections and communications roles in the pre-pandemic period.

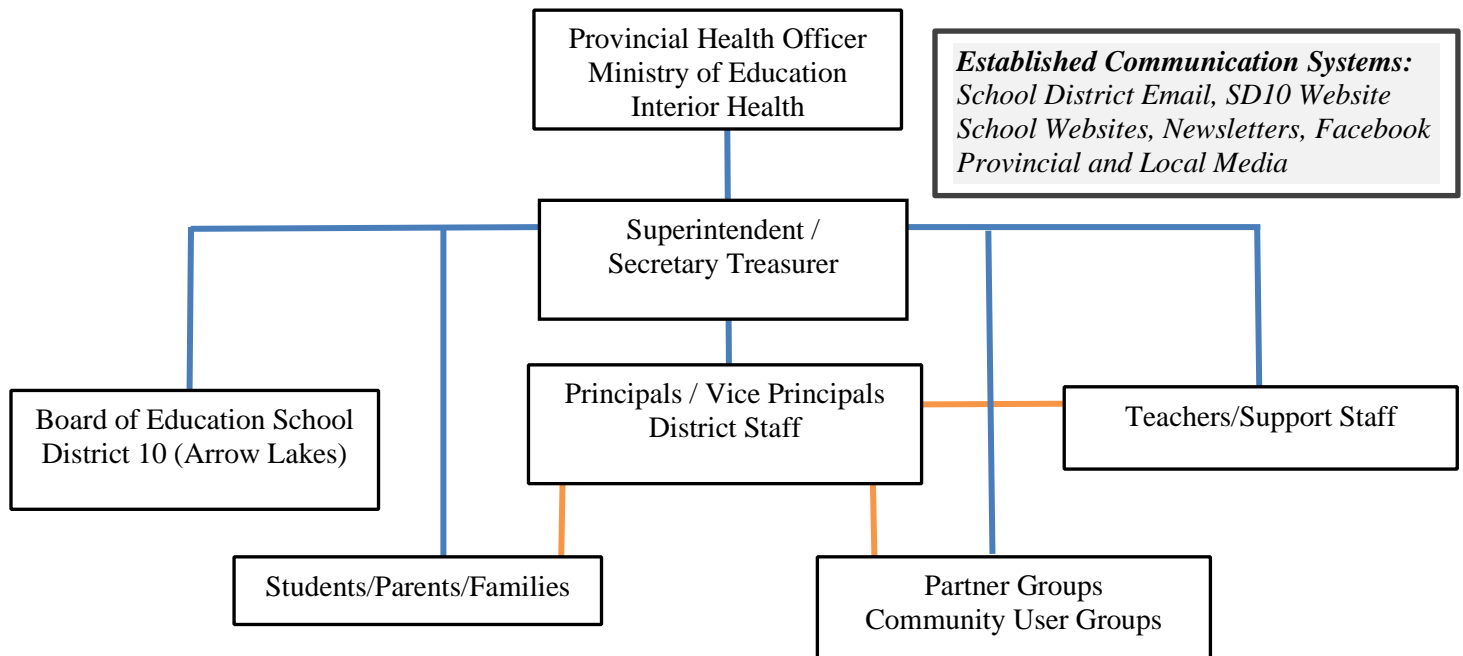
Communication Network/Chart

Office of the Provincial Health Officer Ministry of Education Interior Health		
Manager of Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and updates all operations staff • Implements terminal cleaning procedures • Assists school principals/vice principals in the closing and opening of schools • Reviews and updates HVAC issues 	Superintendent/ Secretary – Treasurer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives updates from the Ministry of Education, Provincial Health Officer and Interior Health • Directs communication accordingly • Gives direction to Senior Staff, Principals / Vice Principals • Reviews and updates the Board of Education 	Director of Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Health and Safety Contact • District Safe Schools Contact • Reviews and communicates with Learning Support Teams, School Counsellors, Indigenous Education Support Staff • Works with Principals and Vice Principals to review students and their families who are identified as being in the high-risk category
School Principals / Vice Principals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and updates all site staff and students • Review and updates Superintendent regarding absenteeism – staff, students • Updates parents and school PAC 	Executive Assistant / Human Resources Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact person for WorkSafe BC: Injury and Prevention Reporting • Reviews and updates staffing lists as required • Reviews and updates website as required 	

Communications Tree

This communications tree addresses the flow and direction of broad-based communications to the whole School District. It is designed for a message of high importance to the whole community. Smaller-scale (i.e., school-based, or classroom based) communication will follow the standard communications tree models used by the school, or department, as appropriate to the situation.

While the primary means of communication will be through email and the School District Website, other communication channels may be used to supplement communication as appropriate.



Communication: General Information

1. The Superintendent (or designate) is the spokesperson for all *School District* related pandemic/epidemic issues.
2. The Provincial Health Officer and/or Interior Health Authority, Medical Health Officer is the spokesperson for all pandemic/epidemic health issues.
3. The Superintendent or Executive Assistant/HR Manager is responsible for updating the School District website with new information as it becomes available.
4. All communication should be done through established communication systems across the District and at schools / worksites including email (and appropriate email groups), websites, newsletters, Facebook pages, etc.

Pandemic Phases: Activities and Responsibilities

Phase 1: Pre-Pandemic Period

Pre-Pandemic Activities	
Planning and Coordination	Responsibilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility for SD10 plan activation <input type="checkbox"/> Update website to include pandemic information <input type="checkbox"/> Designate a Pandemic information officer to monitor, collect and summarize information	Superintendent or designate
<input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate responsibilities and authorities of Ministry of Health/ Interior Health and Ministry of Education in development and implement Pandemic Response Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Advise staff of activation of Pandemic Response Plan	Superintendent, P/VPs
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify a room that may be used as a temporary quarantine room. This room does not need to be on a separate air handling system. Keep in mind the access to washrooms, sinks etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for self-isolation for staff and students that show symptoms while at work or school <input type="checkbox"/> Identify shared equipment, current practices, and assess the risk.	Principals, Director of Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> If a student is showing symptoms, monitor students until parent/guardian arrives	P/VPs
Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider impact of varying levels of student, staff absences and school closures	Superintendent, Director of Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider and develop alternative procedures to ensure continuity of education <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a continuity of operations for essential services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education ○ Human Resources ○ Communications ○ Payroll ○ Facilities ○ Custodial ○ Transportation 	SD10 Leadership Team Superintendent, Leadership Team and District Staff <i>Assistant Secretary Treasurer Operations and Transportation</i>

Infection Control Policies and Procedures	
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement infection control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels <input type="checkbox"/> Order additional cleaning supplies and ensure custodial staff are trained in pandemic terminal cleaning procedures	Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Advise staff, students, and community who are experiencing symptoms to remain at home	Superintendent, P/VPs, Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Educate children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette	P/VPs, Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a healthy work environment by posting tips on how to stop the spread of germs <input type="checkbox"/> Be aware of students with medical alert issues such as compromised immune or respiratory systems	DOL, P/VPs, Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Advise the public health nurse/Superintendent when more than 10% of school population is away ill	P/VPs
Communication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and maintain contacts with Ministry of Education, Interior Health, and local authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Post relevant information on District website on Pandemic Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Work with school P/VPs to 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 <input type="checkbox"/> Advise Board of Education and School Administration on preventative pandemic measures <input type="checkbox"/> Media communications	Superintendent or designate
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish communication with students and families to receive immediate information if child needs to be sent home or if school or facility is closing <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that parents/guardians have provided up to date contact information to the school and/or communication plan <input type="checkbox"/> Update staff contact information and phone tree <input type="checkbox"/> Provide notice that clubs and extra-curricular activities may be suspended <input type="checkbox"/> Educate staff, students and parents on pandemic prevention, signs, symptoms and family preparedness <input type="checkbox"/> Advise staff, students and families of District website	P/VPs
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement safe work procedures to ensure staff safety	Director of Learning, Manager of Operations

Phase 2: Pandemic Period

Pandemic Activities	
Planning and Coordination	Responsibilities
<input type="checkbox"/> If school trips are underway, determine how children and staff will be self-isolated <input type="checkbox"/> Closing of schools may be required	Superintendent or designate
<input type="checkbox"/> School trips and school evening user groups may be cancelled <input type="checkbox"/> Schools may be used by officials for clinics, hospitals, daycare centres, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Depending on staffing or student shortages, classes may need to be combined or moved on-line	Superintendent, P/VPs
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus routes may need to be altered due to driver and/or student shortages	Manager of Operations
Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate capability of student learning continuity: adjust as needed <input type="checkbox"/> Schools may be closed	Superintendent, P/VPs
<input type="checkbox"/> School trips may be cancelled	Superintendent or designate
<input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce cross training to ensure continuity of core operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education ○ Payroll ○ Custodial ○ Communications 	Superintendent, District Staff <i>Director of Learning</i> <i>Assistant Secretary Treasurer</i> <i>Manager of Operations</i>
Infection Control Procedures	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continued use of terminal control practices and procedures that help limit the spread of infection <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that schools and facilities have an adequate supply of hand soap and paper towels <input type="checkbox"/> Audit infection control practices and ensure adequate training of all Custodians and/or staff deployed to assist with infection control practices	Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Advise staff and students who are sick with pandemic consistent symptoms to remain at home <input type="checkbox"/> Restriction of community, volunteer and visitors to schools and	P/VPs

facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing education for children and staff on hand-washing and cough and sneeze etiquettes	
Communication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to work closely with Ministry of Education, Interior Health and local authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Media Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain District website for information on Pandemic Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain method of communication with students, staff and families <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to provide the Board of Education and Principals with information on preventative pandemic measures <input type="checkbox"/> Remind staff, students, volunteers and families of district website	Superintendent or designate
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide updated information in school newsletters and websites <input type="checkbox"/> Remind staff, students, volunteers and families of district website	P/VPs

Phase 3: Post Pandemic Period

Post Pandemic Activities	
Planning and Coordination	Responsibilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-opening of schools <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for operations staff shortages	Superintendent, Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Resumption of business activities <input type="checkbox"/> Depending on staffing levels, classes may need to be combine	P/VPs
Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate capability of student learning continuity: adjust as needed. May take some time for schools to be re-opened <input type="checkbox"/> Resumption of school classes and activities	Superintendent, P/VPs
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	Superintendent or designate
Infection Control Policies and Procedures	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to audit infection control	Manager of Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing education for children and staff on proper hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette	P/VPs, Teachers

<input type="checkbox"/> Advise staff and students who are experiencing pandemic- like symptoms to continue self-isolation <input type="checkbox"/> Advise the Superintendent when more than 10% of school population is away ill	P/VPs
Communication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to work closely with MHO, Ministry of Education and local authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Media Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain and evaluate district website for information on Post-Pandemic Recovery Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Direct staff, students and families to information on district website--	Superintendent or designate
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Critical Incident Response if there have been deaths among students and staff	Superintendent, Director of Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Use school newsletter/website to provide information to students and families	P/VPs

Leadership Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The list of roles and responsibilities below is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of responsibilities or to define a 'job description' but identify high-level responsibilities. Staff who are unclear on their role during the activation and implementation of this Pandemic Response Plan are encouraged to contact the Superintendent.

Superintendent/Secretary Treasurer/CEO/HR Director
Receives updates from the Ministry of Education, Public Health Officer, Interior Health Authority Gives direction to staff Updates the Board of Education Directs Communications Designated Media Contact
Director of Learning
Superintendent designate Works with School Principals to develop alternate curriculum delivery models Occupational Health and Safety Contact
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
Secretary-Treasurer designate Develops and implements key financial functions including continuity Receives and sends financial information Develops financial Policies/Procedures as required to support Pandemic Response Plan
Manager of Operations and Transportation
Assists with school closures Implements environmental cleaning Works with School Principals to identify required custodial tasks that must occur each day Develops contingency plan for busses
Principals / Vice Principals
Updates Superintendent regarding above average absenteeism Updates list of students who are high risk Communicates with school staff, parents and PAC, community rental groups as appropriate Directs work to minimize exposure Contacts parents to pick up ill students Discuss with staff preparations for online learning

Appendix A – Supporting Documents

Appendix A is maintained as a supplemental resource for additional Information and Protocols that are integrated as part of this Pandemic Response Plan

1. School District 10 (Arrow Lakes) Exposure Control Plan
a. Appendix A – Information Posters, Instructional Infographics
2. S-21 Provision of In School Care for Essential Service Workers
3. S-22 Supporting Students In-person in Schools During COVID-19
4. P- 12 Employees Temporarily Working from Home Guidelines
5. WorkSafeBC Exposure Control Planning Guideline https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/exposure-control-plans/exposure-control-plan-for-infectious-disease-for-occupational-first-aid-attendants?lang=en