

Highly Infectious Disease

Readiness & Operations Plan

Platte Canyon School District 1 - Updated 2/28/20

INTRODUCTION

The Platte Canyon School District 1 serves approximately 900 children in our preK-12 system. Our District encompasses roughly 345 square miles along the Highway 285 corridor from Pine Junction to Kenosha Pass. The onset of a highly infectious outbreak in our community could be detrimental to our population. This plan was prepared in order to facilitate our school district in best communicating steps to be undertaken in order to reduce the potentially chaotic nature of a highly infectious outbreak.

This plan outlines PCSD1's strategy in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a highly infectious disease outbreak such as Pandemic Flu in a collective, community approach.

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Producing Positive Outcomes

Positive Outcomes for PCSD1 Residents

The purpose of this plan is to achieve the following positive outcomes for PCSD1 residents:

- Maximize the protection of lives while minimizing educational and social disruption.
- Enable PCSD1 to continue to operate and provide services as normally and effectively as possible in the event of a highly infectious disease outbreak with minimal academic and economic losses.
- Coordinate our response with the applicable federal, state, local agencies and access available resources from each source.
- Continue the core operations of PCSD1 in the event of increased staff/student absences due to a highly infectious outbreak.
- Establish and maintain a coordinated command system that prioritizes effective, timely and sensitive decision-making in order to keep student learning needs as the focal point.
- Develop a communications plan that produces timely and accurate information to the PCSD1 community regarding potential prevention and mitigation measures.
- Coordinate the use of PCSD1 facilities for the use of vaccination sites, temporary clinics/health areas, or other needs when appropriate.
- Coordinate with other close districts for safety measures related to the outbreak. These districts include, Gilpin, Clear Creek, Jefferson County, and Park County RE-2.
- Prepare for and provide mental health service needs of students, staff members, and families.

Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities

Federal, State, and Local Authorities Working Together

During an outbreak of a highly infectious disease, the **US Department of Health and Human Services** along with the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** are the national leaders for overall communication and coordination efforts.

The **US Department of Health and Human Services** along with the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** roles in such a situation are:

- Identify, appoint, and lead the highly infectious disease response; enact or modify legislation and policies required to sustain and optimize pandemic preparedness, capacity development, and response efforts across all sectors.
- Lead national efforts in surveillance and detection of outbreaks. Prioritize and guide the allocation and targeting of resources.
- Provide additional resources for national pandemic preparedness, capacity development, and response measures. Support rapid containment of outbreaks, provide guidance to state level authorities on the use and timing of community infection control measures.
- Support research and development of vaccines and medical countermeasures.
- Consider providing resources and technical assistance to countries experiencing outbreaks of the highly infectious disease.

The **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)** takes the lead from the CDC. **Park County Public Health (PCPH)** is guided by CDPHE. In cooperation with these two agencies, **PCSD1** assists in efforts to raise awareness and actions that are necessary in response to the severity of the phase of the reported illness. The risks and potential health consequences are taken into consideration by CDPHE and PCPH and assist PCSD1 in the following:

- Provide reliable information on the risk, severity, and progression of the outbreak and the effectiveness of interventions used during the outbreak.
- Activate the CDPHE Department Operations Center (DOC) and notify the

Governor, the Governor's Expert Emergency Epidemic Response Committee (GEERC) and the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. CDPHE will collaborate with response agencies the State Emergency Operations Center in order to coordinate response activities.

- Prioritize and continue the provision of health care during a highly infectious outbreak. Maintain situational awareness by monitoring the illness surveillance data and assessing the public health needs of the residents of Colorado.
- Enact steps to reduce the spread of the infection in the community and in healthcare facilities. Provide guidance, resources, and technical assistance to local health departments and aid in the need/use of vaccines and other medications. PCPH will then coordinate with PCSD1 to aid in the distribution of these supplies.
- Coordinate with public and private healthcare systems to ensure a cohesive healthcare response statewide to handle inpatient and outpatient care.
- Protect and support healthcare workers during the infectious outbreak.
- Notify the local health departments if social distancing and community mitigation is needed, such as closing schools, travel restrictions, cancellation of public events, isolation and/or quarantine in order to slow the spread of the disease.

PCSD1's response to a highly infectious disease outbreak is as follows:

- The District Incident Commander will coordinate with PCPH, local first responders, and other District personnel to determine if District locations will be needed as distribution/vaccination centers.
- PCSD1 will communicate with District employees, students, families, and community members regarding the outbreak, including updating schools with potential changes that may take place and information on the extent of the spread of the illness.
- Maintain school staying in session until notified by state or local authorities for the need to close.
- Coordinate with Children's Hospital to educate school communities on prevention of illness: vaccinations, proper hand-washing techniques, community mitigation, social mitigation, and data gathering to prevent transmission. Prepare the school communities to minimize risk.
- PCPH will provide the PCSD1 community with data and health surveillance reporting and information, as allowed by HIPAA.

Potential Scenarios

If the Governor declares a State of Emergency relative to a highly infectious disease outbreak ...

... response to this pandemic will require swift and coordinated action by all levels of government.

- CDPHE will take the lead role at the state level for emergency support and will coordinate with Colorado Emergency Management, within the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and other state and local agencies, as part of a unified command structure.
- Effective prevention and therapeutic measures, including vaccine and antiviral medications, could be delayed, in short supply, or not available.
- Substantial public education regarding the need to target priority groups for vaccination and the allocation of limited supplies, is critical in averting public panic.
- Non-pharmaceutical interventions, travel restrictions, cancellation of public events, isolation and/or quarantine may be required to slow the spread of an outbreak.
- Secondary bacterial infections, following the outbreak, may result in shortages in antibiotic supplies.
- PCPH will work with healthcare providers to coordinate the distribution of vaccines, antivirals, and other medications and/or medical supplies. **PCSD1 personnel may be used to support this process.**
- There may be a need for alternate care sites as a temporary health facility.
- First responders and healthcare workers may be at a higher risk of exposure and illness than the general population, further straining public resources and response.
- Widespread illness could increase the likelihood of shortages of personnel in other sectors that provide critical services.

Common Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

Prevention Strategies

Public health officials recommend prior to and in the early phases of an outbreak, to practice every day good health habits and to utilize non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) such as social distancing or keeping environments germ-free by frequent cleaning to prevent and protect the community from the spread of a highly infectious disease. Other possible measures could include the closure of non-urgent/mandated community events.

It is recommended that people protect themselves and others by practicing everyday actions:

- Clean hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover your nose and mouth with your inner elbow when coughing and sneezing.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Stay home if you are sick.

PCSD1, with support from PCPH, will continue to disseminate materials to the public regarding updates of the outbreak or pandemic, good hygiene methods including hand-washing protocol, and other pertinent information. Additionally, the District will continue to communicate surveillance data in monitoring the outbreak or pandemic. PCSD1 will take great care to make sure that messaging to the community remains consistent throughout the outbreak or pandemic.

PCSD1's Response to an Outbreak

In the case that one case is confirmed by PCPH, PCSD1 will do the following:

- Assure that teachers have prepared lesson plans ahead of time in case they are out due to illness and/or high numbers of students are out due to illness.
- The Superintendent and Director of Business Services may review leave procedures in considering the possibility of a large amount of employees off of work due to illness.
- The Superintendent, along with the Instructional Leadership Team and Operations Management Team, will identify essential staff functions and ensure that cross-training has been executed in order to maintain essential services.
- Begin practicing NPIs as the situation has now transitioned into an outbreak/pandemic emergent situation. While taking guidance from the afore-mentioned state and local agencies, PCSD1 will take a more active awareness to the everyday good health habits and NPIs. It is our primary goal to keep our students, staff members, parents, and community members as safe and healthy as possible; therefore, we will continue to provide consistent educational information, as well as factual updates regarding the outbreak/pandemic.
- Initiate the Incident Command Structure in conjunction with state and local agencies.
- In conjunction with PCPH, determine whether or not District facilities are needed as vaccination centers and/or healthcare facilities.
- If needed, distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to PCSD1 employees, as guided by PCPH. Instructions on this equipment for utilization and proper maintenance may involve guidance from Children's Hospital and other staff to assist in the use of this equipment.
- If voluntary home quarantine measures are suggested for exposed household members, PCSD1 will communicate with staff members, students, parents, and community members as needed to help mitigate the highly infectious illness.
- Depending on the severity of the event, PCSD1 will take direction from state and local agencies, including first responders, to identify next steps.

- PCSD1 will initiate data collection of absenteeism rates and provide to PCPH data they may need for report to CDPHE. PCSD1 will enlist the expertise of our Education Data specialist to aid in this endeavor.
- During any highly infectious illness outbreak/pandemic, PCSD1 will maintain surveillance data and contribute to PCPH and CDPHE in a proactive, positive manner to increase the health and safety of our community.
- PCSD1 will manage all internal resources and document expenses in real time. This will require the support of Business Services.

Recovery

Once we are notified by state and local agencies that we may begin to resume regular operations, PCSD1 will ...

- Conduct an after-action assessment that includes completed surveillance data and feedback from District Directors/Leaders regarding PCSD1 crisis operations. Any damage done to the community from this highly infectious disease outbreak will be defined and analyzed for proper future planning.
- Stress the importance of returning to normal practice and procedures for the health and safety of everyone. We will return as quickly as possible to normally scheduled school days and events. PCSD1 will assess the need for additional mental health support resources and pursue providing as many resources as possible to our community.
- Utilize the **Park County Department of Human Services** to aid in identifying families that may need additional resources as a result of the outbreak.
- Communicate to the community when it is safe to return to school and what precautions, if any, will need to occur. All school grounds and property will be cleaned and equipment may need to be sterilized. The Maintenance/Custodial department will help support this practice.
- Monitor the illness and provide data as needed to continue the transparency of communication to the community.
- Establish a protocol with teachers to assure that students who have missed several days of instruction due to the outbreak can get back on track in a reasonable

amount of time. Some assignments may need to be eliminated depending on each individual student's progress relative to content mastery.

- Debrief with all agencies involved in the crisis response. This will aid in refining this plan in order to better address the next highly infectious disease outbreak. Successes and failures will be discussed in transparency to determine the proper planning for the future.

Appendix: Finding More Information About the Most Prevalent Highly Infectious Illnesses

Web Resources

2019 Novel Coronavirus:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Pandemic Flu - Influenza:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/index.htm>

MERS:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/>

Anthrax:

<https://www.cdc.gov/anthrax/index.html>

Ebola

<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>

SARS:

<https://www.cdc.gov/sars/>