

Greenville I. S. D.

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Revised 2020-2021

This Plan

- is designed to link and correlate with the District's Emergency Operations Plan.
- incorporates prevention-mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery of pandemic disease.
- addresses other communicable diseases.
- is reviewed by the district's School Health Advisory Council.

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Pandemic Influenza and other Communicable Disease Preparedness

I. Introduction/Purpose

The outbreak of infectious diseases around the world has aroused and generated grave concern about the possible significant impact on our health, livelihood, economy, and education system as well as that of the world. With the selfless service of our medical workers and the concerted efforts of all sectors, the preventive campaign has become an all people's movement. Citizens have not only increased their awareness of the dangers of infectious diseases, including influenza, but many have also been actively taking precautionary measures. With the development of guidelines for the immediate implementation of series of monitoring and quarantine measures, there could be immediate stabilization of new cases when they occur. Nevertheless, we must continue to be on the alert and reinforce personal and household hygiene.

Prevention is better than cure. While we hope for new breakthroughs in the medical diagnosis and treatment, educators must be actively involved in teaching our next generation how to cope with the changes of emerging diseases. We should not only take the lead in stepping up the precautionary measures in the personal, family, school and social aspects of prevention and hygiene, but should also set a good example of fulfilling our social and civic obligations formulating school contingency measures. We should base our professional decisions on the benefits and learning needs of our students. We should make full use of this special learning opportunity to increase student and parent awareness of communicable diseases through various means, and further develop and strengthen their sense of responsibility towards the community.

II. Prevention - Mitigation and Control of Communicable Diseases

Communicable diseases are those diseases that can be transmitted person to person. The transmission of an organism is dependent upon many factors, including the type of organism, the dose of organism one receives, route of the transfer of organism, and the physical condition of the receiving host. Any interruption of this process decreases the likelihood of illness from the organism. Both students and staff have a responsibility in the prevention of transmission of communicable diseases.

The following general preventative measures should be communicated to, adhered to, and reviewed frequently by both students and staff.

- **Vaccinations** - Vaccinations against the influenza each fall remains the primary way to prevent this disease. Influenza vaccine is now recommended for everyone. School nurses should communicate and recommend vaccinations to parents, students and staff.
- **Hand Hygiene** - Hands should be cleaned anytime they are visibly soiled, before preparing or eating food or beverages, after coughing or sneezing, and after using the restroom. Facilities and supplies should be readily available for both students and staff to accomplish this. Everyone should use soap and water or a 60% alcohol-based hand rub when soap and water are not available. The goal is to limit the transfer of organism to the environment and from human contact.
- **Respiratory Hygiene** - Some infections are spread when a person coughs or sneezes causing respiratory droplets to be propelled into the surrounding air. Once in the air they can be inhaled and possibly infect others. The goal is to break the transmission cycle by controlling the droplets propelled in the air. Using tissue is an effective means of decreasing the respiratory droplets into the air. Everyone should cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and put their tissue in a wastebasket. Tissues should be available in all classrooms, common areas and rooms where meals are provided.
- **Sanitizing and disinfecting** - Routine cleaning and maintenance of facilities should be maintained with high standards. Increased disinfecting may be required.
- **Universal Precautions** - This is the practice where blood and all body fluids are considered infectious and, therefore, barrier protection should be used and materials handled cautiously. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be used when handling or cleaning up blood and/or body fluids.

- **Separation and Grouping** - This is the practice of keeping the well from the ill. Ideally this is accomplished in separate physical spaces however if this cannot be done then separation is accomplished by placing as much physical distance between the groups as possible within the current space. The basic concept would also include staying home when ill. Each campus administrator and school nurse should identify locations for isolation.

Definitions of Common Terms used in a Disease Investigation:

Index Case - This term pertains to the initial person identified with a specific illness.

Close Contacts - A term used to describe those individuals that have cared for, or have lived with, or had direct contact with respiratory secretions and/or body fluids of a person diagnosed with a communicable disease such as influenza, pertussis or COVID-19

Line List - A list of names and other pertinent information that is gathered during the investigation of a cluster of illness or symptoms. Information requested will vary with the nature of the illness being investigated.

Outbreak - A sudden increase in the incidence of an illness or disease.

Endemic - An illness or disease that is prevalent to a particular area or population.

Epidemic - An illness affecting a population, community or region in excess of normal expectancy.

Pandemic - A disease that is affecting or attacking the population of a large geographic region, country, or continent; extensively epidemic.

Quarantine - The separation of people who are not ill but have been exposed to a communicable disease from the general population, as they may or may not be infected. This restriction of movement is intended to stop the spread of that illness. People may be quarantined at home or other specific locations.

Isolation - The restriction of the movement of known infected individual or group in order to keep them separated from the uninfected in an attempt to stop the spread of an illness, such as influenza or COVID-19. Individuals may be isolated at home, the hospital or other specified locations.

Symptoms - Symptoms of influenza include fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea also can occur, and are much more common among children than adults. Additionally, Symptoms of COVID-19 also include, difficulty breathing and loss of taste or smell.

Spread of Influenza and COVID-19 - The main way that viruses are spread is from person to person through coughing and sneezing. This can happen when droplets from the cough or sneeze of an infected person travel through the air and reach the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes influenza and COVID-19 can be spread when a person touches droplets, nasal drainage or saliva from an infected person, or soiled object, and then touches one's own (or someone else's) nose or mouth before washing hands.

III. Preparedness

Educational Efforts:

Everyone has the responsibility for combating infectious diseases, such as influenza. Parental participation is essential to an effective prevention and control program. Parental education should take place through PTA meetings, fact sheets, newsletters, and electronic communications. Explanations of home quarantine and isolation should be discussed with parents. Parents need to be aware of their child's current immunization status for vaccine preventable diseases and keep abreast of their child's day-to-day health. If their child is sick, they should not be sent to school and parents should seek medical attention for the child from their health provider.

Breaking the transmission cycle will be the key to controlling an outbreak of communicable disease, such as influenza or COVID-19. Parents should understand their responsibility to notify the school immediately if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school will then notify the Hunt County Health Department and begin to gather contact information if requested by HCHD. In some cases, such as influenza or COVID-19, a child

may be kept at home, on home quarantine or isolation, for a specific period of time, usually until the period of communicability has passed. This time frame varies with each disease.

The **Hunt County Health Department** is responsible for the investigation of communicable diseases within Hunt County.

If school nurses or staff believe that a student or staff member has a communicable disease, then they should contact GISD Director of Health Services and be prepared to give specific information. The Director of Health Services will contact the Hunt County Health Department and follow recommended steps.

- Educational efforts will target common means of transmission such as:
 - Sharing of common items
 - Sharing food, beverages or utensils
 - Failure to wash hands prior to preparing food and/or beverages and after using the toilet
 - Failure to cover a cough or sneeze or to wash hands afterwards
 - Infrequent cleaning and disinfecting of common use items or equipment
- Strategies for communicating influenza/COVID-19 information will include:
 - Use of student/teacher class time
 - Signage throughout school, educating about good hygiene
 - Newsletters
 - Web sites
 - Employee training
 - Parent and school employee meetings
 - Electronic communications
 - Translation of information to non-English speaking families

Attached are sample flyers and parent letters for home communication.

Planning and Coordination:

- This plan of action for pandemic disease will be reviewed and updated by the School Health Advisory Council as needed.
- In the event of a pandemic crisis, the Rapid Response team, under the direction of the superintendent, will coordinate response and recovery efforts with recommendations from the recognized Health Authorities.
 - Hunt County Health Department
 - Texas Department of State Health Services
 - Centers for Disease Control
- As a part of the district's Emergency Operations Plan, pandemic preparedness involves stakeholders from local public health and emergency response agencies, district administrators, school health, counselors, teachers, food and child nutrition services and parent representatives.

IV. Response

Attached: GISD's Reporting and Communication Responses to the Pandemic Disease, Flow Chart.

Attached: GISD's Pandemic Response Matrix for different severity levels of the pandemic disease cases reported within the school community.

The response matrix includes:

- Communication
- Campus Access
- Educational Delivery
- Co-Curricular Program
- Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel
- Personnel
- Emergency Care
- School Provided Transport
- School Operations/Food Services

V. Recovery

The goal of recovery is to return to learning and restore the infrastructure of the school as quickly as possible while providing a caring and supportive environment.

The following strategies and activities are recommended:

- Pre-planning for recovery: Identify and pre-screen health and grief service providers.
- Monitor students for the emotional impact of the crisis and provide information on support services that are available.
- Utilize Employee Assistance Programs for assistance with coping with loss and stress.
- Identify potential and/or continuing hazards of pandemic diseases affecting students and staff.
- Continue public health surveillance until discontinued by health authority.
- Capture "lessons learned" and incorporate them into revisions and training.
- Conduct debriefings with staff and first responders.
- Communication: Keep students, families, community and media informed of steps taken.
- Compile reports for local, state and federal officials.

VI. Resources:

U.S. Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov>

Flu Information and Resources

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/flu-resources.html>

World Health Organization

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

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

Washington Department of Health, Flu Materials in Multiple Languages

www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/#external

Teachers Guidelines for Crisis Response

www.nasponline.org

TX Dept. of State Health Services Flu

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/flu/>

Hunt County Health Dept.

<http://www.huntcounty.net/page/hunt.medicalservices>