

The Trimble Local Schools Pandemic Management Plan

The Trimble Local Schools Pandemic Management Plan is developed to address the four areas of emergency response and crisis management as identified by the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Being prepared for a Pandemic can help protect the health of staff members and students. Experts believe a worldwide outbreak, or pandemic, of influenza will happen someday. Preparing for a pandemic is much like preparing for other emergencies. During a pandemic, schools and daycares may be temporarily closed to lessen the spread of flu.

I. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Whether or not schools will be closed or for how long is impossible to say in advance, since all pandemics are different in their scope and severity. However, it is well established that infectious disease outbreaks most often start in schools and so the Trimble Local School District may close schools early in an event. The duration of school closings can only be determined at the time of the event based on the characteristics of the pandemic, but it is unlikely that schools will be closed for less than 2 weeks (based on the incubation period of the disease and the length of time people are contagious) and could be as long as 8 weeks, as mentioned above. Other planning assumptions that are being used by the community include:

1. Working closely with the Athens County Board of Health, the Ohio Department of Health, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the communities of the Trimble Local Schools will maximize the health and safety of the school community. Understanding the roles of each agency and their responsibilities will promote coordination and communications.
2. A pandemic will result in the rapid spread of the infection with outbreaks throughout the world. Communities across the state and the country may be impacted simultaneously.
3. There will be a need for heightened global and local surveillance of symptoms and infection rates.
4. Athens County will not be able to rely on mutual aid resources, State or Federal assistance to support local response efforts.

5. Antiviral medications will be in extremely short supply. Local supplies of antiviral medications may be prioritized by the Athens County Board of Health for hospitalized influenza patients, close contacts of patients, health care workers providing care for patients, or other groups.
6. Due to vaccine production and distribution constraints, a vaccine for the pandemic influenza strain will likely not be available for 6 to 8 months following the emergence of a novel virus.
 - a. As vaccine becomes available, it will be administered to eligible persons and ultimately to the entire population.
 - b. Insufficient supplies of vaccines and antiviral medicines will place greater emphasis on social distancing strategies to control the spread of the disease in the county.
7. There could be significant disruption of public and privately owned critical infrastructure including transportation, commerce, utilities, public safety and communications.
8. Social distancing strategies aimed at reducing the spread of infection such as closing schools, community centers, and other public gather points and canceling public events may be implemented during a pandemic.
9. The general public, health care partners, response agencies, elected leaders and schools will need continuous updates on the status of the pandemic outbreak, the steps the school district is taking to address the incident, and steps the public can take to protect themselves.

II. AUTHORITIES

While the Ohio Department of Agriculture has primary authority to manage animal disease outbreaks in Ohio through Chapter 941 of the Ohio Revised Code, there may be events that require many additional resources, such as those performed by other state, federal and local agencies, private businesses and industry organizations. ODA and these organizations coordinate emergency response and communications before, during and after an animal disease incident and make up the teams dispatched during an animal disease emergency.

Support agencies include the Ohio Adjutant General's Department; Ohio General Attorney's Office; Ohio Departments of Administrative Services, Health, Mental Health, Natural Resources, Public Safety and Transportation; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Ohio Livestock Coalition; The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Extension; Ohio Veterinary Medical Association and Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board; Federal Emergency Management Agency; U.S. Department of Agriculture's animal and Plant Inspection Service, Veterinary Service, Wildlife Service, Regional Emergency Animal Disease Eradication Organization, Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Under 3701.13 of the Ohio Revised Code, Board's of Health have the authority to close schools to protect the public from the spread of infectious disease.

III. PHASES OF A PANDEMIC

The World Health Organization (WHO), the medical arm of the United Nations, has developed a global preparedness plan that includes a classification system for guiding planning and response activities for a pandemic. This classification system is comprised of six phases of increasing public health risk associated with the emergence and spread of a new virus subtype that may lead to a pandemic. The Director General of WHO formally declares the current global pandemic phase and adjusts the phase level to correspond with pandemic conditions around the world. For each phase, the global preparedness plan identifies response measures WHO will take, and recommends actions that countries around the world should implement.

Pandemic Phases	Public Health Goals	Trimble Local Schools Goals
<p>Interpandemic Period</p> <p>Phase 1 – No new virus subtypes detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered low.</p> <p>Phase 2 – No new influenza virus subtypes detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses substantial risk of human disease.</p>	<p>Strengthen pandemic preparedness at all levels. Closely monitor human and animal surveillance data.</p> <p>Minimize the risk of transmission to humans; detect and report such transmission rapidly if it occurs.</p>	<p>Ensure that staff members and students are trained in preventative measures such as respiratory etiquette and universal precautions.</p> <p>Minimize the risk of transmission to humans; ensure that staff members understand detection and reporting guidelines and report rapidly as required.</p>
<p>Pandemic Alert Period</p> <p>Phase 3 – Human infection(s) are occurring with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.</p> <p>Phase 4 – Small cluster(s) of human infection with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localized suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.</p> <p>Phase 5 – Larger cluster(s) of human infection but human-to-human spread is localized, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible (substantial pandemic risk).</p>	<p>Ensure rapid characterization of the new virus subtype and early detection, notification and response to additional cases.</p> <p>Contain the new virus within limited foci or delay spread to gain time to implement preparedness measures, including vaccine development.</p> <p>Maximize efforts to contain or delay spread to possibly avert a pandemic, and to gain time to implement response measures.</p>	<p>Ensure all personnel are knowledgeable about the latest epidemiological information.</p> <p>Ensure that best practices for infection detection and control measures are followed.</p> <p>Ensure adequate resources for staff/student protection.</p> <p>Ensure that TLSD is implementing best practice for social distancing techniques per Local Health Organization guidelines, including reducing the school activity calendar.</p> <p>Maximize communications with parents related to health and safety.</p>
<p>Pandemic Period</p> <p>Phase 6 – Pandemic is declared. Increased and sustained transmission in the general population.</p>	<p>Implement response measures including social distancing to minimize pandemic impacts.</p>	<p>Increase surveillance of staff/student health and attendance and implement administrative procedures to ensure adequate staffing for essential business and school functions.</p> <p>Follow Local Health</p>

		<p>Organization and Ohio Emergency Management Agency, social distancing, isolation and quarantine measures.</p> <p>Ensure maximum support and education for ill and affected students.</p>
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IV. Concept of Operations

A. Overview

1. The Ohio Department of Health will be the lead agency in coordinating the local health and medical response to a pandemic with State, Federal, and local agencies and officials.
2. ODH's response actions will emphasize disease surveillance and investigation, social distancing measures to reduce the spread of infection, and continually informing and educating the public about the pandemic, the public health response, and steps the public can take to reduce the risks of infection.
3. TLSD will maintain increased communications with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) and the ODH and will implement those procedures that increase the health and safety of the school community.
4. The Trimble Local Schools assumes the following responsibilities:
 - a. Develop capabilities to implement non-medical measures to decrease the spread of disease throughout the school community as guided by the epidemiology of the pandemic and the LHO.
 - b. Develop and implement pandemic preparedness activities and a business continuity plan aimed at maintaining the provision of educational services as much as possible and limiting the spread of disease throughout the duration of a pandemic.
 - c. Communicate with and educate the school community about approved public health practices and what each person can do to prepare or respond to minimize health risks.

- d. Develop and implement educational support plans for students who are isolated or quarantined.
5. Each Trimble Local School assumes the following responsibilities:
- e. Develop a response plan that will:
 - Identify chain of command in case of illness with a minimum of 2 back ups.
 - Review and best practices for respiratory hygiene and universal precautions. Train all school staff, volunteers and students.
 - Review procedures for sending ill individuals home and make adjustments if necessary.
 - Update staff and provide information on extent of infection at school site and potential changes that might take place at school.
 - Develop a comprehensive cleaning and disinfecting plan in accordance with current recommendations from ODH and CDC.
 - f. Develop a recovery plan that provides for education support and emotional support for staff and students. If there is loss of life, implement procedures located in the TLSD Comprehensive School Safety Plan.

B. Direction and Control

1. ODH and all response partners will operate under the Incident Command System throughout the duration of the pandemic response.
2. ODH may activate the Ohio Emergency Management Plan to coordinate the county-wide public health and medical response during a pandemic.
3. During Pandemic Phases 1, 2 and 3 where Athens County is not directly affected, Ohio Department of Health will lead countywide preparedness and education efforts for pandemic response.
4. During Pandemic Phases 4, 5 and 6, ODH will communicate and manage health care system resources and information.

5. ODH will assess the viability of community containment options and establish criteria for recommending their implementation to local elected officials.
6. Upon reaching Pandemic Phase 4 (if local area is not affected; Phase 3 if local area is affected)
 - a. TLSD will attend briefings and provide information to staff and students. TLSD will take appropriate measures including social distancing and increased respiratory hygiene in order to reduce transmission.

C. Communications

1. Communications with the public and health care providers will be one of the most critical strategies for containing the spread of the virus and for managing the utilization of health care services. This plan's communications goals are to:
 - a. Provide accurate, consistent, and comprehensive information about pandemic influenza including case definitions, treatment options, infection control measures, and reporting requirements.
 - b. Instill and maintain public confidence in the schools and the County's public health care systems and their ability to respond to and manage an influenza pandemic.
 - c. Ensure an efficient mechanism for managing information between ODH, the communities of Trimble Local and the schools.
 - d. Contribute to maintaining order, minimizing public panic and fear, and facilitating public compliance by providing accurate, rapid, and complete information.
 - e. Address rumors, inaccuracies, and misperceptions as quickly as possible, and prevent the stigmatization of affected groups.

D. Mitigation

Mitigation activities are taken in advance of a pandemic to prevent or temper its impact. Mitigation efforts will occur primarily during the early pandemic phases.

The TLSD pre-event mitigation activities include:

1. Planning, exercising, evaluating and modifying the Pandemic Management Plan if necessary.
2. Training and equipping TLSD staff to assure competencies and capacities needed to respond to a pandemic outbreak.
3. Developing strategic partnerships with local community health care institutions and providers, and local, state and federal response agencies and their staff.
4. Educating schools and parents about a pandemic and recommending preparedness measures.
5. Informing and updating schools about the potential impacts of an influenza pandemic on essential services and city, county, and school infrastructure. Reviewing and updating district-wide business continuity plans and assuring essential business functions are adequately staffed.
6. Stockpiling necessary equipment and supplies that will be needed to respond to an influenza pandemic.

E. Surveillance

COVID-19 is reportable, but in most scenarios Athens County will be reporting to us. TLSD will work closely with the Athens County Health Department and Ohio Department of Health to survey and evaluate disease progression.

1. Surveillance During Pandemic Phases 1, 2, 3
 - a. Student and Staff attendance will be monitored by the Superintendent. Unusual spikes in illness will be reported to Athens County Board of Health.
2. Surveillance During Pandemic Phases 4, 5, 6
 - a. Student and Staff attendance will be monitored by the Superintendent. Unusual spikes in illness will be reported to Athens County Board of Health.
 - b. The TLSD Superintendent will activate tracking of absenteeism for school and central staff. This data will be used to identify staffing needs and inform school closure discussions.

G. Social Distancing Strategies

Social distancing strategies are non-medical measures intended to reduce the spread of disease from person-to-person by discouraging or preventing people from coming in close contact with each other. These strategies could include closing schools; closing non-essential agency functions; implementing emergency staffing plans; increasing telecommuting, flex scheduling and other options; and closing all public assemblies or after school activities.

1. The Athens County Department of Health will review social distancing strategies and current epidemiological data during each phase and recommend to key elected officials, including the local elected officials of the Trimble Local School District and superintendents of public school districts social distancing actions that should be implemented to limit the spread of the disease.
2. Decisions regarding the closing of all public and private schools, community colleges and universities in Athens County will be made by the Local Health Officer after consultation with local school superintendents, school presidents and elected officials.
3. Decisions regarding the implementation of social distancing measures including suspending large public gatherings and closing stadiums, theaters, churches, community centers, and other facilities where large numbers of people gather will be made jointly and concurrently by the CDC and ODH and coordinated with all executive heads of cities and towns in Athens County.
4. Social Distancing Strategies During Phases 1, 2, 3
 - a) The CDC and ODH will
 - i) educate elected officials, government leaders, school officials, response partners, businesses, the media and the public about influenza pandemics and their consequences.

- ii) coordinate with elected officials, government leaders, school officials, response partners, and businesses regarding the use of using social distancing strategies, the associated impacts they cause and the process for implementing these measures.
- iii) confirm the decision making process and criteria for recommending social distancing strategies with key public officials.

b) TLSD schools will

- i) increase respiratory hygiene education for staff, students and parents.
- ii) increase symptom monitoring and attendance monitoring to ensure accurate reporting to the Athens County Board of Health.

5. Social Distancing Strategies During Phases 4, 5, 6

a) CDC and ODH will

- i) Coordinate with elected officials regarding decision making and implementation of social distancing strategies that are commensurate with the severity of illness and societal impact of the pandemic.
- ii) Implement specific, county-wide social distancing strategies that may include
 - Encouraging government agencies and the private sector to implement pandemic emergency staffing plans to maintain critical business functions while maximizing the use of telecommuting, flex schedules, and alternate work site options.
 - Encouraging the public to use public transit only for essential travel; therefore transportation to schools may be interrupted.
 - Advising Athens County residents to defer non-essential travel to areas of the world affected by pandemic influenza outbreaks.

- Suspending all public events where large numbers of people congregate including sporting events, concerts, and parades.
- Closing all public and private schools and colleges.
- Suspending all government functions not dedicated to addressing the impacts of the pandemic or maintaining critical continuity functions.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of social distancing strategies in controlling the spread of disease and will advise appropriate decision-makers when social distancing strategies should be relaxed or ended.

c) TLSD schools will

- i) Follow Local Health Officer guidelines as appropriate following social distancing guidelines and emergency pandemic staffing plans.

- Cancel extracurricular activities or close schools as directed by LHO.

H. Isolation and Quarantine

1. Isolation and Quarantine

- a. The Athens County Department of Health will
 - i) coordinate planning efforts for isolation and quarantine with ODH, neighboring county health departments, community based organizations, TLSD, and local law enforcement.
 - ii) follow CDC guidelines in developing isolation and quarantine procedures for individuals traveling from areas in which a novel influenza virus is present.

V. MAINTENANCE OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- 1. One of the critical needs during a pandemic will be to maintain essential community and business services.

- a. With the possibility that a large portion, of the workforce could be absent due to illness, it may be difficult to maintain adequate staffing for certain critical functions.
 - b. There is the possibility that services could be disrupted if significant numbers of public health, law enforcement, fire and emergency response, medical care, transportation, communications, and public utility personnel are unable to carry out critical functions due to illness. Individual Trimble Local schools or the entire district may be adversely affected.
2. TLSD will update and maintain continuity of operations plans and protocols that address the unique consequences of a pandemic.
 3. TLSD will follow best practice guidelines for return to work after an illness. Because experts do not know whether the mode of transmission, incubation period, or contagious period of pandemic strains of a virus will be similar to those of seasonal influenza (recurring yearly), TLSD will update and follow specific recommendations from the Athens County Department of Health during a pandemic,

Upon returning to the work environment, employees should continue to follow cough etiquette and hand washing protocols.

4. The Trimble Local Schools Pandemic Management Plan will be updated and maintained including:
 - a. Line of Succession
 - b. Identification of mission essential services and priorities.
 - c. Continuity of operations and business recovery plans, including
 - i. Business Impact Analysis
 - ii. Critical “daily” functions that need to be provided even during an event, although at a reduced level
 - iii. Standard Operating Procedures for critical functions/processes including clearly documented protocols for adjusting staffing to maintain essential functions
 - iv. Human Resource policies including

1. Staff policies for personal illness or care of family
 2. Policies for flexible work hours and/or working from home.
 3. Procedures for the reassignment of employees to support mission essential services.
5. Maintenance of Essential Services During Phases 1, 2, 3
- a. The Trimble Local Schools will work with the Athens County Department of Health and the OEMA to update plans for maintaining essential departmental services during a pandemic.
 - b. In conjunction with the Athens County Department of Health, the District will educate central administration and the school community that provide essential services about the need for continuity of operations planning in advance of a pandemic.
6. Maintenance of Essential Services During Phases 4, 5, 6
- a. The Trimble Local Schools will update its continuity of operations plans.

VI. Recovery

1. School recovery from a pandemic will begin when school officials determine that normal supplies, resources and response systems can manage ongoing school activities.
2. The Trimble Local Schools will assess the economic and educational impact of the pandemic.
3. Recovery plans will depend on the severity and duration of the pandemic but will include business recovery plans to mitigate education and financial losses, as well as emotional recovery plans.
4. In consultation with the Athens County Board of Health, the Trimble Local Schools will recommend specific actions to be taken to return schools and district offices to pre-event status including environmental sanitation.
5. The Trimble Local Schools will conduct an after-action evaluation of the pandemic response. The evaluation will include recommendations for amendments to the Pandemic Influenza Management Plan.