

DISTRICT PRACTICE:

1. Purpose:

Rocky Mountain School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all staff and students. A combination of measures will be used to minimize exposure to communicable diseases. Procedures will protect staff and students within the district. It is important that all staff follow the procedures outlined to reduce exposure to communicable diseases.

2. Prevention and Continuity Planning in Rocky Mountain School District:

There may be large numbers of students and staff absent due to illness during a communicable disease. This plan emphasizes the most important element, prevention. The plan includes:

- Educating staff and students in hand washing frequency and technique and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Ensuring adequate soap in dispensers in classrooms that have a sink, and all washrooms.
- Conducting routine cleaning of schools and district sites.
- Advising staff and students who are ill, particularly if they have any communicable disease symptoms, to stay home until they are able to fully participate as they usually would in work/school activities.
- Regular maintenance of HVAC systems.

Additional Measures

- During periods of elevated risk, Interior Health, Provincial Health authority and the Ministry of Education and Child Care will provide guidance about the risk and how it can be reduced.
- In order to minimize the impact of such events, the school district must follow the direction provided by the aforementioned medical health authorities and the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Superintendent of Schools

1. District Team lead.
2. Maintain and distribute electronic communication.
3. Direct school closures as required.
4. Activating the District Response Team as required.

Principals and Supervisors

1. Educate all staff and students about proper hand washing practices.
2. Educate all staff and students about cough/sneeze etiquette.
3. Advise staff and students not attend work or school when exhibiting flulike symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing).
4. Discuss communicable disease at safety committee meeting.
5. Report to the Superintendent of Schools when there are extraordinary levels of illness in classrooms or schools.
6. Monitor routine cleaning and infection control practices happening across schools and district sites. If concerns arise, contact the Operations Supervisor.
7. Ensure that parents and care givers have provided up-to-date emergency contact information to the school.

Director of Operations

1. Continuation of core building functions.
2. Transportation plan for rural students.
3. Review Infection Control practices.

District Health & Safety Officer

1. Provide district-wide support, advice, and expertise to schools and district sites on communicable disease initiatives and events.
2. Maintain liaisons with other school districts, health authorities, ministry and city officials.
3. Advise and report to the Joint Health and Safety committees on plans and preparedness.

Operations Supervisor

1. Ensure custodial staff are trained in the use of cleaning chemicals provided and any special contact disinfection techniques for communicable diseases.
2. Ensure custodial staff have appropriate personal protective equipment, training on use and care of equipment and cleaning supplies during all three phases of the plan.
3. Ensure adequate supply of soap and paper towels for increased hand washing vigilance during all three phases of the plan.
4. Monitor infection control practices in conjunction with the District Health and Safety Officer.

All Staff

Staff will need to follow communicable disease reduction strategies including staying home if they are not well enough to fully participate in regular school activities due to illness, practice good hand hygiene by washing their hands with soap and water regularly and coughing or sneezing into their elbow or a tissue.

School staff must report extraordinary levels of classroom illness to their Principal who must report that to the Superintendent of Schools

4. Education, Training and Monitoring:

If advised by Public Health, the Superintendent of Schools through the Principal or Supervisor will inform site-based staff regarding:

- The risk of the communicable disease in schools and the community.
- The procedures to be followed to minimize risk of contracting the specific communicable disease.
- How to report extraordinary level of illness in either a classroom at the elementary level or as a whole school for all district sites.
- How to find more information from Public Health on the pathogen in the community.

Hand Washing Education

Washing hands with soap and water is always preferred to any other method of hand sanitization.

Washing your hands properly consists of the following steps:

1. Remove jewelry and watches from fingers and wrists.
2. Wet hands under running water.
3. Apply soap and vigorously rub hands together for 10 seconds to produce lather.
4. Wash all surfaces thoroughly, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, between fingers and thumbs, and under fingernails, for 20-30 seconds.
5. Rinse hands one at a time with fingers pointing downward.
6. Dry hands with a disposable towel.
7. Turn off the water with the same towel used to dry your hands. Do not turn off taps with solely your hands as this will only re-contaminate them.
8. Dispose of the towel in the nearest waste basket.

In the event that no running water and soap are available, and hands are not contaminated with visible dirt, hands may be sanitized with an alcohol-based sanitizer (≥60% ethanol).

Sanitizing your hands with waterless hand sanitizer consists of the following steps:

1. Remove jewelry and watches from your fingers and wrists.
2. Apply an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to your hands.
3. Rub all surfaces thoroughly, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, between fingers.
4. Do not touch eyes, nose or mouth until after product has evaporated.

A poster illustrating demonstration of proper hand washing is available in the schools throughout the district.

Health Monitoring

Schools and district sites must report extraordinary levels of illness, including symptoms, when known by the Superintendent of Schools. The information will be passed on to Interior Health if warranted.

Record Keeping

The Superintendent of Schools will maintain records with information received from all district sites regarding rates of illness at schools during communicable disease outbreak. In addition, first aid records will be maintained.

Annual Review

The communicable disease prevention plan will be reviewed annually and updated as required or as new information becomes available.

5. School Closures:

1. The Provincial Health Officer will direct the province when it is time to take additional measures. The Medical Health Officer for Interior Health Authority will direct the District if closure of specific district site(s) is/are required. If, to minimize the spread of infection, activation of these plans is to include school closures, the Medical Health Officer will advise the Superintendent of Schools.

Or

2. The Ministry of Education and Child Care can direct school closures occur to reduce the spread of infection in the school population or for other public health reasons.

Example: Communicable Disease Outbreak

- a) BCCDC informs: → Provincial Health Officer and Medical Health Officer
- b) Medical Health Officer Informs: → Superintendent of Schools
- c) Superintendent of Schools informs: → Ministry of Education and Child Care



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COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

3. The Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the Medical Health Officer, the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Principal, will direct school closure as necessary.
4. Re-opening a school or site following a closure will be directed by the Superintendent of Schools, accomplished in consultation with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Child Care.
5. Communication for school closures is the responsibility of the office of the Superintendent of Schools.