

Pandemic Annex

Emergency Operation Plan

Serving
Gilliam – Wheeler – Sherman County Schools



Arlington School District

Condon School District

Fossil School District

Spray School District

Mitchell School District

North Central ESD

Sherman County School District

Dear Sherman County School Community,

The following Pandemic Annex Emergency Plan was developed by administrative leadership and support staff from the seven school districts in our region. Our goal is to ensure we are protecting the entire school community of students, parents, and staff in the event of a Pandemic Emergency.

I personally ask you to read through the attached plan to help you understand how our school, and schools within our local region, will be responding to a pandemic event.

Since much of our local response is guided by state and federal support and oversight, I ask that you continue to monitor our District's Web Site for current information.

Sincerely,

Wes Owens
Superintendent
wowens@sherman.k12.or.us

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Background:

The Sherman County School District Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) is made up of several components. In order to ensure efficient and effective emergency management, the components of the EOP must be implemented in its entirety.

The purpose of a Pandemic Annex is to provide a general, comprehensive plan to help protect the whole school community (students, staff, and visitors) from new communicable diseases. This plan is not intended to build fear but to provide a thoughtful, measured response to help support health and safety in the school community.

There are some diseases that are *endemic*, such as the seasonal flu, which are expected to infect people at a general rate every year. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a *pandemic* is the worldwide spread of a new disease. This can be concerning as the new disease and its impacts are not well known.

There is usually some warning, and therefore time, to prepare for a pandemic before it reaches the community. As a pandemic is the spread of new disease, disease-specific information for prevention, protection, mitigation, and recovery from infection and community impact will become available as experts learn more about the disease. While disease-specific information may not always be known, there are general communicable disease prevention practices that can help protect people from infection.

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 so the District may close schools early in an event. Any decision to close schools will be done at the recommendation of State and Local Health Officials.

There is the potential for great impact on general community and school functions in relation to pandemics. As such, the creation of this Pandemic Annex is intended to help prepare the District to support the school community (students, staff, and visitors) to be safe and healthy *before, during, and after* a pandemic.

General Outline

This annex is broken down into three sections:

- *Before* – This section details how the school will prepare and protect the school community before the new disease reaches the community.
- *During* – This section details how the school will mitigate the impact of and respond to the disease if it reaches the school community.
- *After* – This section details how the school will recover from and return to general operations once the disease is no longer present in the school community or has become endemic in the broader community.

Each section will have:

- *Goal(s)* – Broad general statements that indicate the desired outcome.
- *Objective(s)* – Specific, measurable actions that are necessary to achieve the goals.
- *Course(s) of Action* – Address the what, who, when, where, why, and how.

When appropriate, the Pandemic Annex will refer to *functional annexes*, such as the Communications Annex, to support a thorough response.

Considerations in the Pandemic Annex Development

Potential School Impact Issues Considered:

- Potential for schools closing; loss of teaching days.
- Large numbers of staff absent, difficult to maintain school operations.
- Loss of services from supply and support services (i.e. food services and transportation).
- Student absenteeism elevated above normal trends.
- Parents who choose to keep children at home.
- Loss of ability to continue operations in support departments.
- Cancellation of extracurricular activities (i.e. athletic events and dances).
- Cancellation of fieldtrip activities.

Potential Community Impacts Considered:

- Large percentages of the population may be unable to work for days to weeks during the pandemic either due to illness or caring for ill dependents.
- Significant number of people and expertise would be unavailable.
- Emergency and essential services such as fire, police, and medical may be diminished.
- School operations could be affected by decreased community support capacities and critical infrastructures.
- Financial and social impacts of prolonged schools' closures.
- Large number of students/kids under quarantine protocols.
- Lack of consumable goods.
- Methods of continued instructions should school buildings close.

Access Control on School District Property:

- Follow visitor and volunteer policies that enables school administrators to control access to the buildings.
- Each should have a plan to lock out certain entrances and exits and to monitor others, if necessary.

Before a Pandemic

This is the point at which a new communicable disease has been identified somewhere in the world, and is spreading, but is not yet worldwide or impacting the community.

Goal: To protect the school community from the spread of new communicable diseases.

Objective: Prepare the school community with non-medical ways to limit the spread of illness.

Courses of Action:

- Wes Owens and designated staff will review the hand hygiene practices outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [found at the hyperlink here](#) and <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html> with all members of the school community.
- Wes Owens and designated staff will post handwashing health promotion materials from the CDC, [found at the hyperlink here](#) and <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html> in the common areas throughout each school building.
- The local Public Health Authority will create, or provide, a flier detailing information on infection symptoms and how to stop the spread of the pandemic. The District will communicate this information to families.
- The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) website, [hyperlink here](#), and at <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/pages/index.aspx>.
- Wes Owens and designated staff will check district first aid and biohazard kits as needed.

Objective: Maintain a clean environment in all school buildings and transportation vehicles.

Courses of Action:

- Wes Owens and designated staff will find out if vendors in the food and cleaning supply chains have a pandemic or emergency plan for continuity or recovery of supply deliveries.
- Custodial staff will inventory hand washing, hand sanitizing, and cleaning supplies and notify the Supervisor of inventory counts and needs.
- Ensure custodial staff has appropriate training on proper cleaning and disinfecting of work and play areas per available guidelines as specific to the disease.
- Custodial staff will clean and disinfect all high frequency touch surfaces such as doorknobs, tabletops, telephones, and computers daily.

- Ensure teaching and support staff have training on and access to proper disinfecting supplies.
- Teaching and support staff will use provided cleaning supplies to wipe down high touch surfaces during the school day.
- Ensure Mid-Co transportation support staff have appropriate training on proper cleaning of transportation vehicles.
- Mid-Co Transportation and support staff will wipe down high touch surfaces during the school day.
- Sanitizing stations will be made available at the main entrances of each school building with signs instructing people to sanitize their hands upon entering the building.
- Sanitizing stations will be made available in the cafeteria of each school building with signs instructing people to sanitize, or wash, their hands prior to eating.
- Identify areas in school buildings that can be used for short-term isolation or quarantine in the case an infected individual is identified on school grounds to create separation from the general population prior to arrangements for their transportation off campus.

Objective: Maintain clear communications with students, staff, parents, and the community on school pandemic planning efforts. This will be through our school messenger system and letters.

Courses of Action:

- Make the Pandemic Annex available for access online by the general public via the District website.
- Link to information online, via the District website, regarding pandemic planning for families. If there are disease-specific recommendations available from the CDC or Oregon Health Authority (OHA) utilize those resources. If not, utilize the CDC published “Get Your Household Ready for Pandemic Flu April 2017” [which can be found at the hyperlink here](#) or at <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/gr-pan-flu-ind-house.pdf>.
- Wes Owens and designated staff will create a one-page information sheet detailing the steps being taken by the District to prepare for, protect from, limit and mitigate the impact of, and recover from the pandemic. The District will plan for communication to families sharing the steps being taken to protect the school community.
- As needed, and when possible, communications are posted and available in both English and Spanish.
- Review and/or test emergency communications protocols.
- Establish a direct line of communication with the local Public Health Authority during normal business hours and after hours via the non-emergency phone number to County dispatch services.

Objective: Track student and staff attendance and absenteeism rates.

Courses of Action:

- Identify a staff person, and backup individual, to be responsible for tracking attendance and absenteeism rates of both students and staff.
- Staff person to report weekly trends to District and School leadership individuals.
- With District administration approval, deidentified attendance and absenteeism rates to be shared with the local Public Health Authority.
- Encourage staff and students with potential symptoms to follow local Public Health Authority guidance on ill individuals.
- Staff, students, and visitors who observe potential pandemic symptoms in themselves or others while on school grounds are to notify the front office or a supervisor.

Objective: Support mental wellbeing in school community.

Courses of Action:

- When staffed, and if available, school-based Counselors and Qualified Mental Health Professional/Assistants will support student mental wellbeing. Any students displaying visible signs of distress or unease are to be given the option of connecting with a school Counselor or QMHP/QMHA.
- All staff will maintain calm, supervise, and reassure students of the efforts and monitoring being done by the District and local Public Health Authority to take appropriate actions relating to the potential pandemic.
- Staff may only share information related to the potential pandemic that has been verified by the local Public Health Authority as accurate and approved by the school for sharing within the school community. Approved information will be provided to school staff by District and/or school leadership.

During a Pandemic

This is the point at which a new communicable disease has been declared a pandemic and is likely to impact the community.

Goal: To mitigate the impact of the spread of new communicable diseases on the school community.

Objective: Prepare the school community with non-medical ways to limit the spread of illness.

Courses of Action:

- Repeat all “Courses of Action” listed in the “Before a Pandemic” section as appropriate.
- Educated the school community on “social distancing” practices which are things that can be done to reduce the spread of disease from person to person by discouraging people from coming into close contact with one another. Social distancing may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:
 - Not holding hands.
 - Not sharing writing or eating utensils.
 - Not sharing beverages.
 - Making sure to stay 3 feet or more away from other people.
 - Not shaking hands, hugging, or kissing.
 - Stopping non-essential functions in the school and administrative offices.
 - Encouraging students and staff to eat box lunches in the classroom instead of gathering together in the cafeteria.
 - Cancelling after school activities and fieldtrips.
 - Cancelling special functions such as dances, theater presentations, assemblies, etc.
 - Allowing only essential school visitors.
 - Prohibit congregation of students and staff in the hallways.
 - Stagger class changes to avoid gathering of students in the hallways.
 - Stagger daily dismissal to avoid gatherings of students.
 - Separate student desks and work areas when possible.
 - Closure of school buildings and/or the entire district.
- Staff will work to maintain calm, supervise, and reassure all students of the efforts the school is taking to support health and limit the spread of disease.
- When possible, during the day when weather and operations permit, increase ventilation to the facility to decrease spread of disease.
- When possible, following each school day, the school should be thoroughly ventilated opening all doors and windows or turning the air conditioning/heating systems up.

- In the event a vaccine becomes available, the District will partner with the local Public Health Authority on vaccination availability.

Objective: Prepare the school community for possible closure.

Courses of Action:

- Encourage parents to have alternative childcare plans in the event of a school building or district-wide closure. For parents who are employed, inform them of Oregon’s Family Leave Law which entitles them to 12 weeks unpaid leave within a 12-month period for care of a family member with a serious health condition. This is to be done via the website, social media, and mass email whenever possible.
- Review the substitute teacher pool list and verify they are willing and able to work during the pandemic. Report findings to school and district leadership staff.
- Create a workforce reduction plan in the case of an increase in workforce absenteeism rates. Determine the point at which an administrative closure would be necessary.
- Inform the school community of the different kinds of potential closures:
 - Administrative closure – done in the event the school, or district, can no longer maintain staffing levels necessary to provide essential school functions and ensure student safety.
 - School Emergency Closure – done in the event Sherman County School is unsafe, unhealthy, inaccessible, or inoperable due to one or more unforeseen natural events, mechanical failures, or actions or inactions by one or more persons.
 - District-wide Emergency Closure – done in the event that the building is unsafe, unhealthy, inaccessible, or inoperable due to one or more unforeseen natural events, mechanical failures, or actions or inactions by one or more persons.
- The District will work in consultation with the local Public Health Authority in order to decide whether or not a school closure is necessary at any point in the pandemic.
- In the event someone tests positive for the infection and has been on school grounds the district will work with the local Public Health Authority to determine the process moving forward and whether or not a school, or district closure, will occur.
- If, and when, possible the District will prepare the school community for distance education options/remote learning/virtual learning/ in the event of a school closure
- Essential personnel, in partnership with local Public Health Authority representatives, maintain regular contact via phone to stay up to date on pandemic status on any changes to the impact on school closure and functions.

Objective: Maintain a clean environment in all school buildings and transportation vehicles.

Courses of Action:

- Custodial staff will inventory hand washing, hand sanitizing, and cleaning supplies and notify the Supervisor of inventory counts and needs.
- Ensure custodial staff has appropriate training on proper cleaning and disinfecting of work and play areas.
- Custodial staff will clean and disinfect all high frequency touch surfaces such as doorknobs, tabletops, telephones, and computers daily.
- Ensure teaching and support staff have training on and access to proper disinfecting supplies.
- Teaching and support staff will use provided cleaning supplies to wipe down high touch surfaces during the school day.
- Ensure Mid-Co Transportation support staff has appropriate training on proper cleaning and disinfection of transportation vehicles.
- Mid-Co Transportation and support staff will use provided cleaning supplies to wipe down high touch surfaces during the school day.
- Sanitizing stations will be made available at the main entrances of each school building with signs instructing people to sanitize their hands upon entering the building.
- Sanitizing stations will be made available in the cafeteria of each school building with signs instructing people to sanitize, or wash, their hands prior to eating.
- Identify areas in school buildings that can be used for short-term isolation or quarantine in the case an infected individual is identified on school grounds to create separation from the general population prior to arrangement of their transportation off campus.
 - If someone is in need of emergency services call 911.
 - If someone is identified with possible pandemic symptoms, and is not in need of emergency services, they are to be temporarily isolated from the rest of the school community.
 - Notify the local Public Health Authority of the potential infection.
 - Follow the directions of the local Public Health Authority on next steps.
 - Follow school protocols for parent notification.
 - Staff and students will follow privacy guidelines and maintain anonymity of any individuals identified as having potential symptoms.

Objective: Safely transport students to and from school.

Courses of Action:

- See “Course of Action: Maintain a clean environment in all school buildings and transportation vehicles” for cleaning instructions.
- Any Mid-Co Transportation staff with pandemic symptoms are not to transport students in any capacity.
- If a staff member or student displays new pandemic-like symptoms, based on local Public Health Authority guidelines, while on a transportation vehicle, the driver is to:
 - If someone is in need of emergency services call 911.
 - Notify Mid-Co and the superintendent immediately to inform them of the situation.
 - Mid-Co is to inform the District administration office of the situation.
 - The District administration office will call the local Public Health Authority for consultation on next best steps.
- The Mid-Co Transportation staff will account for all students and personnel on their vehicle at that time and report this information to the transportation office.
- Visitors who present to the school, either before dismissal or after, are not permitted to move throughout the building and must wait in a designated area after following usual check-in procedures.

Objective: Track student and staff attendance and absenteeism rates.

Courses of Action:

- Identify a staff person, and backup individual, to be responsible for tracking attendance and absenteeism rates of both students and staff.
- Staff person to report daily trends to District and School leadership individuals.
- With District administration approval, deidentified attendance and absenteeism rates to be shared with the local Public Health Authority.
- Encourage staff and students with potential symptoms to follow local Public Health Authority guidance on ill individuals.
- Staff, students, and visitors who observe potential pandemic symptoms in themselves or others while on school grounds are to notify the front office or a supervisor immediately.

Objective: Maintain clear communications with students, staff, parents, and the community on school pandemic response efforts.

Courses of Action:

- As needed, and when possible, communications are posted and available in both English and Spanish.
- Provide information to the public regarding the Pandemic Annex and any changes in school functions.
- Maintain a direct line of communication with the local Public Health Authority during normal business hours and after hours via the non-emergency phone number to County dispatch services.
- Establish a direct line of communication with County Emergency Response Incident Command Center.
- In the case of a school closure, communicate with the public via available pathways. Include clear, concise information on:
 - Reason for closure.
 - Planned length of closure.
 - How the decision was made.
 - Agencies involved in the decision-making process.
 - Date it is anticipated school will restart.
 - Impact on student schoolwork, how students can obtain necessary materials, and plan for distance education options.
 - How updates will be communicated.

Objective: Support mental wellbeing in school community.

Courses of Action:

- When staffed, and if available, school-based Counselors and QMHP/QMHA's will support student mental wellbeing. Any students displaying visible signs of distress or unease are to be given the option of connecting with a school Counselor.
- All staff will maintain calm, supervise, and reassure students of the efforts and monitoring being done by the District and local Public Health Authority to take appropriate actions relating to the pandemic.

- Staff may only share information related to the pandemic that has been verified by the local Public Health Authority as accurate and approved by the school for sharing within the school community. Approved information will be provided to school staff by District and/or school leadership.
- The District will contact the local Mental Health Authority for support services and resources.

After a Pandemic

This is the point at which the community has either been declared free of the disease or the disease has become endemic in the population which means outbreaks are expected to continue occurring on a seasonal basis, similar to seasonal flu.

Goal: Return the school community to normal, daily functions.

Objective: Inventory and stock supplies needed for daily function.

Courses of Action:

- Custodial staff to inventory all cleaning and disinfecting materials and supplies making note of any products that need to be ordered. Inform supervisor of inventory numbers and needs.
- Custodial staff to inventory hand sanitizer supplies. Supervisors, in collaboration with school leadership and custodial staff, are to determine the necessary amount of hand sanitizer needed to be prepared for future pandemics. Product is to be ordered, stocked, and cycled through on a regular basis so as not to expire.
- Food services staff are to inventory all remaining perishable and non-perishable food items taking note of any foods or products that need to be ordered. Inform supervisor of inventory numbers and needs.

Objective: Maintain a clean environment in all school buildings and transportation vehicles.

Courses of Action:

- The District will consult with the local Public Health Authority to determine whether or not supplemental contracted custodial staff and/or specialized training is necessary to properly disinfect the school prior to returning to normal daily functions.
- Custodial staff will clean and disinfect all high frequency touch surfaces such as doorknobs, tabletops, telephones, and computers daily on an ongoing basis.
- Sanitizing stations will be made available at the main entrances of each school building with signs instructing people to sanitize their hands upon entering the building.
- Sanitizing stations will be made available in the cafeteria of each school building with signs instructing people to sanitize, or wash, their hands prior to eating.

Objective: Support the school community to return to the learning environment.

Courses of Action:

- The District will work with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to determine an appropriate course of action following school closures.
- School District Leadership is to document and share with the school community information on any waivers from the Oregon Department of Education.
- Continue working with the County Emergency Response Incident Command Center at on community recovery.

Objective: Continue messaging and education to the school community on non-medical ways to limit the spread of illness.

Courses of Action:

- The District will review the hand hygiene practices outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [found at the hyperlink here](#) and <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html> with all members of the school community.
- Wes Owens or designee will post handwashing health promotion materials from the CDC, [found at the hyperlink here](#) and <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html> in the common areas throughout each school building.
- Wes Owens or designee to check district first aid and biohazard kits as needed.

Objective: Support mental wellbeing in school community.

Courses of Action:

- When staffed, and if available, school-based Counselors and QMHP/QMHA's will support student mental wellbeing. Any students displaying visible signs of distress or unease are to be given the option of connecting with a school Counselor.
- All staff will maintain calm, supervise, and reassure students of the efforts and monitoring being done by the District and local Public Health Authority to take appropriate actions relating to the pandemic.
- Staff may only share information related to the pandemic that has been verified by the local Public Health Authority as accurate and approved by the school for sharing within the school community. Approved information will be provided to school staff by District and/or school leadership.
- The District will contact the local Mental Health Authority for support services and resources