

Granite Falls School District

Pandemic Flu Information/Plan/Procedures

MAY 2007; Updated MARCH 2008; Updated APRIL 2009; Updated OCTOBER 2009

Pandemic Influenza Information

With the United States' heightened awareness regarding a possible pandemic flu, the Granite Falls School District has developed information and basic plan of action in case a pandemic flu does affect our region based on the recommendations from the Center for Disease Control. This plan will be continual updated as information becomes available through state and federal resources. *The District will follow the lead of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to address many issues yet unresolved (180-day/graduation requirement, personnel/payroll issues, student learning alternatives, special education student obligations, costs associated with such as event, etc).*

What is the flu and its symptoms?

Flu, also called influenza, is a contagious disease of the lungs and airways. Usually influenza viruses are spread in droplets of cough and sneezes. Flu symptoms include fever, headache, sore throat, body aches, cough, runny nose, stomach and intestinal discomfort, extreme tiredness

What is a flu pandemic?

A flu pandemic means a worldwide outbreak of the disease.

How does seasonal flu differ from pandemic flu?

Seasonal Flu

- Occurs every year usually in the winter.
- Affects up to about 10% of the population.
- For most people it is an unpleasant but not life-threatening infection.
- Annual vaccination is available for those at risk of serious illness.

Pandemic Flu

- Occurs rarely (three times in the 20th century).
- May affect around 25% of the population.
- It could be a more serious infection for everyone.
- Vaccine probably would not be available in the early stages of a pandemic.

How can I protect my family and myself?

- Ask about a flu shot.
- Wash hands often (for 20 seconds).
- Cover your cough and sneeze with tissue or sleeve.
- Stay home if you feel sick.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes.
- **Practice healthy habits!** Eat healthy foods, get plenty of rest, and exercise regularly.

Emergency Preparations, Response, Recovery

Granite Falls School District has developed a preliminary plan to address the needs of Pandemic Influenza. We have followed the guidelines provided by the Center for Disease Control and provide updates as needed, or as directed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction or the Snohomish Health District. In the case of a pandemic flu event, the district will follow established Infectious Disease protocols as outlined by the health department and the “Infectious Disease Control Guide for School Staff“ (June 2004, Washington State Department of Health & Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction). We will initiate the district planning, response and recovery procedures as follows:

Infectious Disease Control Procedures

In order to safeguard the school community from the spread of certain communicable diseases the Granite Falls School District follows the recommendations provided by the Washington State Department of Health and Snohomish Health District in regard to:

1. Notifiable Conditions: if a disease is reportable, the local health officer is notified and the Health Officer’s directions are followed.
2. The reporting of said conditions and absenteeism above 10%; when a notifiable condition is identified or absenteeism is above 10%, the health department’s recommendations are again followed.

We also follow the guidelines provided in the “Infectious Disease Control Guide for School Staff” provided jointly by Washington State Department of Health and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Pandemic Influenza Relevant Stakeholders

(As identified per CDC checklist)

1. Lead Emergency Response Agency:

- Snohomish Health District
- SNO-COM, EMS
- FEMA
- Law Enforcement
- OSPI

2. District Administrators:

- District Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent and Director of Operations
- Communications Office
- School Principals
- School Assistant Principals

3. The following in alphabetical (not hierarchical order, for each administrator, the associated staff is included in the picture)

- Athletic Director
- District Administrative Staff
- Food Services Manager

- Health Services Program Manager/Health Services Department Chairperson (School Nurses)
- Parents/Guardians
- Psychological Services Program Manager (Counselors/Psychologists)
- Teachers/Educational Staff
- Transportation

Mitigation and Prevention

The district preliminary plan is based upon the guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and the checklist system and suggested information posted on pandemicflu.gov website and by the Department of Health and Human Services Department. Information was also gathered from the Edmonds School District, the Bethel School District, Washington State School Director’s Association (WSSDA), Snohomish County Health District and the Contra Costa Health Services.

To mitigate the effects of a Pandemic the following actions will be taken:

Communications

Different forms of communication will be used to keep staff, students and parents informed of announcements and plans from the Snohomish Health District and plans for the district’s response if the pandemic should affect the Granite Falls School District. The district has in place the following communication procedures: district website, Facebook/Twitter, local newspaper, radio and TV stations for announcements, school and district level newsletters, automated phone calling system for high school students, email communication systems, posters at all schools, staff email and phone trees.

Preparedness

Snohomish Health District will make the recommendation/determination when to close schools and businesses. The district will support their decision-making process by providing the reporting of absences according to the county communicable disease procedures.

Pandemic Influenza updates from the Health District will be monitored by district personnel. Notification for school closure will be through the Health District to the Superintendent.

Procedures for the schools up to the time of closure will include:

| Responsible Staff | Area | Description of Responsibility |
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| Communications Office Human Resource Secretary | Distribution of Information | The district will post flyers and posters as reminders of healthy habits (cover cough, wash hands) |

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| <p>School Nurse Health Room Attendants School Secretaries</p> <p>Custodian Maintenance</p> | <p>Health Room</p> | <p>Symptoms of flu and what to look for in order to identify ill students and staff will be maintained by the district nurse and school health attendants.</p> <p>Students or staff suspected of having the flu should be kept separate from other students using the health room for medication distribution, etc.</p> <p>Schools may need to stock extra gloves and tissues to address the needs of students and staff ill with influenza. Schools may look into purchasing masks or respirator masks.</p> <p>Annual training of staff on proper hygiene techniques and signs/symptoms of flu.</p> <p>Extra thorough cleaning may be indicated during influenza outbreaks when schools are open.</p> |
| <p>Administrative Staff Human Resource Office</p> | <p>Administrative Absence</p> | <p>District Office and schools will follow their Incident Command emergency chain of command to fill administrative positions due to illness.</p> |
| <p>School Administrator Assistant Principal Human Resource Office</p> | <p>Potential Absences</p> | <p>Schools will identify staff that due to health condition or pregnancy will not be able to be present at school once the flu has been identified. Information will be shared with Human Resources to be considered along with the absences called in due to illness.</p> |
| <p>School Administrator</p> | <p>Staff illness</p> | <p>Schools need to be sure staff emergency contact lists are up-to-date.</p> |
| <p>Critical Incident Team School Counselors Human Resource Office</p> | <p>Support</p> | <p>School counselors will identify resources available for counseling support for employees.</p> |

Response

| Responsible Staff | Area | Description of Responsibility |
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| <p>School Nurse Health Attendants School Secretaries</p> <p>Custodian Maintenance staff</p> | <p>Care of students/staff with flu like symptoms.</p> | <p>Students or staff exhibiting flu symptoms will be cared for in a separate location away from other health room users. Parents or emergency contact will be called immediately. Student may wear surgical masks until picked up. This will reduce but not guarantee the spread of disease. If anyone is suspected or discovered to have symptoms that may result in pandemic/epidemic that person shall be quarantined pending further medical examination and local health officials notified. Such people will not be allowed to return to school until medical clearance is provided (see policy 5160 and 5065).</p> <p>Custodian can be contacted for significant cleaning of the area. Daily cleaning of the Health Room is done by custodial staff with the product currently recommended by Custodial Services.</p> |
| <p>School Nurse Health Room Attendants School Secretaries</p> | <p>Reporting of Illness Flu symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Headache • Sore throat • Body aches • Cough • Runny nose • Stomach and intestinal discomfort • Extreme tiredness | <p>Nurse/Health Room staff will keep a confidential record of students and staff exhibiting flu symptoms who are sent home. When absences are called in, Health Room or school secretarial staff will note those that are home due to flu like symptoms. The school staff is to report these illnesses to the district nurse. Students or staff with these symptoms are to be sent home, isolated and cared for until parent/guardian/emergency contact can pick them up.</p> <p>--Reporting of symptoms when Pandemic Influenza suspected: Call Snohomish Health District.</p> <p>--Reporting to the Health Department of symptoms when Pandemic Influenza known in community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a confidential roster with the following information—name, age, class, contact information, symptoms, date and time of symptom onset (FERPA will be followed as allowed by law to maintain student privacy rights). |

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| School Principal working with Communications Office and Snohomish County Health Human Resource Secretary | Communications to Staff | Updates will be given to staff on the extent of infection at each school site and potential changes that may take place. |
| Communications Office Human Resource Secretary | Communications to Parents | Will provide information to parents on prevention procedures, and provide information in cooperation with Health District as to the school status – open or closed and if closed when reopening is anticipated. |
| Administrative Staff Principals Assistant Principal | Debriefings | Administrative staff will conduct timely debriefings to identify lessons learned and make necessary changes to the response plan. |
| Director of Operations/ Communications Office Custodians Maintenance | Building Use during a Pandemic (perhaps by Emergency Services) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate building use by outside health or emergency agencies while schools closed. • Coordinate cleaning of buildings in use by outside agencies during this time. • Coordinate cleaning at the end of this usage time period. • Verify school safe for use by students and staff after use by outside agencies. |

Recovery

| Responsible Staff | Area | Description of Responsibility |
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| School Principal Assistant Principal Counselors | Critical Incident Team services | If necessary, the building principal will contact counselors for assistance in grief counseling support for students and staff. |

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| Communications Office Human Resource Secretary | General Information | Provide information in cooperation with Health District Staff on extent of pandemic flu in the community and activities that may assist students and staff; signs and symptoms to look out for and safe room function and location at each school. Also announce counseling support services available to faculty and staff. |
| District Nurse Health Attendants School Secretaries | On-going assessments | The district nurse/health attendants will provide physical assessments or make appropriate community health referrals. |
| Communications Office and Critical Incident Team Human Resource Secretary | Families and Staff Information | Make educational materials available to families and staff on topics such as how to support your student with their recovery from pandemic flu, common symptoms of loss and grief, and constructive ways to cope with stress. . |
| District Nurse and Critical Incident Team School Principal Assistant Principal | Long-term assistance | Identify students, families, and staff who may need long-term physical and mental health support or intervention and develop school and community resources to provide these services. |
| School Principal Assistant Principal Human Resource Office | Staff well-being | Monitor the effects of cumulative stress on caregivers such as office staff, school nurses, and teachers, aides, school counselors, and other crisis team members. |
| Human Resource Office Superintendent Assistant Superintendent | Staff Assistance | Modify work roles and responsibilities or add volunteer or support staff as needed. |

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| <p>Critical Incident Team School Principal Assistant Principal</p> | <p>Student Follow-up</p> | <p>Follow-up with any student referrals</p> |
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| <p>Administrative Team/Incident Command School Principal Assistant Principal Superintendent</p> | <p>Incident de-briefing</p> | <p>Conduct debriefing meeting(s) to document “lessons learned” and incorporate them into revisions and trainings.</p> |
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Important School Messages Regarding Sickness

- **Remind students and staff to cover noses and mouths with a tissue or sleeve** when coughing or sneezing and have tissues readily available. Make sure tissues are available in all classrooms and common areas such as libraries and lunchrooms and remind students and staff to dispose of used tissues in appropriate waste receptacles. If hands become contaminated with respiratory secretions while coughing or sneezing, perform proper hand hygiene as soon as possible.
- **Remind students and staff to clean their hands and make sure they have the supplies to do so.** Frequent hand washing with soap and water will help protect students and staff from viruses. Alcohol-based hand rubs may be used as an alternative. Work with your school's janitorial staff to ensure that restrooms are stocked with soap and paper towels or working hand dryers.
- **Encourage sick students and staff to stay home.** Sick students and staff should stay home from school until they have been without fever for 24 hours to help prevent spreading illness to others.
- **Encourage staff and families to inquire about getting the flu shot.** Each year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sends medical providers a list of people who are at highest risk for complications from the flu and who should receive a flu shot. In most cases, anyone who wants a flu shot can get one.
- **Encourage staff and janitorial team to wipe down any surfaces** that may have been contaminated by saliva or other respiratory secretions. Use a household disinfectant labeled for activity against bacteria and viruses, an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant.

What is flu?

Flu, also called influenza, is a contagious disease of the lungs and airways. Flu symptoms usually include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Stomach and intestinal discomfort
- Tiredness

Flu may be mild in some people, severe in others and causes death to about 36,000 people each year in the United States. Older people, young children and people with certain illnesses or chronic medical conditions are at higher risk for serious flu complications.

What causes flu?

A virus causes flu. A virus is a microscopic organism that lives and reproduces within a cell and causes a disease such as measles, mumps, whooping cough, hepatitis or chickenpox. Some viruses kill people, others just make people ill. Once a virus infects someone, there is no way to get rid of it. An antibiotic cannot kill a virus. Sometimes other kinds of medicines can help to lessen the symptoms. Prevention is the key to keeping viruses from spreading to someone else. Researchers have identified three types of influenza viruses, named A, B, and C:

- Influenza A: can infect people, birds, pigs, horses, seals, whales and other animals. Wild birds are the natural hosts for these viruses. There are subtypes of influenza A. Some subtypes cause illness in humans, and some cause illness in animals. Problems may occur when an influenza subtype virus that only infects animals expands its ability to infect humans. Since a person has no history of protection against the virus, the new subtype virus causes people to become very ill or die. See the information below about Avian or Bird Flu for an example of a subtype that is expected to move from infecting only birds to one that infects humans.
- Influenza B: found only in humans. There have been no recorded Influenza B pandemics in humans.
- Influenza C: causes mild illness in humans. There have been no recorded Influenza C pandemics in humans.

How is flu spread?

Usually flu is spread from one person to another through droplets containing the flu virus. You can inhale a flu virus by breathing in droplets after someone sneezes or coughs. Or, if someone coughs or sneezes into her/his hand and then touches something like a doorknob or telephone receiver, the virus can live for several hours on those surfaces. If you touch those items, and then rub or your nose or eyes, you could carry the flu virus into your body. Influenza is contagious from one day before someone feels symptoms of flu to about 5 days after that individual gets sick. During the contagious time, the virus is actively being shed from nose, throat and lungs.

How can I prevent catching the flu?

1. Get vaccinated. Currently, two types of vaccinations occur. One is a flu shot. Injected material contains inactivated virus that your body reacts to by building defenses against that virus. This type of vaccine works effectively for people of all ages and medical conditions. Each year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sends medical providers a list of people who are at highest risk for complications from the flu and who should receive a flu shot. In general, anyone who wants a flu shot can get one. The other is an effective nasal spray vaccine. This type, which uses live, weakened flu virus, can be used by healthy people between 5 and 49 years old who are not pregnant.
2. Wash your hands frequently. Since viruses live on almost any surface for several hours, anything you touch could contain flu virus. Washing your hands throughout the day reduces the likelihood that you will carry a flu virus to your nose or mouth.
3. Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes. Even if you wash your hands, try to avoid touching any mucous membrane, such as your eyes, nose, or mouth, to prevent getting flu virus into your body.
4. Practice healthy habits. Keeping yourself healthy helps your body defend itself against viruses that make you ill. Healthy habits include getting plenty of rest; eating healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains; exercising or including physical activity into your routine 4 to 6 days per week; and taking steps to reduce your stress, including relaxing every day.

If I get the flu, how can I keep from infecting others?

1. Stay home from school, work or social events if you have a fever and respiratory symptoms. If you or any of your family members are experiencing any flu symptoms, stay home. Flu symptoms include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose and muscle aches. Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea may also occur, and are more common among children than adults.
2. Cover coughs and sneezes. Always cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Cover your mouth and nose with the inside of your elbow or a tissue. Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hand. If you use tissues to contain droplets or discharges from your nose and mouth immediately dispose in the garbage and wash your hands thoroughly. Remind others to do the same.
3. Most important of all, wash your hands with soap and water frequently and/or use hand sanitizers.

What is a flu pandemic?

From the Greek words “pan,” meaning “all,” and “demos,” meaning “people,” a pandemic is a disease that affects a large number of people over a very wide area. In general, a flu pandemic means a worldwide outbreak of the disease. Three conditions must be met to reach the flu pandemic category:

1. A new flu virus subtype happens.
2. The virus infects humans, causing serious illness.
3. The virus spreads easily and continues to infect humans.

What is the difference between seasonal and pandemic flu?

Subtypes of the flu virus already present in humans cause seasonal flu outbreaks. Because they are already present, vaccines have been developed to prevent people from becoming infected or people have developed resistance because they have that type of flu before. A pandemic flu virus is caused by a new subtype of the flu virus that has never circulated in humans before. No vaccine is available at the onset of the virus, so high levels of illness and death could occur.

How often do flu pandemics occur?

Influenza pandemics have occurred three times in the recent past; in 1918, 1957 and 1968. Public health and medical experts believe that a pandemic will happen again soon. In some ways, we may be in more danger now because of the ease of modern air travel.

What is the treatment for regular or seasonal flu: Home remedies such as rest, lots of fluids, and over-the-counter medicines (like Tylenol and decongestants) will help you feel better. Elderly people and young children are at most risk for hospitalization and complications from the flu. If a person has a severe choking cough, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, they should seek medical care right away.

What other resources will give me information about influenza?

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/
- World Health Organization www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html.
- Washington state Department of Health www.doh.wa.gov

Will medical masks help decrease the spread of a pandemic flu?

If effective vaccines and anti-viral medications do not exist, masks could help prevent or slow influenza transmission. However, most masks that are available to the public are designed to be disposable and do not effectively seal against the spread of germs. In the event of a pandemic they would be better protection than a woven cloth mask, a handkerchief, scarf, or no protection at all and improvised devices may be the only option available. At this time the school district does not anticipate having masks on hand for students and staff. Other interventions, such as washing your hands, covering your cough, and staying home when sick, will continue to play a critical role in preventative strategies.

How do we keep our schools clean, and how will our practices change in the event of a pandemic?

The Granite Falls School District currently has a full custodial staff that cleans our schools daily. Custodial work is driven by how often something needs to be cleaned. For example, restrooms are cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis, and walls are spot-cleaned on a weekly basis. Normally, areas that are disinfected daily include: restroom fixtures, such as sinks and toilets, door handles/push plates, mirrors, soap and paper dispensers, restroom floors, classroom sinks, and water fountains. In the event of a pandemic, our routines would be significantly increased. Daily and throughout the day, custodians will clean and disinfect as many surfaces as possible that staff, students, and

visitors touch in our schools. Custodians are trained to provide clean, healthy buildings and will lead the effort to protect the health of our community in the schools.

Should we be using certain soaps?

Plain soap and water are best! You do not need to use antibacterial soaps to stay healthy. The best way to remove bad bacteria is to wash thoroughly. Try to wash your hands for 20 seconds before rinsing.