

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

Board Business Continuity Plan



September 16, 2009

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
PURPOSE OF THE PLAN	4
KEY CONSIDERATIONS	4
BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING COMMITTEE	5
REGIONAL PLAN ACTIVATION	5
SCHOOL CLOSURES	6
SCHOOL PLAN ACTIVATION	6
CRITICAL SCHOOL OPERATIONS	7
COMMUNICATIONS	8
BOARD COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST	9
PANDEMIC ACTION PLAN FLOWCHART – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	10
ACTION PLAN CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS	15
CHAIN OF COMMAND	17
APPENDIX 1: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	29
APPENDIX 2: ISOLATION ROOMS	31
APPENDIX 3: EMPLOYEE SUPPORT	32
APPENDIX 4: CONTACT INFORMATION	35

Tri-County Regional School Board Business Continuity Plan

Introduction

The goal of this Tri-County Regional School Board Business Continuity Plan is to ensure clear communication and effective problem solving. The Plan will rely on the collaboration of many community partners including students, staff, parents/guardians and members of the public to mitigate the impacts on the school system. The Tri-County Regional School Board will work closely with the Nova Scotia Departments of Health, Health Promotion and Protection and Education. The Plan is a living document that will be subject to change as issues arise and developments occur. This is normal, as the Plan is a continuation of the Board's Master Plan for Crisis Intervention, in this case most pointedly addressing concerns around the H1N1 pandemic.

The Board's main priority with this Plan is the health and safety of students and staff.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this Plan is to support the continuation and/or reinstatement of critical school and school board functions during a pandemic or other emergency situation.

The Plan fosters business continuity by outlining the action plans and processes to be followed by each school and school board department as they work toward the resumption of normal business operations.

Key Considerations

In preparing this plan it is assumed that that the Board will experience significant absenteeism as a result of a pandemic.

When preparing this plan the planning team considered that:

- the pandemic virus may spread rapidly leaving little or no time to prepare;
 - the pandemic may be widespread with simultaneous outbreaks;
 - there may be shortages of healthcare, emergency, and essential services personnel due to illness and absenteeism;
 - there may be severe disruptions in essential services; and
 - there may be shortages of equipment and supplies.
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Business Continuity Planning Committee

The Board has established a Business Continuity Planning Committee comprised of the Superintendent of Schools, Director of Programs and Student Services, Director of Human Resources, Director of Operations, Coordinators of Programs P – 6 and 7-12, Health and Safety Officer, and Board Secretary who will be meeting regularly to closely monitor the situation. The purpose of this Committee is to act as resource and to make recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools.

Role of the Business Continuity Planning Committee

1. Direct the overall operation of the school system;
2. Receive reports from, and consult with, schools and Board staff;
3. Make decisions about the operation of the school system;
4. Oversee the release of information;
5. Report to the Board about the operation of the school system; and
6. Determine, if necessary, the closing of any school(s).

Regional Plan Activation

The Superintendent of Schools or designate shall have the authority to activate the Business Continuity Plan, suspend the delivery of services and/or redeploy staff, as necessary.

Each member of the TCRSB Business Continuity Planning Committee will designate an alternate individual to replace him/her if he/she is unable to attend work.

In this event, existing Board and school staff may be asked to assist in areas of responsibility that are different from their regular staff assignment.

When the Plan is activated, the following organizational changes may be made.

1. The Superintendent of Schools will continue to be responsible for directing the system on a day-to-day basis in conjunction with the Business Continuity Planning Committee comprised of the Superintendent of Schools, Director of Programs and Student Services, Director of Human Resources, Director of Operations, Coordinators of Programs P – 6 and 7-12, Health and Safety Officer, and Board Secretary who will be meeting regularly to closely monitor the situation.

2. The Business Continuity Planning Committee will consult with designated principals and other staff as necessary.
3. The Business Continuity Planning Committee will meet on a regular basis. The Committee will assess information received from school and Board staff and make decisions about next steps and meeting schedules.

School Closures

The Tri-County Regional School Board will rely on the advice and guidance of our provincial and local public health officials who have the expertise to assess the level of health risk posed by a specific situation. Our priority is to keep schools open as long as it is safe to do so. Decisions about closing schools for health reasons will be made in consultation with Department of Education and Health officials.

School Plan Activation

1. By 10:00 a.m. each day, Principals will report absenteeism and other building issues via an online database or directly by phone or e-mail.
2. It is the responsibility of each principal to ensure that there is always a representative (Principal, Vice Principal or Teacher in Charge) available to respond to an emergency situation.
3. Requests from the media will be directed to the Superintendent or designate to minimize disruptions at the school level. Media will be asked not to contact the schools directly. Any media inquiries to school personnel will be redirected to the Superintendent or designate.

Critical School Operations

Intention:

It is our intention to conduct the affairs of the Tri-County Regional School Board in accordance with existing Board policies and operating procedures to the extent possible.

As the situation changes, decisions related to the following areas will be made by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Business Continuity Planning Committee:

1. Community Use of Schools
2. Courier
3. School and Board Crisis Response Teams
4. Essential Maintenance Services
5. Extracurricular Activities
6. School Trips/Excursions
7. Food Programs
8. Garbage Collection
9. Tutoring
10. Meetings
11. Professional Development Activities
12. Security of Facilities
13. Student Transportation
14. Supplies Orders
15. Internships
16. External Agencies in Schools
17. Volunteers

Communications

Communication Goal

The Tri-County Regional School Board goal for communications is to inform our partners about the Business Continuity Plan and any related alterations to school and/or school board operations.

Communications Priorities

- Partners are confident that the TCRSB is well prepared for a pandemic.
- Partners are aware of the ways to get information, ask questions and receive clarification about the Plan.
- Partners are informed about the status of programs and services.

Strategic Considerations

- The Tri-County Regional School Board will rely on the advice and guidance of our provincial and local public health officials who have the expertise to assess the level of health risk posed by a specific situation. Our priority is to keep schools open as long as it is safe to do so.
- Decisions about closing schools for health reasons will be made in consultation with Department of Education and Health officials.
- The Board recognizes that nothing is more important to parents than the well being of their children. Parents will make the final decision regarding the school attendance of their children.

Key Messages

- The Tri-County Regional School Board is well prepared for a pandemic. Our plan is completely open to staff, parents/guardians, students and the community for their information, to ask questions and to receive clarification about the Plan.
- During a pandemic, the Tri-County Regional School Board will follow the advice and guidance of provincial and local public health officials who have the expertise to assess the level of health risk posed by a specific situation.

- Our priority during a pandemic is to keep schools open as long as it is safe to do so. Non-essential services may be restricted in order to focus on providing the most necessary services to our students.
- An action plan will be communicated to school board personnel and partners to support our priority of keeping schools open as long as it safe to do so.

Board Communications Checklist

- Create a new section on the TCRSB website to promote immediate access to pandemic plan information;
- Communicate to all employees in September 2009 to inform them about the pandemic plan. Create an information package that administrators and supervisors can use to communicate with their staff about the plan in fall 2009;
- Provide all schools with a parent communication, sharing the Board's Business Continuity Plan and how to get further information (TCRSB web site);
- Share information with community organizations, service providers and media;
- Participate in interagency pandemic planning;
- Provide regular updates to Board Members on the status of the pandemic situation;
- Update the Minister of Education regularly, through appropriate reporting channels;
- Publicize general restrictions on the community use of schools;
- Post information on website about all other cancellations;
- Hold media briefings or news conferences, if needed, to share significant news.

Pandemic Action Plan Flowchart – Roles and Responsibilities

Action Plan Flowchart

Priority: Keep schools open as long as it is safe to do so.

Purpose: The purpose of this plan is to support the continuation and/or reinstatement of critical school and school board operations during a pandemic.

Superintendent of Schools:

- activates pandemic plan;
- suspends service delivery in schools and the school board, as necessary; and
- redeploys personnel, as necessary

Business Continuity Planning Committee:

- guides the development, implementation, monitoring and revision of the pandemic plan; and
- acts as resource and makes recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent or designate:

- spearheads information sharing about the Pandemic Plan with school board personnel, students, parents, public and media;
- communicates with the Department of Education regarding the pandemic plan;
- handles media inquiries related to the pandemic plan

Schools and Board Departments:

- inform and update school board employees on the pandemic plan;
- provide support (training, supplies, etc.) for flu prevention strategies;
- complete assigned responsibilities within the pandemic plan;
- collect and report required data, such as staff absenteeism reports;
- direct parents and staff members to sources of pandemic information;

- revise instructional, professional development and sanitation practices in keeping with the board plan;
- work collaboratively with the Business Continuity Planning Committee on all aspects of plan implementation, monitoring and revision; and
- refer media inquiries on the pandemic to the Superintendent or designate

Roles and Responsibilities

Schools

- Inform staff, students, parents, community partners, School Advisory Councils and other members of the school community about the pandemic plan;
- Follow the pandemic plan on a daily basis, including the implementation of prevention, sanitation and isolation procedures;
- Collect and report daily summaries of student and staff absenteeism;
- Display current information on the pandemic plan;
- Monitor the availability of supplies and equipment at the school and immediately notify the Operations Department of any shortfalls;
- Identify, prepare staff and operate isolation rooms as per the pandemic plan specifications;
- Direct all media inquiries about the pandemic to the Board's Superintendent or designate;
- Arrange training for students and staff on specific prevention and sanitation procedures;
- Work collaboratively with school board personnel and community partners to maintain and promote a safe and healthy learning environment in schools;
- Revise school schedules and staff assignments to maximize the delivery of essential school services in consultation with the Director of Programs and Student Services; and
- Adjust individual and group school programs to ensure the safety of students and staff (e.g. updated Emergency Medical Plans for individuals with chronic medical conditions)

Programs and Student Services

- Monitor student and staff absenteeism and respond accordingly;
- Monitor and adjust delivery of the Public School Program in our schools;
- Maintain technology services to support communication during the pandemic;
- Revise practices to prevent the spread of the pandemic, such as professional development, meeting, travel and extracurricular activities;
- Liaise with community agencies in pandemic planning and response;
- Support schools in all aspects of pandemic plan implementation, monitoring and revision;
- Adjust group and individual programs to maximize the safety of students and staff; and
- Schedule staff meetings to provide information about department continuity plans. Managers/Supervisors hold meetings if necessary to make sure all staff receive messages face to face.

Operations

- Conduct all school board operations, including cleaning, maintenance, construction and transportation, in accordance with the pandemic plan;
- Ensure the completion of assigned duties such as specific cleaning tasks, disinfecting of hard surfaces in schools, and more frequent sanitation of school fountains, in association with school administration;
- Reschedule support staff to maximize the delivery of essential cleaning and transportation services during the pandemic;
- Ensure that schools and school board facilities are provided with required cleaning materials and sanitation supplies and equipment;
- Assist schools with the identification, set up, cleaning, monitoring, equipping and utilization of isolation rooms as per the pandemic plan;
- Monitor and address Occupational Health and Safety issues associated with the pandemic;

- Work with schools, other school board departments and outside agencies to continuously update pandemic information as it becomes available;
- Provide training to appropriate staff in specific sanitation strategies in relation to flu prevention; and
- Schedule staff meetings to provide information about department continuity plans. Managers/Supervisors hold meetings if necessary to make sure all staff receive messages face to face.

Human Resources

- Lead the Occupational Health and Safety components of the pandemic plan;
- Monitor staff absenteeism and respond accordingly;
- Confer with employees and unions on pandemic related issues, such as sick leave provisions;
- Modify staff hiring and replacement practices as necessary;
- Maintain updated casual and substitute list to assist with the hiring of replacement staff for affected employees;
- Work with supervisors, school administrators and/or health care professionals to support return to work plans for employees; and
- Schedule staff meetings to provide information about department continuity plans. Managers/Supervisors hold meetings if necessary to make sure all staff receive messages face to face.

Finance

- Monitor and revise payroll, purchasing and contracting activities to maintain critical services;
- Track and report on the costs associated with the pandemic plan;
- Recommend necessary budget adjustments associated with the extra costs incurred as a result of the pandemic, including a pandemic account;
- Notify vendors of pertinent pandemic information;
- Monitor supplies and services necessary for school operations; and
- Schedule staff meetings to provide information about department continuity plans. Managers/Supervisors hold meetings if necessary to make sure all staff receive messages face to face.

Action Plan Checklist for Schools

- a. Hold school staff meeting in September with all school personnel to fully explain the TCRSB Pandemic Plan, including the specific roles and responsibilities of all employees;
- b. Refresh your lists of contact details for staff and parents/guardians and notify parents/guardians that Public Health may seek personal student information such as class lists;
- c. Review your plans for dealing with above average levels of staff absence;
- d. Review your contact information for the local public health representative;
- e. Ensure that hand hygiene supplies are adequate and working properly; if/when updating or repairing facilities. Ensure that you have stocks of tissues, paper towels and soaps;
- f. Display pandemic information in school;
- g. Check that you have procedures for isolating (with appropriate supervision) a child who falls ill during the day until their parents can collect them; (refer to Appendix 2)
- h. Ensure that staff are all aware of the relevant procedures for flu prevention;
- i. Review the H1N1 Communication Toolkit for School Administrators as provided by the Department of Health Promotion and Protection;
- j. Ensure that the Wipe Out Germs-Wash with Soap! Poster contained in the Toolkit are placed on bulletin boards, in washrooms, classrooms, etc.;
- k. Communicate to students and staff the recommended hand washing procedures and encourage their use;
- l. Establish a plan for communications with parents and school partners;

- m. Share the Board's Business Continuity Plan with School Advisory Council at its first meeting of the year;
- n. Monitor and adjust community use of schools as necessary (e.g., availability, scheduling and fees); and
- o. Direct all media inquiries to the Superintendent or designate.
- p. Ensure that all custodial staff have been trained in proper sanitation and cleaning procedures and monitor their implementation;
- q. Ensure that adequate supplies of cleaning materials are readily available and that there are procedures for regular cleaning of hard surfaces;
- r. Ensure that hard surfaces (door handles, light switches, taps, telephones, computer keyboards, kitchen worktops) are cleaned more frequently than usual;
- s. Ensure that hand hygiene facilities, and facilities for the disposal of tissues, are adequate, accessible, and in working order.
- t. Monitor the operation of food service providers in schools to ensure full compliance with all aspects of the Board's pandemic plan;

Getting the right messages to children

You should teach and encourage children in an age-appropriate way to follow the advice on personal hygiene (hand-washing, minimizing contact between hands and mouth/nose, use of tissues). While emphasizing to children that this is a serious matter, care must be taken to avoid causing undue fear or upset.

We recognize that it is not possible for staff to monitor that every child is following the advice all of the time, but frequent reminders should help to reinforce the right key messages.

We recommend that staff make use of the posters on general infection control that the Department of Health has made available in spring 2009. These can help students to avoid normal everyday infections as well as in a pandemic. There are posters on hand-washing and on 'coughs and sneezes'; these can be obtained free of charge from www.fightflu.ca and are contained in the Communications Toolkit for School Administrators.

Tri-County Regional School Board Chain of Command

The following “Chain of Command” has been established to deal with emergencies at both the Board and school/worksite levels.

- Superintendent, or if unable to be contacted, Director of Programs & Student Services
- Appropriate Director
- Appropriate Coordinator/School Administrators
- Appropriate Assistant Coordinator/Foremen.

Roles & Responsibilities of persons in “Chain of Command”:

- **Superintendent:**
 - responsible for managing the emergency.
 - all communication to media and general public.
 - communication to all board employees/members, including decision on further action.
 - determine which employees should go to the incident site or remain at the worksite.
- **Director of Programs & Student Services:**
 - ensure incident is dealt with in accordance with Board Policy 746.
 - act as media spokesperson in absence of Superintendent
 - delegate to appropriate coordinator applicable activities.
- **Director of Human Resources:**
 - ensure employees are safe.
 - ensure supports are available.
 - in conjunction with Policy 746, ensure appropriate contacts are notified.
 - delegate applicable activities to appropriate coordinators.
- **Director of Finance & Operations:**
 - ensure information on facility is available (e.g. blueprints/schematic heating, electrical, alarms).
 - ensure transportation incident is dealt with in accordance with Policy 746.
 - ensure that appropriate support personnel are available on and off site, as required.
- **School Administrator:**
 - ensure safety of students and staff
 - follow “Administrators’ Book of Emergency Checklists”

-ensure there is a pre-determined staff member who will act in place of the administrator if he/she is not available.

➤ **Vice-Principal:**

-follow direction of the Principal

-assume responsibility outlined under the principal guidelines in the event the Principal is absent

➤ **Teacher-in-Charge:**

-as the designated Teacher-in-Charge, he/she would deal only with emergency matters as they arise

-determine whether the emergency is beyond their level of expertise and if so, call the Board Office for permission to place another teacher in the school, who is deemed to be more competent, in charge

➤ **Site-based Crisis Team Members:**

-expect to take on extra responsibility regarding the emergency as designated by the principal/teacher-in-charge

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In order to minimize the spread of the pandemic in school board facilities, specific strategies are recommended for all board employees to follow as outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Employee Support

The Tri-County Regional School Board recognizes and endorses the need for staff to safeguard their safety and wellness and that of their families.

Detailed information regarding employee support may be found in Appendix 3.

Human Resources Management

Prior history indicates that there will be second and third waves of the pandemic. While these later waves may be of variable severity, their impact may be reduced by the use of vaccines. Consequently, the Board will have to continuously re-evaluate its status in the key areas of staffing. The Board will also have to quickly regroup and redeploy staff in order to maintain critical school board services.

The Board shall also enact plans for the replacement of employees on sick leave. This may entail modified hiring practices as staffing priorities are identified during the reinstatement of key school and school board services. In keeping with the collaborative and dynamic nature of the Board pandemic plan, continuous monitoring and adjustments will be completed in consultation with health care professionals.

A third priority in human resources management will be support for employee re-entry to the workplace following prolonged absence due to illness.

Board Continuity Plan – Detailed Responsibility List

Administrators (school board and school) are responsible to prepare detailed continuity plans for their specific functions. The following is a broad outline of continuity planning for critical school and school board functions.

Department: Superintendent’s Office

Function	Model of Service Delivery	Continuity Strategies
Follow duties as described in the FOIPOP Act in the event of an application under that Act	FOIPOP Administrator	Maintain service with backup provided by the Superintendent or designate
Routine communications	Superintendent or designate	Maintain service with backup provided by the Board Secretary and the Superintendent of Schools
Communications necessary as a result of the pandemic	Superintendent or designate	Maintain service with backup provided by the Board Secretary and the Superintendent of Schools
Update the website with information as directed	Superintendent or designate	Maintain service with backup provided by the Board Secretary and the Superintendent of Schools
Management of the public school system in the Tri-County region	Superintendent of Schools	Director of Programs
Communicate with staff	Superintendent of Schools	Director of Programs

Department: Finance

Function	Model of Service Delivery	Continuity Strategies
Payroll	Process employee payroll and issues payments. Ensure employee group plan coverage is maintained and employees are receiving benefits due.	Strategy to be identified.
Issue financial documentation	Documents prepared by Department of Finance personnel.	Strategy to be identified
Maintain purchasing process, accounts receivable, accounts payable	Completed by Department of Finance personnel	Strategy to be identified
Processing of Workers' Compensation Board claims	Completed by Department of Finance personnel	Strategy to be identified
Ensure sufficient funds are available to meet Board obligations	Director of Finance	Strategy to be identified
Management of the Finance Department	Director of Finance	Or Designate
Communicate with staff	Director of Finance	Or Designate

Department: Programs and Student Services

Function	Model of Service Delivery	Continuity Strategies
Maintain delivery of the public school program	School-based and regional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain constant communication with schools to monitor absenteeism • Identify core school programs • Prepare lists of staff teaching competencies to cover core school program as required • Work with school

		<p>administrators and regional personnel to assist with issues arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeploy regional personnel to assist in schools if necessary • Suspend non-essential regional and school activities • Collaborate with community partners to address pandemic issues
Maintain the operation of the school board technology network	Coordinator of Information Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify board personnel who have technical expertise • Plan for staff redeployment to support technology services as required • Create technical support for schools to facilitate daily absenteeism reports and other data collection • Focus on key technical services and direct resources to keep them functioning • Suspend non-essential technical services as necessary
Assist schools with all programs and student services aspects of the pandemic plan	Director of Program and Student Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with regional staff and principals to plan for various scenarios • Maintain constant contact with school administrators to address issues as they arise • Field school queries in a timely fashion • Respond to school requests for assistance in a timely and thorough manner

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with health care partners to address school issues
Communicate with staff	Business Continuity Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with regional staff and principals to provide pandemic plan information • Invite and act on staff questions and suggestions related to the pandemic plan • Work as a member of the PPC to support plan implementation, monitoring and revision
Professional development activities	Business Continuity Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the pandemic situation in schools and maintain, revise or suspend school-based and/or regional professional development activities as necessary • Confer with Dept. of Education on any changes to professional development activities associated with the pandemic
Management of the Programs and Services Department	Business Continuity Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated Coordinators

Department: Human Resources

Function	Model of Service Delivery	Continuity Strategies
Coordinate human resources services at the Board and school levels	Completed by the personnel in HR division	<p>Priority will be placed on the hiring of casuals / substitutes, while continuing to fill vacancies through the Board's standard recruitment/hiring process.</p> <p>Pending staff vacancies will be addressed immediately to reduce potential disruptions.</p>
Maintain dialogue with employee groups	Director of Human Resources	<p>Department staff will maintain ongoing dialogue with TCRSB employee groups.</p> <p>Regular consultation will be held with unions.</p>
Board personnel complete assigned duties in accordance with collective agreements	Completed by the HR staff	Plan is in place to ensure that any staff health, safety and/or absenteeism concerns are addressed.
Recruitment and training of replacement staff	Completed by the HR staff	Working with school administrators and supervisors, the Department will expand employee casual lists as necessary through active recruitment.
Communicate with staff	Director of Human Resources	HR staff
Management of the Human Resources Department	Director of Human Resources	Coordinator of Human Resources

Department: Operations

Function	Model of Service Delivery	Continuity Strategies
Train staff in sanitation and hygiene procedures	Property Services to train staff in cleaning procedures	Training sessions scheduled: Custodians, Janitors Substitutes; July 3/09 - Bus drivers, TBA
Maintain essential cleanliness in schools and school board facilities	Property Services shall establish and ensure standards are met and set staffing requirements	Additional hours being allocated to increase sanitation levels of door handles, washrooms and counters.
Identify and initiate the purchase of the required cleaning, sanitation and PP and E supplies for schools and other sites	Required materials are identified by Property Services	Initial purchases of materials have been made. Suppliers have been identified for future additional requirements should the need dictate.
Specific school custodial services (cleaning, garbage removal, disinfecting hard surfaces.	Property Services shall establish and ensure standards are met and set staffing requirements	The availability of additional custodial staff will be monitored closely .
Physical plant functions (heating, ventilation, power, water, fire safety equipment)	Adequate plant services must be provided to the school building for safe operations.	Every effort will be made to keep schools open and in safe condition. School cancellations due to problems with the operation of physical plants shall be carried out in accordance with Policy

Ensure adequate staff replacement for bus drivers	The Pupil Transportation Department shall recruit, screen and train bus drivers.	An additional driver training program shall be offered if required
Bus sanitation	Transportation/ Property Services Managers establish standards and train drivers or custodians.	Procedures are being put in place to sanitize busses between and after runs if required.
Transportation of ill students	Requirements for special provision for the transportation of students is made by the Transportation Department in consultation with Programs staff and other recommended outside agencies	Procedures will be passed on to drivers should the need arise to transport ill students home
Discontinuation of bus service In part or in whole	Decisions with respect to adjustments in services shall be made by the Director in consultation with the Managers and the Superintendent	Bus services may be cancelled due to driver absenteeism. Efforts will be made to continue operations with spare drivers and, where possible, through alternative routing in a geographical area. Changes in services will be communicated through established practices.
Communication with staff	Required communication on issues shall flow through the Director and Coordinators to staff	Initial presentation to staff on the Pandemic Plan and the required procedures will be communicated during scheduled training sessions. Ongoing updates will be issued through managers and school administration.
Management of the Operations Department	Director of Operations through Property Services, Transportation and perform administration and management functions	In the absence of the Director of Operations, Coordinators shall report to the Superintendent or his designate with respect to issues in their respective areas of responsibility.

Department: Schools

Function	Model of Service Delivery	Continuity Strategies
Delivery of the public school program	Provision of educational programming by school teaching staff and regional support staff	Principals must consider strategies for replacing teachers and possible redeployment of staff
Supervision of students	Provide students with a safe and healthy learning environment	Scheduling to ensure adequate supervision; accommodate supervision of isolation room; monitor hygiene practices.
Communication with staff	Provide staff with training and information to promote a healthy workplace	Provide all school staff with an orientation package, demonstrations, information links and regular email updates regarding the Board pandemic plan and their roles and responsibilities in consultation with appropriate Board staff.
Routine inspections of school facilities	Principals in accordance with OHS and Fire Safety Act	Immediately report any concerns to the Operations department.
Communication between home and school	Use all traditional vehicles, including school newsletters, signage, web site, notices to parents/guardians, Tri-County Up for Parents, school advisory council meetings, and meet the teacher nights, etc., to share pandemic information.	Ensure communications plan is in place, including a backup plan.
Preparation of plans for staff absences	Teachers to develop materials and plans for substitutes; teachers to prepare for possible reassignment;	All aspects of instructional planning should be adjusted with increased emphasis on the daily delivery of essential school programs, preparation of materials for replacement staff, reassignment of school personnel to cover employee absences and monitoring of emergency medical plans for students and/or staff that require them.

Counseling services	Provide advice, support and counseling intervention to students displaying social-emotional needs	Redirect school counseling services to address the social-emotional parameters of the school pandemic response as they arise among students and staff.
Extra-curricular activities	Principal	In consultation with the Board's Business Continuity Planning Committee
Professional development activities	Principal	In consultation with the Board's Business Continuity Planning Committee
Support staff	Provide essential support services to schools	Principal needs to identify plan for replacement and redeployment of staff.
Data Collection	Daily monitoring and reporting of student and staff absenteeism	Principal needs to establish a system in the office for collecting the information
Management of the School	Principal	Vice Principal or Designate

Appendix 1: Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Minimizing Illness Among Students and Staff

How to recognize influenza?

Flu-like symptoms are:

- fever and/or cough and;
- one or more of: unusual tiredness, head, muscle or joint aches, or sore throat.

Prevention Strategies

The best way to prevent illness is through prevention. Health recommendations to stay well include:

- wash hands thoroughly and often in warm, soapy water – for at least 20 seconds - or use hand sanitizer;
 - cough and sneeze into arms and sleeves, not your hand; if using tissues, dispose of them into appropriate receptacle and wash hands;
 - stay home (school, work, public places) when displaying flu-like symptoms;
 - disinfect doorknobs, counters, telephones, computer keyboards and other hard surfaces; and
-

Primary strategies which will be used in order to minimize illness include:

- Restrict workplace entry of people with influenza symptoms;
- Promote good personal hygiene practices and workplace cleaning practices;
- Minimize, where possible, situations where close contact is necessary (1 meter workspace rule, no shaking hands, limit number of meetings);
- Discourage the sharing of school supplies, including pencils, crayons and pens during a pandemic;
- Encourage the wiping and cleaning of hands and objects when passing round objects like musical instruments or toys; and
- Because of the difficulty in cleaning soft toys adequately, remove communal soft toys. Do not allow children to share wind instruments;

Intervention Strategies

- Students displaying flu-like symptoms should be placed in an isolation room until their parent/guardian takes them home;
- Students displaying or exhibiting severe respiratory distress should be provided with access to appropriate medical care as per emergency medical procedures;
- Students who are placed in isolation and cannot be picked by the parent/guardian will be transported home by a designate as per the emergency contact information for the student; and
- Employees demonstrating flu-like symptoms at work are instructed to notify their supervisor and to leave work immediately and to contact a health professional for advice and direction.

Employees who are unable to leave work should be placed in isolation from the school population.

Procedures for the use of isolation rooms are outlined in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2: Isolation Rooms

Isolation rooms shall be established using the following guidelines:

INFORMATION TO BE ADDED

Appendix 3: Employee Support

To assist with the maintenance of healthy staff members and to ensure that ill employees do not return to work prematurely and place others at risk, the Human Resources Department shall institute modified employee benefit provisions during the pandemic as follows:

Sick Leave Accommodations

Teachers

All Teachers will be entitled to sick days as outlined in the Local Agreement. Each teacher's sick bank is reported on their bi-weekly pay advice.

- If caring for others the employee may be deemed to be ill (not part of the local Collective Agreement and non binding outside of a pandemic event).

Support Staff

All Support Staff will be entitled to their accumulated amount of sick days; their total bank is reported on their bi-weekly pay advice.

- If caring for others the employee may be deemed to be ill (not part of collective agreement)
- Support Staff will be provided information on Sick Benefits through Employment Insurance.

Employees covered under the long term disability (LTD) plan administered by Johnson Insurance will exhaust all sick benefits before being able to access LTD benefits – it is recommended that application to the plan be made at least 60 days prior to sick benefits coming to an end.

Compassionate/Bereavement Leave

- As per the Collective Agreements that the Tri-County Regional School Board has with CUPE Local 955 and NSTU, as well as the Terms of Employment for Non-Union Employee's.

Employee Assistance Plan

An “Employee Assistance Plan” is available to assist all employees and their families.

NSTU – Request EIP services by calling 1-800-565-NSTU

CUPE and Non-Union – Contact Shepell-fgi by calling 1-800-268-5211 or by visiting their website at www.shepellfgi.com

Fitness for Duty Guidelines

A Fitness for Duty guidelines provide direction for the length of time an employee should remain away from the workplace after contracting influenza. This period of time will be established once the effects of the influenza are known. The guidelines also facilitate an employee’s return to work once they are well.

The Tri-County Regional School Board is committed to providing a safe work environment in the event of a pandemic, and to protect the health and safety of students and staff.

These Fit for Duty guidelines apply specifically to a pandemic event.

Purpose:

To provide procedures for identification and intervention when staff members may pose a health threat to the school community because they have contracted the influenza virus related to the pandemic.

Definitions:

“Fit for Duty”: means able to perform the duties of the job, without creating a risk for other students or staff of contracting the influenza virus.

“Health Service Provider” is a doctor of medicine, nurse practitioner or other health care practitioner who is qualified to provide a medical opinion on the state of health of a staff member as it relates to the influenza virus as expected in a pandemic event.

“Supervisor” is the person to whom a staff member reports

Employee Responsibilities:

1. Reporting to work when fit for duty
2. Notifying the supervisor when not fit for duty
3. Notifying the supervisor when observing a co-worker who may not be fit for duty (in cases where the possibly impaired individual is the employee’s

supervisor, the employee should make the notification to the next higher level manager or Human Relations staff).

4. Cooperating with a supervisor's directive and/or referral for a medical evaluation

Supervisor Responsibilities:

1. Observing the attendance, performance and behavior of staff they supervise.
2. Interviewing an employee who appears to the supervisor unfit for duty and referring an employee for a medical evaluation when appropriate.
3. Recording the reasons/observations that triggered a fitness for duty medical evaluation referral.
4. Utilizing this policy in a fair and consistent manner, respecting the employee's privacy and the confidentiality of medical information.

Procedures:

1. The supervisor who receives reliable information that an employee may be unfit for duty, or through personal observation believes an employee to be unfit for duty, will validate and document the information or observations as soon as is practical. Actions that may trigger the need to evaluate an employee's fitness for duty with respect to this policy are limited to observation of influenza conditions consistent with a pandemic event.
2. The supervisor will present the information or observations to the employee at the earliest possible time in order to validate them, and will allow the employee to respond to the concern. The supervisor will then determine whether the employee should leave the workplace immediately for safety reasons.
3. The supervisor may direct the employee to a health service provider to assess the condition of the employee. An employee may not be allowed to return to work until such an assessment has been provided or until the supervisor has been satisfied that the employee is fit to return to work.
4. The employer shall be responsible for the additional cost associated with any medical evaluations completed by a health service provider, if required by the employer.
5. Prior to returning to work after recovery from an influenza virus consistent with a pandemic event, the supervisor shall consider advice received from the local health authorities on the length of time considered appropriate to recover from the influenza virus, and the length of time the virus remains infectious.

Appendix 4: Contact Information

Additional information and resources may be accessed through the following sources:

811 – Call 811, the provincial HealthLink line, operating 24-hours, seven-days-a-week

www.tcrsb.ca - TCRSB web site

www.gov.ns.ca/hpp - Department of Health Promotion and Protection web site

www.ednet.ns.ca – Department of Education web site

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca – Public Health Agency of Canada web site

www.fightflu.ca – Public Health Agency of Canada web site

www.who.int – World Health Organization web site

www.swndha.nshealth.ca – South West Nova District Health Authority (SWNDA)

Appendix 5: School “Takeover” by Health for off-site clinics and Flu Management sites

As part of the main pandemic planning process (the Master Pandemic Plan of the SWDHA) three schools have been identified as possible alternate site health clinics.

They are Hillcrest Academy, Maple Grove Education Centre, and Digby Elementary School.

In the case one or all of these schools are taken by Health, and in the instance that school has not been cancelled Board-wide, the following plan has been put in place:

Digby Elementary students will split shift with Digby High School. High school students will go in the morning and elementary students will go in the afternoon, some Elementary classes may require furniture to be moved to the High School.

Maple Grove students will split shift with Yarmouth High. High school students will go in the morning and elementary students will go in the afternoon.

Hillcrest Academy students will split shift with Shelburne High. High school students will go in the morning and elementary students will go in the afternoon, some Elementary classes may require furniture to be moved to the High School..

Times and further details are yet to be determined.