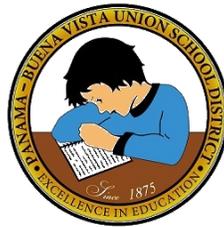


INFECTIOUS DISEASE PLAN

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District



Introduction

A pandemic occurs when a new virus emerges that is different from seasonal flu or other known viruses and spreads quickly between people, causing illness worldwide. Most people will lack immunity to the new virus and a vaccine may not be available right away. A pandemic has the potential to overwhelm normal operations in educational settings.

Furthermore, schools tend to be affected by infectious disease outbreaks more than other settings. This is because children easily transmit illnesses to one another as a result of their close proximity, their inefficiency at containing respiratory droplets and their ineffective hand washing. As a school district, we play an important role in protecting the health of our students and staff from contagious diseases.

When a new virus emerges, it can take up to 6 months before a vaccine is widely available. When a vaccine is not available, non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) are the best way to help slow the spread of disease. They include personal, community, and environmental actions. These actions are most effective when used together. NPIs also can provide protection against other infectious diseases in schools.

As educators, we play a key role in infectious disease readiness. Planning for and practicing NPI actions will help our school respond more effectively when an actual emergency occurs.

About this plan

This pandemic/infectious disease plan provides guidance for reducing illness at school on a regular basis as well as procedures during infectious disease outbreaks and pandemic periods.

This plan includes:

- 1. Outlines a District and countywide response to illness outbreaks**
- 2. Strategies to prevent and reduce the spread of infectious diseases within our schools**
- 3. Procedures for temporarily canceling school due to an infectious disease outbreak**
- 4. Considerations for reopening schools**

Plan goals

We will utilize this plan to achieve the following goals:

- Limit the number of illnesses and deaths
- Preserve continuity of essential school functions
- Minimize educational and social disruption
- Minimize economic and academic losses
- Ensure accurate and timely information dissemination

Countywide Response to Illness Outbreaks

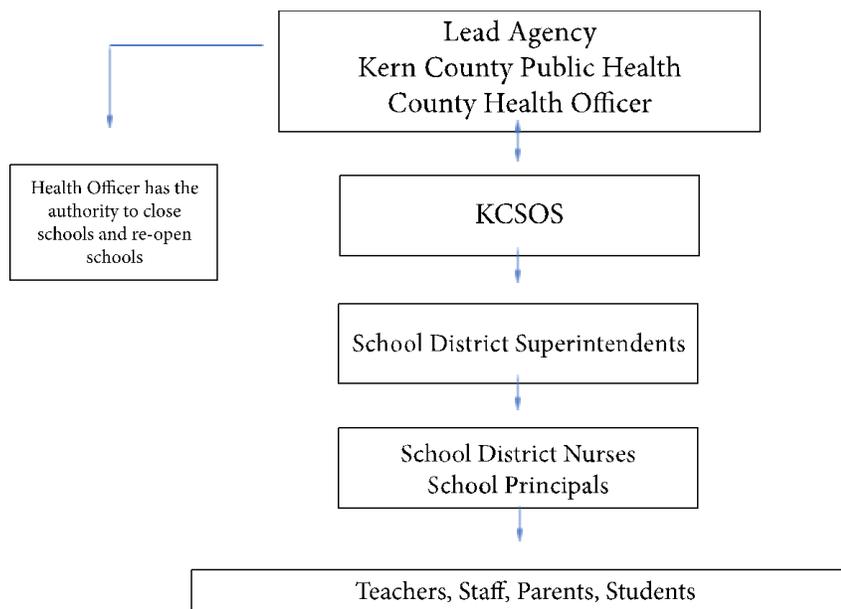
The Kern County Public Health Department is the lead agency during a public health emergency in Kern County, such as an infectious disease outbreak or pandemic. In a public health emergency, Public Health may direct specific actions to control the spread of disease in schools and in the community.

The Health Officer has legal authority to take actions necessary to prevent the spread of disease. This includes the legal authority to dismiss schools and re-open schools.

As lead agency in a public health emergency, the Public Health Department is:

- ❑ the primary point of contact for information on the disease outbreak or pandemic including:
 - case definition and symptoms
 - exposure and infection control
 - the need to dismiss schools and/or re-open schools
(*reference: Health & Safety Code 120175*);
- ❑ the single point of contact for instructions related to school district response, including infection control instructions and school dismissal.
- ❑ the primary point of contact — in partnership with the Kern County Superintendent of Schools — for content of information distributed by the school district to parents, students, teachers and staff.

District and Countywide Response



Strategies to Prevent and Reduce the Spread of Infectious Diseases

How Germs Spread

Illnesses such as the flu (influenza) and viruses such as Norovirus (sudden and violent nausea, vomiting and diarrhea) and the common cold are caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, lungs and/or gastrointestinal tract. The flu and colds usually spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes and the virus is inhaled by another person.

Norovirus is spread by infected persons passing germs through food or ineffective hand washing. Germs are also spread by droplets when a person touches something that is contaminated with a virus and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth. The length of time germs can live on certain surfaces depends on the actual virus.

Disease Prevention & Education

To help prevent the spread of any infectious disease, schools have an opportunity to educate students, staff, and the community on social etiquette, good health and hygiene habits, and disease prevention.

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will provide hand washing, coughing, and sneezing education at any time there is a suspected outbreak and during the school year as requested by staff. Panama-Buena Vista Union School District nurses will follow illness/disease prevention information that is current and up to date on the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/guidance-hcp.html>.

During times of suspected or identified infectious disease outbreaks, the Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will coordinate with the **Kern County Superintendent of Schools** and the **Kern County Public Health** to address the outbreak at the school level and may host vaccine clinics at our schools for students and/or staff.

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District basic educational message is:

- Cover Your Cough
- Wash Your Hands Often
- Stay Home If You're Sick
- Wear appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):

Cover Your Cough: Students are taught coughing and sneezing etiquette as outlined below. An ample supply of tissue is available in each classroom and school common areas.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze OR
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Wash your hands after you cough or sneeze.
- **Wash Your Hands Often:** Hand washing with soap and water (cold or warm) is the best option. Staff are encouraged to provide time and opportunities each day for students to practice washing their hands with soap and water: upon arrival at school, after coughing

and/or sneezing in hands, at the beginning of the lunch line before eating, after bathroom use, and after recess.

- Wet hands, apply soap and scrub for at least 20 seconds.
- Thoroughly rinse under clean, running water.
- Dry hands completely with paper towel. Use a paper towel to turn off faucet handles and open restroom doors.

When there is no access to a sink, as on a field trip, alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol, dye-free and fragrance-free) liquid or foam hand sanitizer or alcohol-based sanitizer wipes may be used. Hand sanitizers are not a substitute for handwashing.

Stay Home if You're Sick: A primary strategy against the spread of illness is for sick people to stay home from school. This includes students, staff and volunteers.

- **Too sick policy**
 - **Vomiting** – Vomiting (2) or more times in 24 hours. Student may return to school when symptoms are gone.
 - **Diarrhea** – Two (2) or more watery stools in 24 hours, especially if the student acts or looks ill. Student may return to school when symptoms are gone.
 - **Fever** – Temperature of 100.5 Fahrenheit (39.5 C) or higher. Student should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school WITHOUT medications to reduce the fever.
 - **Eyes** – If there is a thick mucus draining from the eye, vision change, and/or redness of the eye, itching, pain or sensitivity to light, this may be a sign of “pink eye” (conjunctivitis) and the student should be checked by a health care provider.
 - **Bad Cold or Cough** – Students need to be able to cover their cough to be at school. If a cough or cold persists for more than 2 weeks, the student may need to be seen by a healthcare provider.
 - **Throat** – A sore throat can be a symptom of the common cold. A bacterial throat infection, such as strep throat, requires medical treatment. Student may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started.
 - **Rash** – Bothersome body rash, especially with fever or itching. Some rashes may be spread to others and should be checked by a healthcare provider.
 - **Injury/Surgery** – Please have your healthcare provider give instructions to help your child safely return to school. Letting the District Nurse know in advance of any planned surgery is also helpful.
- **Illness/Disease Monitoring & Tracking:**

Staff are trained to be alert to children who are ill. Examples of symptoms include: fever, frequent cough and/or sneezing, sore throat, vomiting/diarrhea. These students will be sent to the office for evaluation. Be careful not to assume that your “frequent flyer” is faking as they might really be ill.

During times of a potential infectious disease outbreak, school nurses or staff designated as school health assistants will implement a surveillance system to detect unusual rates of diseases in our schools. Office Staff along with School Nurses will monitor illnesses daily, track illness trends and report to the Health Services Office. Once a pattern is identified, the Kern County Health Department will be notified as necessary.

Wear appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment): During periods of suspected or identified infectious disease outbreaks, school nurses or health assistants may protect themselves by wearing appropriate PPE when helping sick students; this includes gowns, gloves, eye protection and facial mask. Students who have a cough with a fever or are sneezing with a fever will be isolated and asked to wear a mask until parents pick them up. Having the sick person isolated (separated from others) can help to slow or stop the spread of disease. The use of a mask is common in health care facilities and helps to contain their secretions until they are sent home. It does not mean they are infected with a specific virus. (Large quantities of medical masks are kept at each main school site with their emergency supplies and can be divided up and distributed to schools if needed.) If the student is unable or unwilling to wear a mask, the individuals helping the sick person may need to wear a mask in addition to any other appropriate PPE (gown, gloves and eye protection).

Disinfection & Cleaning Procedures

Common School Areas / Classrooms: Commonly touched surfaces such as stairway railings, door handles, computer keyboards, bathroom faucets and surfaces, drinking fountains, 1 to 1 devices, telephones, and elevator buttons will be cleaned by wiping them down frequently with a general cleaning solution.

In the event disinfecting surfaces becomes necessary due to an infection disease outbreak, an **EPA-registered disinfectant** should be utilized and consideration will be given to increasing the frequency of cleaning these commonly touched surfaces and areas based on the nature of the disease.

NOTE: Per California Education Code 17614, any EPA-registered disinfectant may only be used by staff who have been annually trained on the safe and effective use of pesticides on school sites.

Furthermore, when an employee or student with a suspected infectious disease is identified and has left the building, his or her work area, along with any other known places they have been, will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

The person cleaning and disinfecting (usually a trained custodian) may wear a mask and gloves and should discard them afterwards. Hands will be washed or sanitized at the completion of the procedure. **During times of a specifically known or suspected disease outbreak, the school district will consult public health both locally and statewide to determine if there is a proper way to discard waste.**

School Buses: School buses are cleaned by the drivers on a regular basis during the normal school year. However, during periods of suspected or confirmed infectious disease outbreak, consideration will be given to increasing the frequency of cleaning schedules, possibly at the end of each route (morning and afternoon) based on the nature and spread of the disease and guidance from the Kern County Public Health Department. Bus drivers may also consider wearing masks while on route, for their personal protection.

Food Service Protocols: Panama-Buena Vista Union School District follows Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles in each step of the food preparation process, from receiving to service. In addition, independent health and safety audits are administered throughout the school year and Panama-Buena Vista Union School District also participates in two local health and safety audits each year. Staff members participate in regular safety training and are not allow staff to come to work if they have a fever, diarrhea or vomiting.

During periods of suspected or confirmed infectious disease outbreak, Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will consider the need to make modifications to our services based on the severity and nature of the outbreak. This could include discontinuing the use of self-serve salad bars, serving sack lunches instead of cafeteria style lunches, having more stringent sick employee policies, etc.

Social Distancing: During suspected or identified infectious disease outbreaks, several social distancing measures will be taken to reduce the spread of an infectious disease. These include:

- Discourage hand shaking.
- Discourage the sharing of drinks or eating out of the same chip bag, etc.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid face-to-face meetings; if unavoidable, maintain a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals.
- Cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, assemblies, field trips, workshops or trainings.
- Consider setting up staggered shifts or flexible hours to reduce crowding in district office facilities.

Procedures for Canceling School Due to an Infectious Disease Outbreak

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will collaborate with Kern County Public Health and Kern County Superintendent of Schools to monitor disease outbreaks in our schools and to determine if and when school should be cancelled.

The health department will also help us decide the length of time for a school closure and the extent of the closure (single school closure, neighboring schools, partial district, entire district, etc.), taking into consideration the mixing of students/staff across schools, geographic proximity, outbreaks at neighboring school districts, etc., based on the nature of the specific disease.

Legal Authorities for Cancellation of School: The Panama-Buena Vista Union School District Superintendent has the authority to cancel classes when he deems it necessary for the health and safety of students and staff. In the Superintendent's absence, the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services is authorized to cancel school/classes.

In the event of a local infectious disease outbreak within the Panama-Buena Vista Union School District, the district will work in partnership with the Kern County Public Health Department when making a decision to close school. In the event of a local, community-wide infectious disease outbreak, authority is granted to the local Health Officer to close schools/cancel classes in an emergency or to protect the public's health (*reference: Health & Safety Code 120175*).

If school is cancelled due to an infectious disease outbreak, all other school-related gatherings (athletic events, concerts, afterschool activities, field trips, etc.) will also be cancelled. In some cases, non-academic events may be cancelled even if classes are not cancelled.

Communicating with Stakeholders: Panama-Buena Vista Union School District is committed to providing accurate, consistent, and timely communications with staff, students, and parents to instill and maintain public confidence in our schools. We will coordinate with Kern County Superintendent of Schools and Kern County Public Health, to disseminate critical information, to develop and deliver common health messages and educational materials in English and Spanish, and to demonstrate the school district is taking reasonable action to preserve the safety and health of our staff and students.

Information will be disseminated via our normal emergency communication methods: staff email, web site postings, ParentSquare, parent letters, school newsletters and television and radio broadcasts.

Continuity of Operations Plan: Certain essential district-level functions will need to continue even during a school closure situation. *Essential Services* may include:

- Payroll, Accounts Payable
- Communications & Technology (website, press releases, learning at home resources, etc.)
- Facilities Coordination (with Red Cross, Health Department, etc.)
- Emergency Operations Center (planning for reopening of schools.)

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will identify *Essential Personnel* who will be needed to carry out essential services and determine if those services can be accomplished at home (by computer, through emails, conference calls, etc.) or by staggering work schedules and locations and using social distancing measures. Essential personnel who report to work during a school closure will take precautions and may wear personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, gown and eye protection, etc.) to protect themselves from infectious disease. If indicated, the district nurses will train and provide essential personnel with N-95 respirators. If a vaccine becomes available and is in limited supply, essential personnel may be on the school district's priority list for receiving the vaccine.

Schools as alternative care sites: If schools are closed due to an infectious disease outbreak, the school sites may be needed by Kern County Public Health as public health site for vaccine distribution, quarantine, etc. As part of their safety plan, schools are required to establish procedures to all a public agency to use school buildings and grounds for emergencies involving health and welfare (*reference: California Education Code 32282*)

Continuity of meal programs: If schools are closed, the school district may decide if we will provide meals for students who participate in the NSLP. It may be possible to set up a schedule to distribute sack lunches at the already established summer food distribution sites or at other locations as deemed necessary. Social distancing measures for preventing the spread of disease will need to be considered.

Continuity of instruction: In the event schools are closed for an extended period of time due to an illness outbreak, the district may deploy strategies such as Independent Study (IS) to ensure students continue learning while away from school.

Procedures for Reopening Schools

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District's primary objective in the recovery phase is to restore the normal learning environment as soon as possible. Issues to consider include determining if schools need disinfection measures before reopening, staffing levels, and grief/mental health issues. Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will also work with the Kern County Superintendent of Schools and/or the California Department of Education to develop a plan for students/staff to make up lost school days.

As the district resumes normal operation, it will remain in contact with Kern County Public Health regarding disease surveillance. Infectious disease outbreaks often comes in waves and the response and recovery process may be repeated several times.

Disinfection: There are two primary considerations regarding disinfection: public perception of the safety of the school and actual germs in the school. Disinfection needs will depend primarily on the severity, type and duration of the pandemic as well as if the school was used by the health department or *Red Cross* as a quarantine, feeding center or vaccination site.

Although viruses can live up to 48 hours outside the human body on nonporous surfaces such as plastic, metal or wood (depending on the virus), extensive cleaning of schools by wiping down floors and walls prior to reopening is typically not necessary unless specifically directed by the health department. However, public perception about the safety of schools may impact decisions regarding the extent of disinfection.

Personnel: If there have been multiple staff deaths due to the infectious disease outbreak, the district will formulate a plan to continue instructional programs with a reduction in workforce and potentially reconfigure staffing levels and positions at our schools.

Mental health issues: Depending on the severity of the outbreak, we can use or modify our Crisis Response Team protocols and/or collaborate with our local mental health partners to assist

students and staff with loss and grief issues. This process may be much more involved and lengthy than our usual Crisis Response protocols.

Making up school days: Panama-Buena Vista Union School District will collaborate with the Kern County Superintendent of Schools and/or the California Department of Education and our local unions to work out a plan for making up lost school days.

Emergency conditions and average daily attendance (ADA) funding: In the event of a school closure and/or loss of attendance due to unforeseen emergency conditions, school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education should submit a J-13A waiver material decrease request to the CDE in order to mitigate the loss of ADA funding.

Approved material decrease requests will provide these LEAs with the authority to add apportionment days to their reported ADA, thereby alleviating what would otherwise be a loss in LCFF funding.

FAQs on the J-13A waiver request forms can be found on CDE's web site at:
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/formj13afaq.asp>.

J-13A waiver request forms can be found at:
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/documents/j13a.pdf>.

Assessment: Each school that is impacted by an infectious disease incident will complete the following actions in the recovery phase.

- Assess the economic and educational impact of the pandemic on the schools.
- Evaluate the response actions taken by the school district as a result of the pandemic.
- Determine effectiveness of existing plan to respond to similar events in the future.
- Revise existing plan as necessary to address any deficiencies.