

CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD



PANDEMIC PLANNING (H1N1)

September 30, 2009

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I INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board is to ensure that our students and staff work in safe environments. In an effort to ensure that the workplaces remain safe, the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board has commenced pandemic preparedness planning. The Board will work closely with the Nova Scotia Departments of Health, Health Promotion, Education and, locally, with the Cape Breton District Health Authority. It is imperative that communication be a key component of the Board's plan to provide all partners with accurate information on a consistent basis.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

It is hoped that the Pandemic Preparedness Plan will strongly support the Board's ability to carry out its key roles and functions during any pandemic. The plan will outline the role of the Board, Central Office administration, school administration, students, staff and parents in maintaining regular operations for all schools under the Board's jurisdiction. This plan is an evolving document, one that will undergo continuous review and revisions as new information emerges.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

1. Over the years, the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board has dealt with many situations which have disrupted the regular services of the Board. As a result, the Board is well prepared for a possible pandemic.
2. The Board's plan is intended to be open and available, through our web site, to all staff, parents, students and community for information and feedback.
3. During any pandemic, the Board will draw heavily on the advice and expertise of the local and provincial health authorities. They have the knowledge and expertise to assess the level of health risk posed by each situation.
4. As stated, the priority of the Board is the health and safety of our staff and students. Every effort will be made to keep all of the schools in the Board open for as long as possible. It is possible that certain services normally provided by the Board may be halted or interrupted during a pandemic.

II PANDEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Board has established a Pandemic Planning Committee with the following members: Superintendent of Schools; Directors of Programs & Student Services, Human Resources, Operational Services and Financial Services; the Coordinator of School Services; the Communication Officer; the Occupational Health & Safety Officer; the Director of Regional Education Services; and the Board Chair.

ROLE OF THE PANDEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Oversee the operations of the school system;
2. Appoint a spokesperson who will serve as the key communication person for the Board who will deal with the media, parents, and various health agencies;
3. Receive reports from the Coordinator of School Services on absenteeism rates for all students and from the Coordinator of Human Resources on absenteeism rates for all staff by school and by Family of Schools;
4. Report to the Board, on a regular basis, about current situations;
5. Recommend, if necessary, any school closures in consultation with the Department of Health Promotion & Protection and the Department of Education.
6. Provide regular updates to the Minister of Education, as necessary.

III PLAN ACTIVATION

1 System-wide

The superintendent of schools or designate will have the authority to activate the pandemic plan. In addition, the superintendent shall have the authority to close schools, after consultation with the planning committee, the local health authorities and the Department of Education. Once a decision has been made to activate the plan, the local union presidents will be notified that such action has been initiated.

2 School Activation

- A. Using the revised online enrollment form, school principals or designates will report each morning on absenteeism rates of all students and school staff, by 10 a.m.
- B. The Coordinator of Transportation will report, each day, by 10 a.m. to the Coordinator of School Services on the absenteeism rates for all bus drives. The Coordinator of Facilities Management will report each day at 10 a.m. to the Coordinator of School Services on the absenteeism rates of all maintenance and cleaning staff.
- C. The Coordinator of School Services will prepare daily communications for the Pandemic Planning Committee. Absenteeism rates for all students and all staff will be prepared by individual schools as well as by Family of Schools.
- D. Any requests from the media for information from the schools will be directed by school administration to the Communications Officer.
- E. Decisions concerning the on-going operation of schools (in regards to the following areas) will be made by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Pandemic Planning Committee.
 - a) Community Use of Schools
 - b) Delivery Services
 - c) Essential Maintenance
 - d) Extracurricular Activities
 - e) School Trips
 - f) Food Services
 - g) Tutoring
 - h) Meetings
 - i) Professional Development Activities
 - j) Student Transportation
 - k) Volunteers
 - l) Pre-service Teachers

IV COMMUNICATION

The very best plans for dealing with a pending crisis in our schools will fail without effective and on-going communication with all partners. The Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board is committed to open lines of communication and, therefore, our plan is available to staff, students, parents, and the community for their information,

input or clarification. In addition, a fact sheet on the H1N1 virus, prepared by the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion is included in Appendix “A” of the plan.

Strategies:

1. The Board will establish a link on the website to provide access to the Board’s Pandemic Plan. In addition, information on any restrictions on the use of school facilities will be made available on the site. In addition, any cancellations in services will be made available on the site.
2. The plan will be communicated to all Board personnel in early September and schools will be directed to provide students and parents with access to the plan.
3. The plan will be communicated to all Board members. In addition, members will be provided with regular updates as information becomes available.
4. The plan will be made available to relevant community agencies and the media.
5. The plan will include regular updates to the media, especially as new information becomes available.

V ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School Board – As reflected in the Education Act section 64(1):

- the School Board is accountable to the Minister and responsible for the control and management of the public schools within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Act and the regulations;
- The Board Chair will participate as a member of the Pandemic Planning Committee and will ensure regular updates to elected Board Members.

Students and Parents

- follow the public health strategy as communicated through school personnel regarding the prevention of infection and early identification and treatment.

Superintendent - The superintendent or designate has the responsibility:

- to activate the pandemic plan;
- to work with the Pandemic Planning Committee;

- to suspend the delivery of services to schools and/or the Board Offices, as necessary;
- to re-deploy staff, as necessary;

Pandemic Planning Committee

- oversee the implementation of the pandemic plan and revise as necessary;
- provide accurate, timely information to the Superintendent of Schools;
- ensure information on the pandemic plan is communicated to school board personnel, students, parents, community agencies, and the general public;
- provide regular updates to the Department of Education, Health and Health Promotions;
- handle all media inquiries concerning the pandemic plan.

School Board Departments:

Programs and Student Services

- provide resources and support to schools in dealing with program delivery;
- maintain technology to support effective communication;
- monitor practices such as professional development and extra curricular activities to minimize the spread of the pandemic.
- work with community agencies to provide supports in dealing with the pandemic;
- work closely with schools to adjust and modify programs to ensure safety of students;
- ensure staff meetings are held regularly to pass along timely information about the pandemic.

Operations

- assist schools to ensure all necessary cleaning and sanitation supplies are provided;
- provide necessary training for all support staff regarding the additional cleaning that may be required during the pandemic;
- assist schools in establishing isolation rooms;
- develop and distribute checklists for all staff on specific procedures to be followed once the Board's plan is in place;
- reschedule staff, as necessary, to ensure essential services are provided;
- provide regular absenteeism information on all support staff to the Coordinator of School Services;

- ensure all affected staff are provided information on pandemic awareness prior to a return to work.
- ensure staff meetings are held regularly to pass along timely information about the pandemic.

Human Resources

- provide necessary supports to individual schools regarding staff replacements;
- work with the Unions on issues related to the pandemic plan;
- monitor staff absenteeism;
- monitor (and expand if necessary) all casual and substitute lists;
- redeploy staff, as necessary, to ensure schools remain operational;
- ensure that affected staff are provided information on pandemic awareness prior to a return to work.
- work closely with schools to adjust and modify programs to ensure safety of students;
- ensure staff meetings are held regularly to pass along timely information about the pandemic.

Finance

- administer payroll, purchasing and contracting activities to maintain critical services;
- provide necessary funding for pandemic-related supplies and services;
- track costs associated with the pandemic plan;
- oversee the operation of food service providers in schools to ensure compliance with the Board's pandemic plan;
- notify vendors on the pandemic plan and how this may affect them;
- monitor supplies and services necessary for school operations;
- reassign staff to ensure critical services are maintained;
- ensure affected staff are provided information on pandemic awareness prior to a return to work.
- ensure staff meetings are held regularly to pass along timely information about the pandemic.

School Administration and Staff

- Each school in the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board is expected to develop an individual school plan to deal with the H1N1 pandemic.
- Coordinators will be assigned to assist Family of Schools in the process (See Appendix "A").

VI ACTION PLANS: System wide

The Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board's pandemic preparedness plan will include action plans for schools, central office personnel and for each of our work groups, such as, bus drivers, maintenance staff and cleaners. The intent of the action plans is to minimize the spread of the virus by taking specific actions in the workplace.

CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS

1. Hold school staff meeting early in September with all school personnel to fully explain the CBVRSB Pandemic Plan, including the specific roles and responsibilities of all employees;
2. Refresh your lists of contact details for staff and parents/guardians;
3. Ensure that absenteeism reporting is carried out.
4. Review your contact information for the local public health representative; to report absenteeism exceeding 10% OR absenteeism that is higher than baseline levels as determined by the school which is likely due to ILI (influenza-like illnesses).
5. Ensure that hand hygiene supplies are adequate and working properly.
6. Communicate to students and staff the recommended hand washing procedures and encourage their use;
7. Hand sanitizers may be provided where hand washing is not readily available and will be located in strategic areas and used only under direct supervision;
8. Display pandemic information in high traffic areas of the school;
9. Check that you have procedures for isolating (with appropriate supervision) a child who falls ill during the day until their parents can collect them;
10. Ensure that staff are all aware of the relevant procedures for flu prevention;
11. Review the H1N1 Communication Toolkit for School Administrators as provided by the Department of Health Promotion and Protection;
12. Ensure that the Wipe Out Germs – Wash with Soap! Poster contained in the Toolkit are placed on bulletin boards, in washrooms, classrooms, etc.;

13. Establish a plan for communications with parents and school partners;
14. Share the Board's Pandemic Preparedness Plan with School Advisory Council at its first meeting of the year;
15. Share the Board's Pandemic Preparedness Plan with food services providers;
16. Monitor and adjust community use of schools as necessary (e.g., availability, scheduling and fees);
17. Direct all media inquiries to the Communications Officer;
18. Ensure that all custodial staff have been trained in proper sanitation and cleaning procedures and monitor their implementation;
19. Ensure that adequate supplies of cleaning materials are readily available and that there are procedures for regular cleaning of hard surfaces;
20. Ensure that hard surfaces (door handles, light switches, taps, kitchen worktops) are cleaned more frequently than usual;
21. Ensure that hand hygiene facilities, and facilities for the disposal of tissues are adequate, accessible, and in working order.

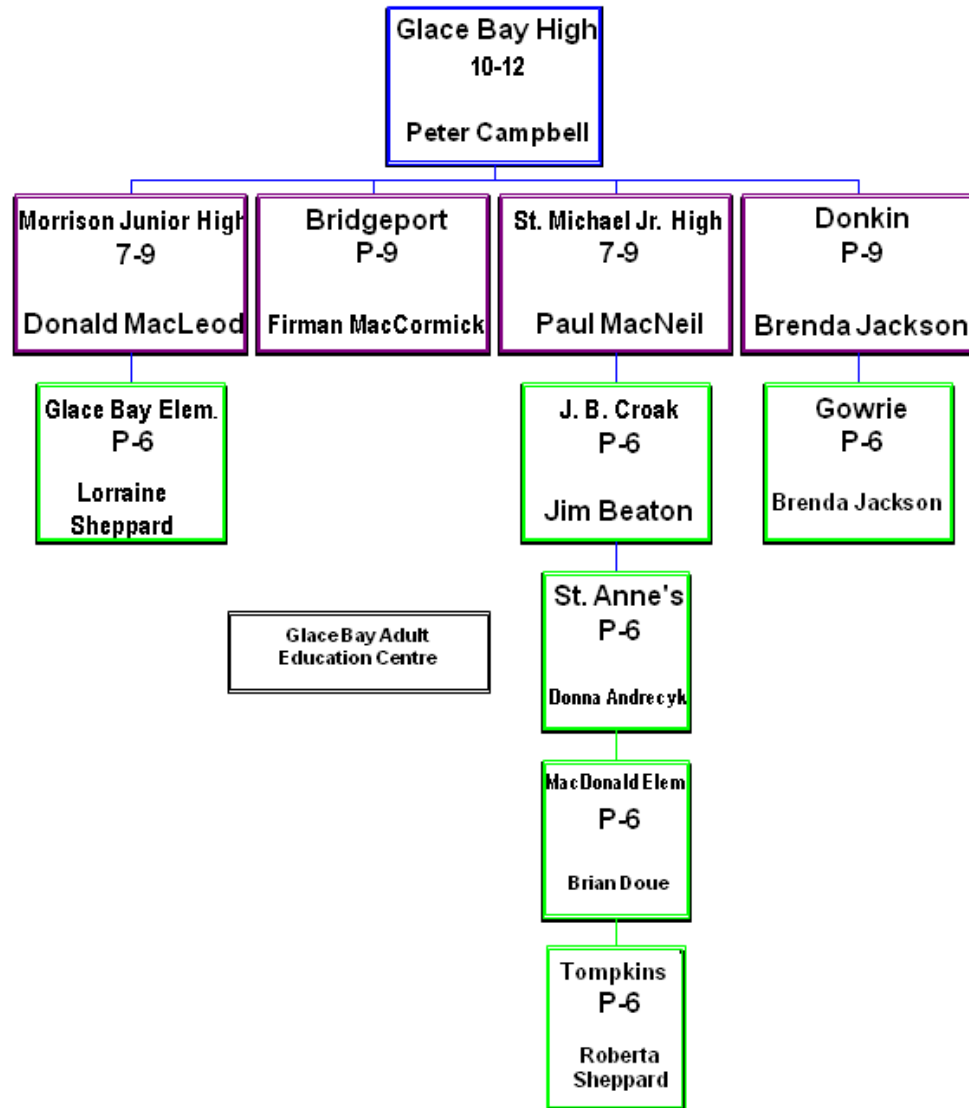
ACCESS POINTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- 811 – call 811, the provincial HealthLink line, operating 24 hours, seven days a week
- 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/alert-alerte/h1n1/index-eng.php – 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

- publichealth.ns.ca – Public Health Services – shared service GASHA and CBDHA
- www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/IC2/Intranet/index.cfm - Cape Breton District Health Authority

Appendix A (Family of Schools)

Family of Schools Glace Bay



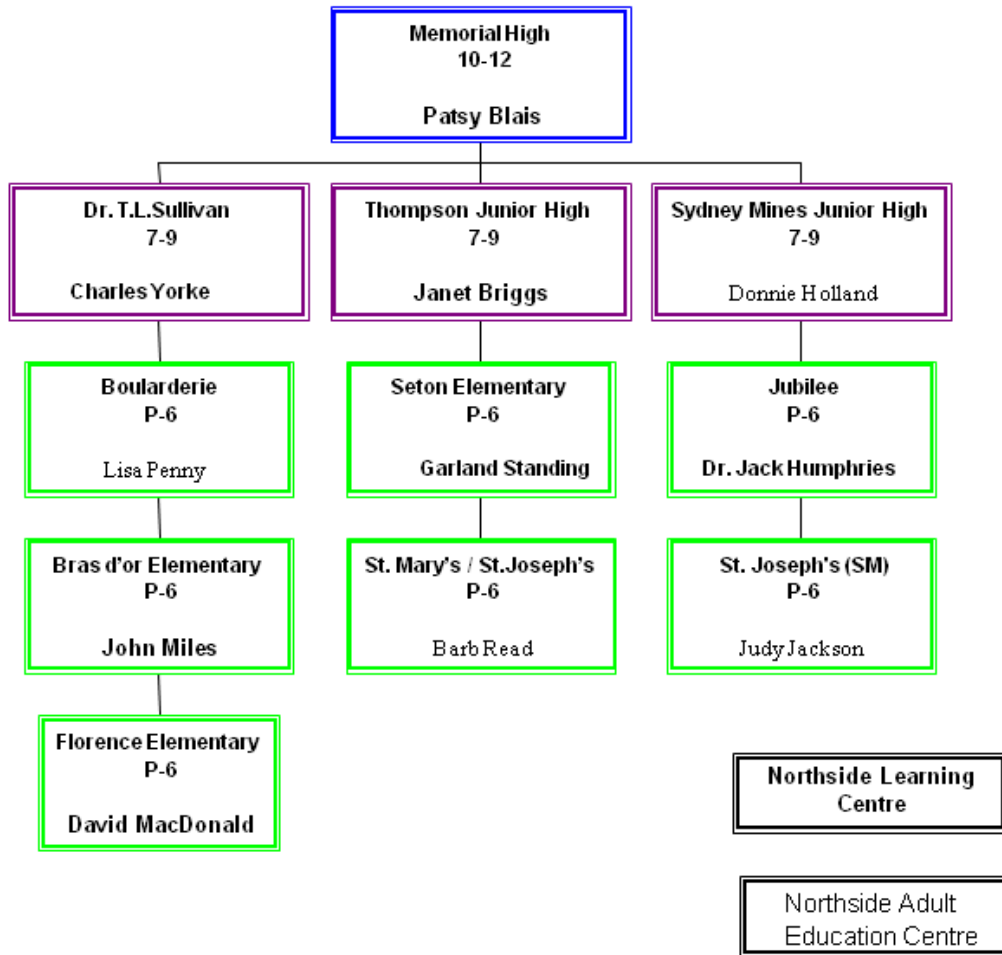
Note: The Glace Bay Family of Schools should report all information concerning the pandemic plan to:

Mary Passerini, Coordinator of Human Resources

Phone: 562-6487

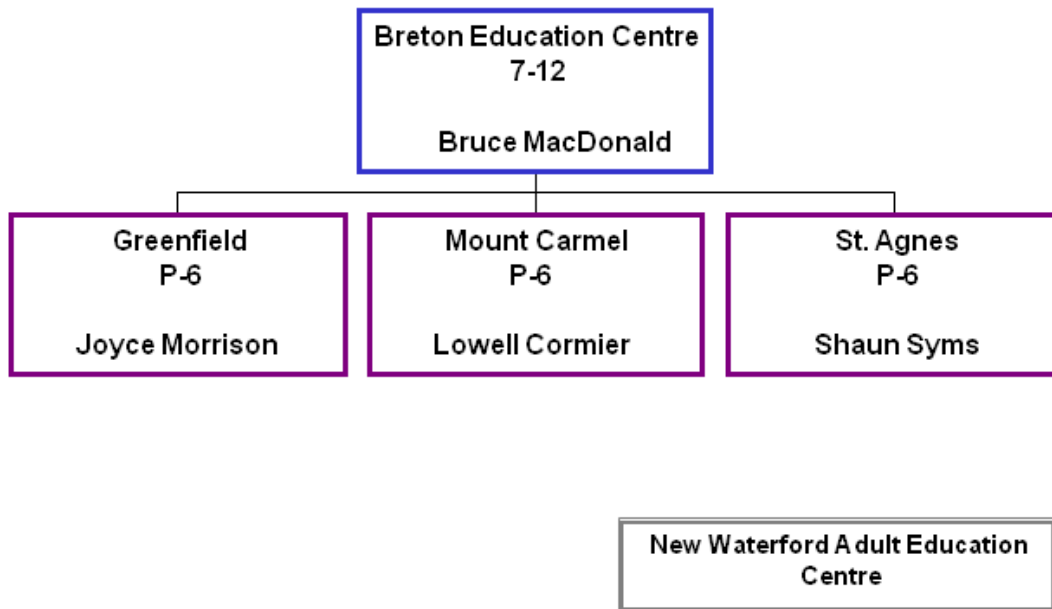
Email: maryp@cbvrsb.ca

Family of Schools Northside



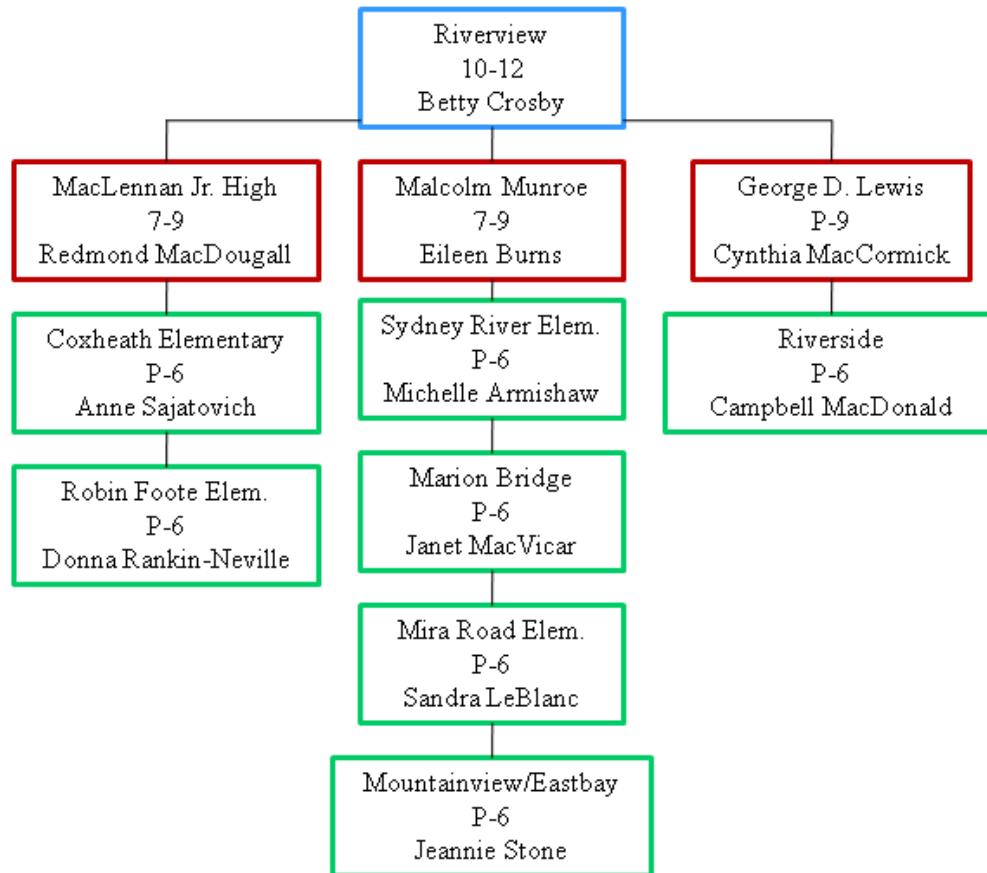
Note: The Northside Family of Schools should report all information concerning the pandemic plan to:
David Brennick, Coordinator of Programs 7-12
Phone: 562-6490
Email: dbrennick@cbvrsb.ca

Family of Schools New Waterford



Note: The New Waterford Family of Schools should report all information concerning the pandemic plan to:
Susan Kelley, Coordinator of Student Services
Phone: 562-6475
Email: skelley@cbvrsb.ca

Family of Schools County



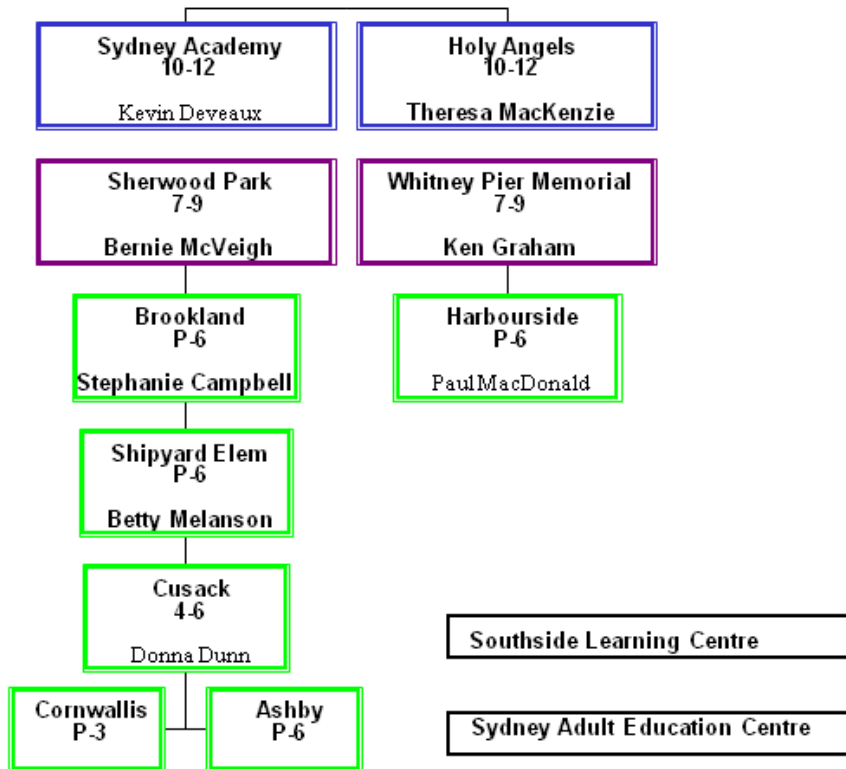
The County Family of Schools should report all information concerning the pandemic plan to:

Joe Chisholm, Coordinator of Human Resources

Phone: 564-6486

Email: jchisholm@cbvrsb.ca

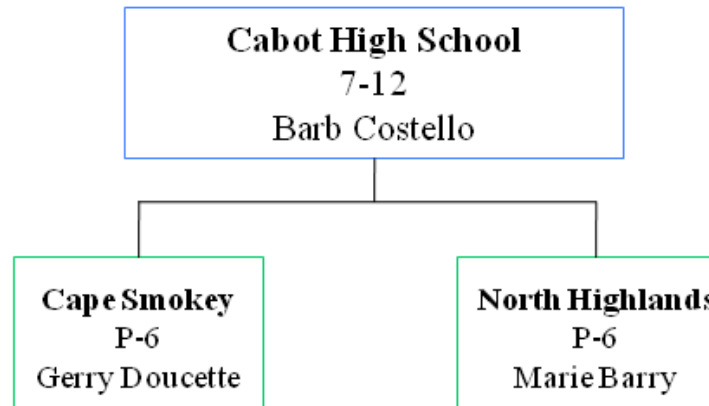
Family of Schools Sydney



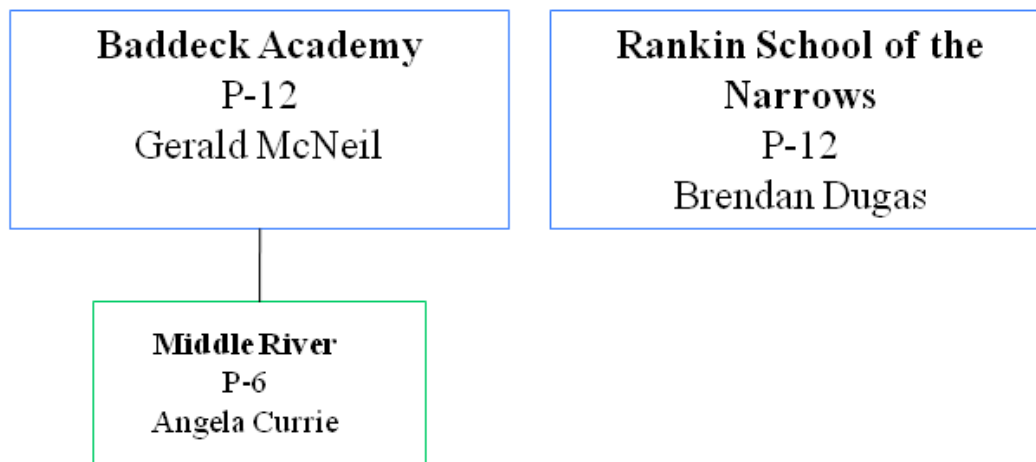
Note: The Sydney Family of Schools should report all information concerning the pandemic plan to:

Cathy MacNeil, Coordinator of Programs P-6
Phone: 794-6209; Email cmacneil@cbvrsb.ca

Family of Schools Victoria North



Victoria South



The Victoria North and South Family of Schools should report all information concerning the pandemic plan to:

Rick Simm, Coordinator of Programs – Instructional Support

Phone: 794-6232

Email: rsimm@cbvrsb.ca