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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 4, 2006

To: College/University Pandemic Planning Liaisons

From: Laura M. King
Vice Chancellor - Chief Financial Officer

Subject: Memo #6 - Avian Flu Pandemic Planning next steps

All colleges and universities recently participated in small group meetings convened around the state. The campus participation was very strong and well prepared. My thanks to you, your team members, and your campus leadership for the commitment of time and executive attention to this task.

As we approached the regional meetings, plan documents were approximately 50% complete overall. It was evident at the meetings that work had continued after the first drafts were submitted. Generally, the areas most often in need of completion included: coordination efforts with external partners (city, county, K-12 district), communications plans for internal and external audiences, and consideration of the elements of a "re-start" plan.

Substantial progress was made at the regional meetings in the identification and articulation of plan elements. You should soon receive direct feedback from Mr. Matuska on areas in need of improvement, clarification and/or completion in the draft plan document you submitted in late June.

I am requesting that every college and university complete the draft plan document and convey it electronically to my office by September 15, 2006. I in turn, will prepare the overall system plan for submission to the state of Minnesota in early October. It is recognized that plans remain in draft form even after September 15th and that substantive consultation with campus colleagues and the student body is planned when fall term commences.

College/university teams made presentations at the regional meetings which focused on:

1. highlighting strategies and tactics developed as a part of the planning process;
2. issues unique to planning environment;
3. difficulties encountered in plan development
4. areas where regional/system guidance sought

The following material presents a summary of the information gathered at the regional meetings. Each functional area contains ideas/best practices put forth by one or more college/university and policy questions pending. Please acknowledge where appropriate in your draft plan document any issues awaiting system policy discussion.

Additions to the below information and views concerning the policy questions are encouraged and invited. The System Steering committee will undertake development of the means and methods for addressing the policy questions including assurance of the involvement of faculty, staff and students. Leadership council advice and consultation will occur this fall as well.

If you have additional policy questions/concerns, please direct them to Nancy Lamden at Nancy.Lamden@so.mnscu.edu and she will route them to the appropriate party for consideration.

Once again, my personal thanks to you and your team for the devotion that you have brought to this effort. Your work now is critical to the continued well being of your students and staff.

c: James H. McCormick, Chancellor
All College and University Presidents
System Steering Committee

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A. Academic and Student Affairs

Ideas/best practices

Provision of the course syllabus, instructional materials and expectations for student assessment at the beginning of the semester is a great assistance to students and faculty preparedness

Current, up to date faculty course records and multiple, on-going means of assessment will help with the continuation of learning and assignment of grades

Measure student attendance by using network login statistics and other data. (Winona State University)

Consider establishment of a pre-defined alternative calendar. (Dakota County TC)

Considering use of "Podcasting". (Century College)

Using industry lab sites for instructional delivery. (Hennepin TC)

Policy questions pending

Grading policy --% of course completion or time? Will this be established system wide or by each institution? Is there a need for consistency or limits throughout the system?

Who assigns grades if original faculty no longer available?

How will the system re-establish academic calendar

Attendance - Is there a suggestion for common language for syllabi?

Withdrawal, tuition refund policies need review/consideration

Need for development of international travel guidelines and procedures – when to send international students home and when to bring home students abroad

B. Operations/Human Resources

Ideas/best practices

Online timesheets have been developed. (Multiple)

Develop “go-kits” for staff which enable remote site operation of campus. Include laptops, phone trees, building keys, (Alexandria TC)

Vendor agreement in place to increase security services to 24-7 if needed. (Hennepin TC)

What happens if another type of emergency develops during pandemic event? (fire, storm, etc.) (General Question)

Use shifts other than M-F day to increase social distancing.

Policy questions pending

Need clarification of definition of essential functions and personnel performing those functions.

Consider whether any issues with staff and/or students volunteering for community service before/after classes cancelled. This also applies to staff with second job e.g. nursing instructors who also work in a local hospital.

Is there the ability to suspend class size requirements?

How can we maintain “separation of duties” with reduced staff?

Any guideline revisions needed to address potential for higher interest in telecommuting? Would it require ISRS/MAPS/SEMA4 policy changes?

If we have multiple stops and starts how do we deal with contract provisions that are triggered from semester start dates?

C. Healthcare

Ideas/best practices

Emphasize need for personal/family preparedness. Red Cross web site contains section "together we prepare" for family and personal planning/preparation. (MSU Mankato)

Be sure that psychological impact addressed in post pandemic recovery plans. (Multiple)

Develop year long wellness campaign. Healthy campus theme planned for entire year. (North Hennepin CC)

Policy questions pending

Need to issue guidelines for administration of respirator program.

D. Communications

Ideas/best practices

Suggest starting with big picture at faculty meetings this fall. Too soon to come out with detail that planners are familiar with. May just add confusion and dissension. (Central Lakes College)

Using recorder to record the stories of people for documentation and historical purposes. (St. Cloud State)

Runners may be needed to deliver messages when technology fails. (Southwest MSU)

Early communications to students/parents brochure. (MN West CTC)

Early communications with child care providers.

Assure that private student housing owners/operators are included in planning. (Multiple)

Use student service clubs and ministerial relationships to communicate with off campus students

Use of color-code alert system to communicate emergency status. (Central Lakes College, St. Paul College)

Use of MN Dept. of Health web site for features that offer communications documents in multiple languages. Hygiene brochures in six languages can be downloaded from MN Dept of Health website

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/pandemic/schools.html>
e.g.

Cover Your Cough for the community in six languages

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/infectioncontrol/cover/genposter.html>

Students may be a conduit to providing education to communities with primary languages other than English. Emergency Community Health Outreach ECHO TV is routinely used for other things including pandemic education. All about Avian Influenza and Isolation and Quarantine Care see show, show script, brochures, available in other languages, Spanish, Khmer, Somali, Hmong, Vietnamese.

<http://www.echominnesota.org>

To view shows in 6 languages: <http://tpt.org/mnchannel.new/echo.php>

Individual Pandemic Planning checklist in English or Spanish

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/planguide/checklist.html>

Need access or structure for multiple phones for communication purposes on campus. (South Central College)

Use of telephone hot-line with updated messaging regarding campus status. (Multiple)

Use of regular or "Dark" web site as communicator. (Multiple)

Consider potential use of Interactive Television (ITV) and relationships with local cable companies and public TV.

Policy questions pending

Communications strategy will need to link system web page with campus pages and manage messages so to assure consistency

Guidance sought on standards for securing information technology assets and hardening access to LAN and WAN.

E. General

Ideas/best practices

Best plans were constructed as an additional chapter in the college/ university All Hazard Plan which enables standard decision making structure, familiarity with emergency protocols and recognition that planning is part of a larger preparedness discipline

Using a Prevention (mitigation) - Preparedness (design) - Response (delivery) - Recovery as an organizational format. (South Central College)

Develop strong communication practices with local education and governmental entities. Consider submitting plan to local agencies for review and assistance. (Ridgewater College)

Define who is responsible for what during a pandemic event including names, titles, and contact information. (Multiple)

Assure that plan document includes methods for documentation of decision making during the event. Will greatly aid any appeal, grievance issues.

Reducing plan to an easy to read and follow - short and concise format. (Multiple)

Begin implementation of re-start plan when the closure/cancellation occurs. Plan should include support for the students interested in returning--- registration, payments, counseling, etc.

Establish Memorandum of Agreements with local agencies desiring and/or expecting support.

Policy questions pending

Protocol for campus cancellation/closure decision - role of governor, Board, chancellor, president

Will all campuses cancel/close simultaneously or serially by institution, campus, program or division?

Will on line instruction be considered differently at cancellation/closure decision?

How does decision to re-open get made? Do all re-start simultaneously or serially?

Interest expressed in establishment of shared remote site for critical business function support after campuses close.

Protocol for on-going construction activities (contractor) on campus, e.g. contractors' stop work (insufficient workforce); campus directs work stoppage (building closure, lack of campus maintenance staff to support contractors' needs).