Academic Continuity Plan (ACP) - Best Practices
World Virtual School Project 2019

1) **SCHOOL PROCEDURES** - Each and every participating school should have an emergency plan with procedures in place for academic continuity of operations (herein referred to as the Academic Continuity Plan - ACP). Use of online resources to continue the academic program online over the course of an emergency is premised on the foundation of a robust and well-organized blended learning environment throughout the academic program. The ACP must specify expectations that teachers use these same core blended learning systems for consistency across each level (elementary, middle, high school) during the course of an emergency. Parents should be able to readily understand what courses are supported online and to what degree. Recognizing that, when necessary, evacuations are ordered in monthly increments, planning should encompass the possibility of both short-term and long-term continuity of up to several months or more.

- ❏ An ACP is developed, up-to-date, and in place for online academic continuity of operations.
- ❏ The ACP verifies a robust and well-organized blended learning environment throughout the academic program.
- ❏ The ACP specifies expectations that teachers use the same core blended learning systems for consistency across each level (elementary, middle, high school) during the course of an emergency.
- ❏ The ACP specifies for Parents what courses are supported online and to what degree.
- ❏ The ACP encompasses the possibility of both short-term and long-term continuity of up to several months or more.

2) **COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION** - Emergency online systems should include the means to communicate reliably with all community constituents.

- ❏ The school has an effective, up-to-date, and remotely accessible information system to communicate with parents and other community stakeholders at the inception and throughout the duration of an emergency.

3) **ACCESSIBILITY** - All online academic resources should be hosted off campus, or they should have a failover replica off campus in the event that campus facilities are offline and/or inaccessible.

- ❏ All systems critical to academic continuity of operations should be identified as such.
- ❏ All of these identified systems should be hosted off campus, or they should have a failover replica off campus in the event that campus facilities are offline and/or inaccessible.

4) **PERSONNEL** - Critical academic services should have at least two knowledgeable system administrators in the event that one of them is out of contact. Because some teachers and students may also be out of contact, critical academic services should have online central administration so that courses, teachers, and students can be reassigned as needed by the systems administrators.

- ❏ All systems identified as critical to academic continuity of operations have at least two knowledgeable system administrators in the event that one of them is out of contact.
- ❏ All systems identified as ACP critical services are able to be administered remotely (from anywhere, online) by those designated system administrators.

5) **CURRICULUM** - The emergency online curriculum for grades PK-5 should be comprised at least with weekly notifications, updates, and/or assignments - with the parents as the intended intermediaries. The assumption is that all K-5 students should seek an interim school placement during a long-term emergency if at all possible. Via an effective learning management system (LMS), the emergency online curriculum for grades 6-12 should be comprised of daily academic communication between teachers and students, following as closely as possible to the academic plan for the school year. The assumption is that the curriculum should be sustainable online, although some grades 6-12 students may also be placed in an interim school.

- ❏ The emergency online curriculum for grades PK-5 is comprised at least with weekly notifications, updates, and/or assignments - with the parents as the intended intermediaries.

- ❏ The school has the mechanisms in place by which to stay in touch with PK-5 families to determine whether they arranged an interim school placement during an emergency.
- ❏ The school maintains an effective learning management system (LMS) for grades 6-12 which enables daily academic communication between teachers and students, following as closely as possible to the academic plan for the school year.
- ❏ The school has the mechanisms in place by which to stay in touch with grades 6-12 families to determine whether they are successfully following the online curriculum.
- ❏ Parent access to online curriculum activities and content can be enabled to the degree that they can support their children's learning as needed.

6) **ENSURING SUCCESS** - Critical academic systems should provide some real time auditing of specific teacher and student usage, to assist the school administration in ensuring successful delivery of services. The ACP should include the allocation of school personnel to stay in contact with and to assist families online with any difficulties in keeping pace with academic expectations.
- ❏ ACP critical services have the capacity to audit Student and Parent usage to assure delivery of services.
- ❏ The ACP includes the allocation of school personnel (e.g. counselors) to stay in contact with and to assist families online with any difficulties in keeping pace with academic expectations.

7) **PREPARATION AND TESTING** - Preparation to use these systems should include regular training (with orientation of new faculty), regular use, periodic system tests ("fire drills"), and an annual audit (facilitated by the WVS regional representatives at the regional meetings).
- ❏ There is regular usage across the school of those systems which core to the ACP.
- ❏ The ACP is supported with orientation and regular (at least once a year) training.
- ❏ The ACP is tested at least once a year with a "fire drill" type exercise (i.e.online school day - see sample below).

Sample ACP 2-Part Testing Procedure (implemented annually):

1) "Soft" Drill - Students stay at home. All Faculty and Staff are at school for a Professional Day. School is "in session" as an online school day.Teachers have access to peer and technical support at school. Administrative follow up guides process improvements. (Perhaps in the fall.)

2) "Hard" Drill - Students stay at home. All Faculty and Staff stay at home. School is "in session" as an online school day. It also counts as a Professional Day. Administrative follow up guides process improvements. (Perhaps in the spring.)