



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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H1N1 School Closure Virtual Learning Platform

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Internet based options for education continuity in the event schools are closed for H1N1

Q: Why has ODE created a virtual learning platform for every school?

A: President Obama has declared the H1N1 pandemic a national emergency. The pandemic has reached Oregon schools and is already responsible for closures and student absentee rates as high as 60% in several schools.

These services are intended to provide schools that do not have an existing web and communication infrastructure with a base set of options for education continuity due to H1N1 closures. Many of Oregon's school Districts and ESDs have established rich web platforms and education continuity services and have incorporated them into their school closure plans. Some schools may still need short term communication and education continuity services.

Q: How do we activate our school's platform?

A: The principal can only activate a school platform. We recommend that activation requests be made prior to an H1N1 outbreak to provide schools with enough time to create teacher accounts and integrate the desired platform services into the school closure plan. School principals were sent a message with the activation instructions, individual audio conference codes for their meeting rooms, and the audio conferencing bridge phone number.

The school principal can request activation by sending a request to support@orvsd.org. The request e-mail *must* include a contact phone number. Once the request is received, OVSD operations will contact the principal to confirm the request and activate the site. Confirmation is required by security policy. The principal can direct OVSD operations to delegate platform administration to the appropriate school staff.

Q: We have a great school web site already, but would like to incorporate the audio conferencing and webinar options into our school closure services. Do we have to activate all the features just to use the audio conferencing and WebEx?

A: No, a school can use any or all of the available services. The platform is flexible and audio conferencing and WebEx services are designed to work independent of the web portion.

Q: Are there ANY costs to the schools to activate and use these services?

A: No, the platform is an extension of the OVSD infrastructure funded by the Oregon Legislature and Governor. WebEx is made available by Accelerate Oregon through the efforts and resources of Intel, Cisco and ODE.

Q: Our school has 1,200 teachers and students. How are we going to create 1,200 accounts quickly?

A: Only school staff needs accounts for publishing communication and content. Students and their parents do not need accounts to view information. Students can interact with teachers by posting comments to a teacher's post.



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An account is not required for students to respond to a teacher's lesson. The platform is set up to provide the minimal level of service required for effective and simple education continuity.

Schools who believe they would be activating these services during an H1N1 school closure are encouraged to activate their services well before an H1N1 outbreak. This will allow the school to incorporate these services into their school closure plan, set up staff accounts and to customize the web portal as necessary.

Q: Is the web portal component of the ODE platform difficult to change and administer?

A: No, the platform is built on the OVSD Drupal Content Management System (CMS). This CMS has been configured in its simplest form for ease of use. Account creation and teacher's class post "paths" are already created in a Menu. A school administrator can quickly add a teacher account.

Q: How would a teacher provide quality instruction with this?

A: There is no substitute for quality teaching with active engagement. The web portal portion of the H1N1 platform is intended to provide a minimum level of education continuity during the days a school is closed due to this national pandemic. Teachers and students who are not ill from the H1N1 environment can combine textbook and digital learning objects with teacher guidance to continue their studies. Links to digital learning objects are in the platform to assist teachers with lessons.

Q: How would our school use audio conferencing?

A: Principals have two on-demand preconfigured meeting rooms. The first is a closed room for school coordination. Only the participants can hear the conference and speak to each other. The second meeting room extends the conference to community participants. This meeting room streams the conference to an embedded player on the school's H1N1 web platform. People who access the player can hear the participants, but not talk to them. This extends the reach of the conference to an unlimited number of participants. If a school wants to put the streaming player on their current web portal, they can simply embed the player and stream address there.

Each room has two access codes; one for the users to enter the conference and one for the principal to start the conference. Users cannot talk to each other until the principal joins the conference. If the principal has not entered the conference, the participants will hear prerecorded music. All conferences use the same access phone number, and access codes direct them to their meeting rooms. Audio conferencing is a toll service. The total number of ports is limited, so schools should keep the maximum number of school staff to 10-20 at any one time.

Q: How would our school use WebEx?

A: When the decision to close a school is made, WebEx becomes available to the school principal and teachers. Schools can request Host Accounts for the WebEx meeting place. Each Host Account can hold a webinar using a toll free phone for the audio portion for up to 200 people.

Q: Can we use these WebEx services even if our school is not closed because of a H1N1 outbreak?

A: No, H1N1 learning continuity WebEx is not an unlimited service. A school must be closed in order to activate WebEx for their school staff. OVSD schools that already have ORVSD.org WebEx do not need any additional accounts for school closures. OVSD schools can use their existing service.

Q: If we want to activate the web portion of the platform, what will the internet address of our site be?

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A: The Platform will use the Oregon.k-12.net domain. School addresses will use a school-districtt.Oregon.k-12.net sub domain structure.

Q: Can we keep our platform after the H1N1 Pandemic has subsided?

A. Yes. Once schools activate the platform it is theirs to keep, repurpose, or request deactivation. Examples of districts and schools who are currently using this CMS option include:

- <http://www.salkeiz.k12.or.us/>
- <http://silverfalls.orvsd.org/>
- <http://westlanetech.orvsd.org/>
- <http://oregondataport.org/>
- <http://stimulus.k12partners.org/>

Q: How do I get additional questions answered?

A: Please send questions to ODE.H1N1@state.or.us. Answers to questions and concerns will be responded to as quickly as possible.