



## **Happy Friday!**

Another great, week in the Bellefonte Area School District! As promised, I'll be providing covid information weekly in a brief email on Fridays. According to the CDC, Centre County is designated as having a "low" community rate again this week. This email includes a Covid case count update and supplemental information about the staffing shortages in the district.

### **Covid Case Counts**

Since last Friday (4/15), we have received notifications of 4 new covid cases in the district. The 4 new cases include a staff member from the High School, a staff member at the Middle School and 2 students from Bellefonte Elementary School.

As a reminder, the rules for contact tracing/quarantine were changed for schools by the PA Department of Education (PDE) and the PA Department of Health (PA DoH) a few weeks ago. We are still required to report new cases to the PDE/PA DoH, but we are no longer required to report the number of close contacts/quarantines.

### **Staffing Shortages**

Like many school districts across the state and country, we continue to have staffing shortages in our district. We are in particular need of support staff right now, including cafeteria workers, custodians, and paraeducators across the district, as well as a Health Room Assistant at Benner Elementary School. A list of open positions and more information about the open positions and application process can be found on the Human Resources page of the district website: <https://bellefonte.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>. More information about working in our most amazing district with our awesome students can be found on the Human Resources page of the district website ([www.basd.net](http://www.basd.net)). Please share this information with anyone who may be interested now or in the future.

Along with the staffing shortages in our schools, there is also a statewide and nationwide shortage of bus drivers. We have been fortunate that our bus/van companies have been able to provide drivers and transportation with little disruption for this entire school year. Last week, Dr. Kris Vancas, our Director of Curriculum and Instruction at BASD, and I were invited to the Fullington school bus depot in Pleasant Gap to “test drive” a bus, and as a promotion for recruiting bus drivers. We had a great time! It really was not as difficult to drive a huge bus, as I would have thought. Our Fullington guide told us there are a lot of incentives available for persons who are interested in becoming a bus driver, in any capacity. Please contact Fullington for more information.

My time at Fullington last week reminded me of a few things. First, on a personal note, my grandfather owned buses and drove for the Lock Haven School District many, many years ago. My aunts and uncles drove buses for him, and my mom had her license to drive buses a long time ago, as well. It was quite an honor and nostalgic for me to be able to follow in my mom’s and family’s footsteps, even if it was for only a few minutes. I was happy to be able to promote our school bus drivers. Secondly, we had time to reflect on how driving a bus is such an incredibly important job. Our bus and van drivers are so essential to the success of our students, too. We owe them a huge shout out and a thank you for all they do! If you get a chance, please thank a bus/van driver!

Barring any breaking news, I’ll send my next update on Friday next week. As always, thank you so very much for your continued support, patience and understanding! I hope you have a wonderful weekend!

Tammie Burnaford

Superintendent

Bellefonte Area School District