



## Bellefonte Area School District

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*Inspiring and Preparing Today's Learners to Embrace Tomorrow's Challenges*

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**April 30, 2021**

**Dear Bellefonte Area School District Parents, Families, Staff and Community:**

Happy Friday! I am sending this letter to give a quick update for the covid cases in the district. Since Monday, we were notified of 6 new coronavirus cases (all students) in our district.

### **BASD Case Count Update**

As a recap, since my letter and report on Monday, April 26, we received notification of 6 new cases in our district, as follows:

- We received notification that a Marion-Walker Elementary School student tested positive over the past week. The student has not been in school for more than a week. The case does count by PDE guidelines, and no contact tracing was required.
- A middle school student tested positive earlier this week. The student was in school while infectious, and the case does count by PDE guidelines. Parents of students who may have been close contacts were notified earlier this week.
- The rest of the new, known district cases involve 4 High School students. We have received notification of the following cases since Monday:
  - One of the positive cases involves a student who was physically present while infectious **before** the mandated closure last week. According to the PDE guidelines, the case does not count because it was before the closure. However, there may have been a small number of students who were close contacts of the student before the closure. The parents of those students were notified earlier this week.
  - Three students tested positive and were physically present while infectious **after** the closure. The 14 day rolling calendar was set back to 0 after the closure, but

these 3 new cases this week do count now by PDE guidelines. Parents of students who may have been close contacts were notified earlier this week, yesterday and today.

Just to refresh your memory, per the PA Department of Education (PDE) mandates, we must keep track of the number of active cases in each district school based on a 14 day rolling calendar. Cases count in the rolling 14 day calendar only if the student/staff member was physically present in the building while infectious. Active cases move in and out of the 14 day window based on the date of symptom onset or a positive case. The case counts and surrounding circumstances are shared with the PA Department of Health (DoH) after each new case is identified, and we are given recommendations about possible closures, if needed. The PDE guidelines for closures changed a few weeks ago and include shorter lengths of closures if closures are recommended by the PA DoH. As we have done all year, we will continue to follow the guidance of the PA DoH when new cases arise.

<b>Building</b>	<b>Total number of known, new cases since 4/26</b>	<b>*Since 4/26, the number of new cases that do “count” - students/staff that have been physically present in the building while infectious</b>
High School	4 (all students)	3
Middle School	1	1
Bellefonte Elem.	0	0
Benner Elem.	0	0
Marion-Walker Elem.	1	0
Pleasant Gap Elem.	0	0
BeLA	0	0

## **Other Reminders**

Parents should continue to notify building principals if their child(ren) tests positive for the coronavirus as soon as possible, so that we can provide information for parents and we can stay on top of any contact tracing that may need to occur.. The best way to get in touch with the building principal in the evenings, on the weekends or off times is via email, as our principals check email regularly even during the evening hours and on weekends. The quick notifications really have helped our administrators to act quickly to begin contact tracing and to lessen the spread of the disease over the past 8 months.

Of course, the PDE mandates, the DoH directives, increases in new cases or unforeseen issues can happen rapidly, and we may need to change our plans at a moment's notice. The uptick in cases is concerning. If closures must occur, all other school-related activities and athletic events will be postponed, as well, during any closure. If any of this latest information changes or our status must change, we will let you know as soon as possible.

Again, we are urging everyone in our school community to continue to follow the guidelines and practices that can help lessen the spread of the virus. This includes washing hands frequently, wearing masks, social distancing and practicing personal responsibility. Now, as much as ever, we need to keep up the great work in order to keep our students, staff and community safe and healthy. Please use good judgement and practice safety at all times, so that we can return to normal and finish our last 22 days of school this year safely together.

I hope you and your family stays safe, healthy and well! I hope you have a wonderful weekend!

Sincerely,  
Tammie Burnaford  
Superintendent  
Bellefonte Area School District