



Good evening!

Happy Friday! This evening, I'm providing an update to the Covid cases within our district and an update to the Mask Order Stay.

### **Covid Cases**

Since my email on Tuesday morning, we received notification of 16 new cases across the district. Of the 16 new cases, 15 are students and 1 is a staff member. A few of the cases involve siblings who both tested positive (they are counted as separate cases). A summary of the new cases is shown in the chart below.

<b>Building</b>	<b>Total number of known, confirmed, new cases since 11/30</b>	<b>*Since 11/30, the number of new cases - students/staff that were physically present in the building while infectious</b>
High School	8 (all students, but one is also a BeLA student)	4
Middle School	2 (students)	2
Bellefonte Elem.	0	0
Benner Elem.	3	0
Marion-Walker Elem.	1 (staff)	1
Pleasant Gap Elem.	2 (students)	0
BeLA	See HS information	0

Parents have been notified if their children were identified as a close contact to these 16 cases this week. At the time of this email, there were a total of 5 students quarantined for the 16 new cases that we received notification for since Tuesday. However, please note that at least one of the students quarantined is a sibling of a student who tested positive. Also note that only 7 of the 16 new cases were in school while infectious. Please continue to monitor your children for symptoms of any illness and keep them

home if they exhibit symptoms or if they have been exposed to a known positive covid case and could be infectious.

### **Mask Order Update**

A few hours after I sent the email explaining the status of the PA Mask Order on Tuesday, we got word that the PA Supreme Court reinstated the Stay for the PA Department of Health's Face Covering Order for PA school districts. This PA Supreme Court Order effectively extends the duration of the school masking mandate to at least December 8th rather than December 4th. The PA Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments on the appeal on December 8th, and may or may not decide to keep the mask mandate in place during the pendency of the appeal.

For now, the masking mandate remains in place until at least Wednesday, December 8, 2021. I will send any updates as we get them. The Governor has continued to state the masking mandate will end at the latest on January 17, 2022. When the masking mandate ends, the District will revert back to its Health and Safety Plan which currently makes masking optional.

Barring any breaking news, I'll send my next update letter on Monday morning, as usual. I'm also planning to send more information about Flexible Instructional Days with my letter on Monday. I hope you and your family have a wonderful weekend!

Sincerely,

Tammie Burnaford  
Superintendent  
Bellefonte Area SD