



**Bellefonte Area
School District**

Bellefonte Area School District

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**Mrs. Tammie L. Burnaford, Interim Superintendent
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Inspiring and Preparing Today's Learners to Embrace Tomorrow's Challenges

Oct. 5, 2020

Dear Bellefonte Area School District Families:

Happy Monday! It's hard to believe, but we are starting our seventh week of school today. What an amazing journey it's been so far! As of this writing, there are still no known positive COVID-19 cases in our BASD schools.

This week's update for Centre County shows that the number of cases in the county are down very slightly. However, undoubtedly, Centre County will again be designated as having a "substantial community transmission rate" later today. But, in our local area, our case count remains low. Specifically, during this latest reporting period (Friday, Sept. 25 - Thursday, Oct. 1), there were 10 new positive cases attributed to the 16823 zip code and 0 new cases attributed to 16841. In fact, we have had 16 straight days with no new cases in the 16841 zip code. As a reminder, these two zip codes also span two other school districts, so the actual cases may not have been in our communities. The data is not broken down by specific municipalities. My next superintendents meeting with the PA Department of Education and the PA Department of Health will be held this morning, but we are not planning to move to full remote learning at this time. We will continue to closely monitor the data and our schools. Of course, changes can come rapidly and are sometimes out of our control. If any of this latest information changes or our status must change, we will let you know as soon as possible.

The ever changing status of mandates and recommendations at the state level requires us to once again revise and resubmit our BASD Health and Safety Plan, specifically for athletics. To recap, in Gov. Wolf's original orders for the state, he placed mandated limitations on gathering sizes - 25 for indoor events and 250 for outdoor events. This applied to athletics and

our sports venues, as well. Then, on Sept. 14, his orders were deemed unconstitutional by the Western PA federal courts, but the governor sought a stay for his orders pending an appeal. The stay was not granted at first, but on Thursday, Oct. 1, a judge in the US 3rd Circuit Court granted the stay. This means that we must revert to our original plans to reflect the 25/250 limitations in our gym and stadium for sports events. We know this fall sports season has been very frustrating, particularly for parents and spectators. Please know we are trying to do everything we can to provide opportunities for parents and families to see their athletes compete within the constraints that are forced upon us. If anything changes again, we will adapt accordingly. We truly appreciate your patience through these challenging and constantly changing times.

In the past two weeks, our district was given some great news from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). There is such a thing as a free lunch at BASD! Through an extension of a USDA meals program, all BASD students can get school meals at no charge until the end of December! Some details:

- School Breakfast and Lunch meals are available for all students at no charge from now until the end of December
- No need for parents or students to submit an application
- Available in all schools if open, or at any remote pickup location
- Parents and guardians of virtual learners currently enrolled in BeLA or BASD hybrid classes may pre-order meals online for pickup for their child's virtual learning days. Please visit the BASD website under the Food Services section for meal order opportunities.
- For more information, please contact Laura Frye, director of food services, by phone (814-355-4814 ext.3010) or by email (lfrye@basd.net).

I know I repeat this often, but the main reason we have been able to keep our schools open and our students and staff safe is due to the support we have received from students, staff, parents and families in following safe practices, such as wearing masks and social distancing. We encourage everyone in our school community to continue to follow the guidelines and practices that can help lessen the spread of the virus. Working together is essential, and we are so proud of what we have done together. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Tammie Burnaford
Interim Superintendent
Bellefonte Area School District