



Good evening! This is Tammie Burnaford, interim superintendent of Bellefonte Area School District. I'd like to provide an update to our status this evening.

We received word this afternoon that another one of our high school students received a positive coronavirus test. The student has no known connection to our other high school student or the middle school adult who tested positive last week. The student also has no known connections to any of the students or staff in the middle school or elementary schools and did not ride the bus. The high school and middle school buildings were cleaned deeply over the past three days.

We are working again with the Department of Health in our plans and will follow the Dept. of Health recommendations. Based on the guidance on the DOH website and the recommendations we already received, we are planning to have all of our schools open tomorrow. The high school principals already have identified and contacted staff members and parents of students who may have been in close contact with this case. The DOH will also reach out to those individuals and will provide further guidance.

At this time, I'd also like to explain how an individual is identified as a close contact. The DOH rule and definition for close contact is when one person is less than six feet from another person who has tested positive for more than 15 continuous minutes. Those individuals will be quarantined for 14 days according to the Dept. of Health. Our students and staff have been following the guidelines and all of our safe practices, so well that the list of primary contacts has been relatively short in our cases. In my letter to parents and families tomorrow, I will provide links to the specific Department of Health webpages and guidance, as well as more information about secondary contacts.

Obviously, these three cases in our schools do bring concerns from all of us. Due to confidentiality, we are unable to provide more details about the individual cases, which may also cause concern among our staff, students, parents and families. And, rumors tend to fly – many that are untrue. We will try to provide frequent messages and as much information throughout these difficult times. But, right now, we can say our three current cases are unrelated and seem to be the result of other non-school related outbreaks, gatherings or events. Please know that

we have and will continue to make the safety and wellbeing of all of our students and staff as our number one priority. We will work tirelessly to that end. These times may be challenging, but our school community is second to none.

Again, all schools will be open tomorrow, Oct. 12. Thank you so much for your support, patience and understanding.