



Good morning!

Just a short note about the notifications we received over the long weekend and those that we received this morning...

COVID Case Count Updates

Over the long weekend and this morning, we received notifications of 25 new positive cases in the district. The descriptions and counts are inclusive of the weekend and as of 11:30 this morning. Most cases go back to last week, as some families were awaiting test results which have been delayed. Some parents notified us this morning, so contact tracing was not completed yet. The majority of notifications involved High School, Middle School, Bellefonte Elementary and Marion Walker Elementary students, as follows:

1. We received notification that 7 students and 1 staff member at the High School tested positive for Covid. All, except 1, were present in school last week while infectious. Contact tracing was not fully completed at the time of this writing. Parents will be notified this morning if their children are identified as close contacts.
2. We received notification that five students at the Middle School tested positive for Covid. At least 4 of the students were present in school last week while infectious. However, there were no identified close contacts in at least 3 of those cases. Contact tracing was not fully completed at the time of this writing. Parents will be notified this morning if their children are identified as close contacts.
3. Just this morning, we received notification of 5 new cases at Bellefonte Elementary. At least one of the students was not in school while infectious. The staff at Bellefonte Elementary were collecting more information and began working on contact tracing this morning, but had not completed it as of this writing. Parents will be notified if their children are identified as close contacts.
4. We received notification that 6 Marion-Walker Elementary students tested positive for Covid. All but 1 of the students were in school while infectious last week. Mrs. Krisch was still working on contact tracing for a few of the cases. Parents will be notified this morning if their children were identified as close contacts for those few cases.

5. We received notification that 1 student at Pleasant Gap Elementary tested positive for Covid. The student was in school last week while infectious. Dr. Besch completed contact tracing and already notified parents if their children were identified as close contacts.

The total number of students quarantined as a result of being identified as a close contact in these cases was not determined at the time of this writing. As mentioned in the past, please note that some of the cases are a result of a family member, in some cases a sibling, testing positive first. Additionally, several of these cases involve siblings with each case counting individually.

We need to work together and get through these next few weeks, one day at a time. We are urging parents to work with us and support all personal safety measures. Additionally, please note that parents must keep their students home if they are sick or have any symptoms. They must keep their students home if they are awaiting test results or if someone in the house has tested positive. They also should keep their students home if someone in the house is sick and awaiting test results or if the parents have any notion that their student may have been exposed to a positive case.

Barring any breaking news, I'll send my next update letter or a brief email on Friday, as usual. As always, thank you so very much for your continued support, patience and understanding through these very challenging times. I hope you have a terrific Tuesday and a great week ahead!

Tammie Burnaford
Superintendent
Bellefonte Area School District