



Good morning!

Just a short note about the notifications we received over the weekend and this morning, as of 11:00 AM today....

### **COVID Case Count Updates**

Over the weekend and this morning, we received notifications of 24 new positive cases in the district as follows:

- We received notification that 7 students and one staff member at the High School tested positive for Covid. One student was not in school while infectious. Contact tracing for all of the other cases was not fully completed at the time of this writing. Parents will be notified today if their children are identified as close contacts.
- We received notification that 5 students and two staff members at the Middle School tested positive for Covid. One of the student cases dates back to the first week of school in January, so no timelines have already expired, and no contact tracing will be necessary. At least two other students were not in school while infectious. Dr. Garman and Dr Eckenroth had not fully completed contact tracing for the other cases at the time of this writing. They will notify parents this today if their children are identified as close contacts.
- We received notification that a staff member at Bellefonte Elementary School tested positive. The staff member was not in school while infectious, so no contact tracing was necessary.
- A staff member at Benner Elementary School tested positive. Information was still being gathered at the time of this email, but preliminary information indicates there were no close contacts to this person.
- We received notification that 4 Marion-Walker Elementary students tested positive for Covid. The students were in school while infectious. Mrs. Krisch had completed the contact tracing and notified parents if their children were identified as close contacts.
- This morning, we received notification that a Pleasant Gap Elementary student tested positive. The student was in school while infectious, and Dr. Besch concluded contact tracing. No students were identified as close contacts, and no quarantines were necessary.
- Late Friday and today, we received notification that 2 staff members that travel to more than one building in the district tested positive for covid. The staff members were in the buildings while infectious, but no close contacts were identified.

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. So far, there have been only a few students who were identified as close contacts for these cases. But, as mentioned, the principals are still working on contact tracing for several cases. Please note that some of the cases are a result of a family member, in some cases a sibling, testing positive first.

We need to continue 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.

As a reminder, there is no school for students this Friday. It is a “clerical day” for teachers and professional staff. Barring any breaking news, I’ll send my next update letter or a brief email on Friday. As always, thank you so very much for your continued support, patience and understanding through these very challenging times. I hope you have a marvelous Monday and a great week ahead!

Tammie Burnaford  
Superintendent  
Bellefonte Area School District