

Bloomsburg Area School District

www.bloomsd.org

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Below, please find an update on 3 critical areas for our school community as we navigate through the pandemic. References to DOH/PDE guidance are included where appropriate. This framework reflects our current understanding of community sentiment regarding our instructional model. As our context and situation evolves and changes, it will be important for our processes and frameworks to evolve and change as well. Our focus is on three specific items:

- 1. Instructional Model Status
- 2. Resetting Building Case Counts
- 3. Introduction of Covid-19 Daily Dashboard

Instructional Model Status

The recurring question we have been receiving since the Governor's announcement on Thursday is, *why are we not closing school*? Below please find an overview of our rationale.

- **DOH/PDE Guidance:** We have been fortunate to not experience the number of positive Covid-19 or presumed positive cases as our neighboring districts. Should we reach those thresholds we will follow the guidelines.

| Building | On-Campus Enrollment | COVID-19 Cases to Close School for 3-5 days | COVID-19 Cases to Close School for 14 days | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Beaver-Main Elementary | 90 | 2-4 | 5 or more | | |
| Memorial Elementary | 338 | 2-4 | 5 or more | | |
| W.W. Evans Elementary | 176 | 2-4 | 5 or more | | |
| Secondary Complex | 583 | 4-6 | 7 or more | | |

- Local Health Team Recommendation: Our local health team would make the recommendation to preemptively shift to remote learning. Given our case counts at this time, the current recommendation is to maintain our inperson instructional model.
- **Health Provider Request:** We have been asked regionally by hospital and direct care provider administrators and CEOs to keep our schools, especially our elementary buildings open if at all possible. For these essential services to function they need their workers, who often need us to have their kids during the day.
- **Governor Wolf's December 10, 2020 Announcement:** The Governor's announcement last week directly stated that schools could stay open, while following guidelines established by DOH/PDE. Below please find the excerpt related to schools and the link to the online guidance.

Schools and Extracurricular Activities

Do the Limited-Time Targeted Mitigation Orders and the Mitigation, Enforcement and Immunity Protections Orders apply to schools? The Orders do not apply to educational instruction but do apply to school activities within and outside of the classroom that are not related to educational instruction, including, but not limited to, assemblies, school board meetings, staff meetings, and extracurricular activities.

Do the event and gathering limitations in the Limited-Time Targeted Mitigation Orders include students and staff? Yes, the Orders include all individuals present at the event or gathering, regardless of whether they are students, staff, or others.

Do the Limited-Time Targeted Mitigation Orders apply to school buses?

The Order does not apply to school buses. The <u>Department of Education</u> includes a list of best practices for safely transporting students.

Are school board meetings considered gatherings?

Yes. A school board meeting is a gathering and must follow the indoor gathering limits, and members must practice physical distancing, and comply with the Secretary's Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings. Local education agencies should consider alternative ways to host these meetings including virtual.

Does the Limited-Time Targeted Mitigation Order apply to school cafeterias and college dining facilities? No. The Orders do not apply to school cafeteria food services and college dining services, as those services are not considered to be a private catered event or offered by a restaurant.

See the <u>Department of Education's website</u> for additional guidance and resources on schools.

What are considered extracurricular activities?

Extracurricular activities are defined in the Limited-Time Mitigation Orders as voluntary activities sponsored, approved or permitted by a school entity or local education agency or an organization sanctioned by the local education agency other than sports and athletics, and include, but are not limited to, preparation for and involvement in public performances, contests, demonstrations, displays, and club activities.

https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Targeted-Mitigation-FAQ.aspx

Resetting A School Building's Case Count

As noted in our one-call message last week, our goal is to avoid the necessity to shift to remote learning mid-week as we react to case counts in each building.

The availability of our virtual Fridays as utilized for WW Evans last week and the shift to remote learning for the Secondary Complex 6-12, consistent with DOH/PDE guidance allows us to reset our case count for both WW Evans (Monday) and the Secondary Complex (Tuesday). Both facilities have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. All contract tracing has been completed. Below please find the excerpt related to schools and the link to the online guidance.

When does a school building's case count reset?

The case count resets after the period that the school building is closed consistent with the <u>DOH/PDE guidance on recommended</u> <u>procedures following a case of COVID-19 in a school building</u>. This closure allows time for case investigations, contact tracing, and cleaning and disinfecting to be accomplished prior to the building reopening. In other words, the rolling 14-day period restarts with the first new case – after the school building reopens.

NOTE: Cases and close contacts excused from school must complete their isolation or quarantine period regardless of how long the school building may be closed.

https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-

 $\label{eq:schoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/PublicHealthGuidance/Pages/SchoolClosureRecommentations.aspx} \\$

Important Note: As noted in the guidance all individuals who test positive, who are presumed positive must complete his/her quarantine prior to returning to school. The BASD is still using the 14-day quarantine window. We have not adopted the shortened quarantine windows.

Covid-19 Dashboard

Starting Monday December 14, 2020, we will introduce and publish our Bloomsburg Area School District Covid-19 Dashboard. We will update the dashboard daily, Monday-Friday. Cases identified over the weekend may not be uploaded until Monday morning, depending on confirmation of the case and completion of contract tracing.

The dashboard will allow our community to identify the number of confirmed and presumed positive cases in each building and across the District.

| Bloomsburg Area School District <u>Confirmed Covid-19 Cases</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Building | Students & | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Weekly | |
| | Staff | 12/13/2020 | 12/14/2020 | 12/15/2020 | 12/16/2020 | 12/17/2020 | 12/18/2020 | 12/19/2020 | Total | |
| Beaver-Main Elementary School | Students | | | | | | | | | |
| | Staff | | | | | | | | | |
| W.W. Evans Elementary School | Students | | | | | | | | | |
| | Staff | | | | | | | | | |
| Memorial Elementary School | Students | | | | | | | | | |
| | Staff | | | | | | | | | |
| Bloomsburg Area Secondary Complex | Students | | | | | | | | | |
| | Staff | | | | | | | | | |
| Daily Total | Students | | | | | | | | | |
| | Staff | | | | | | | | | |