

RESPONDING TO COVID-19 CONFIRMED OR PROBABLE CASES

Butler Area School District

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has issued instructions about how confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases will be addressed. The Pennsylvania Department of Health will be responsible for communicating directly to students, families and employees regarding any potential exposure. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Department of Health has informed superintendents that they will contact the school district if they feel closing a school or schools is necessary to mitigate a cluster of cases.

Below are the guidelines from the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Since Butler County does not have a Health Department, we will work with the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH).

The following information is from PDE's website as of August 3, 2020.

After a Positive Case of COVID-19

After a Positive Case of COVID-19, DOH or county and municipal health departments (CMHDs) staff will notify the school entity immediately upon learning that a person with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 was present at the school or a school event while infectious. DOH or CMHD staff will assist the school with risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations. Schools should take every measure to maintain the confidentiality of the affected individual.

It is the responsibility of DOH or CMHD staff to contact a student or staff person with COVID-19, inform close contacts of their possible exposure, and give instructions to those involved, including siblings and other household members, regarding self-quarantine and exclusions. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications from DOH or the CMHD to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the DOH or CMHD staff.

After a Positive Case of COVID-19 (continued)

Pre-K to 12 schools are reminded to contact local DOH or CMHD staff before acting in response to a known or suspected communicable disease. Call DOH at 1-877-PA Health (1-877-724-3258); a representative is on-call 24 hours a day. Pre-K to 12 schools located in a jurisdiction with a CMHD should call the CMHD. DOH and CMHDs will provide guidance to schools regarding disease information, appropriate letters and communications, identification of high-risk individuals, appropriate action and treatment, and on-going support and assistance.

Contact Tracing

Robust surveillance, case investigation, contact tracing and isolation of positive cases or quarantine of close contacts can slow and stop the transmission of COVID-19. Pennsylvania's public health infrastructure of epidemiologists, community health nurses, and CMHD staff are the backbone of this work. More information on contact tracing and case investigation can be found in DOH'S Contact Tracing Plan.

DOH and its CMHD partners have established procedures for timely communication with Pre-K to 12 school entities when there is a probable or positive COVID-19 case. Local DOH staff or the CMHD will notify the school entity and PDE immediately upon learning that someone who tested positive for COVID-19 was present at the school or school event while infectious. DOH or CMHD staff will assist the Pre-K to 12 school with risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.

DOH or CMHD staff will assist the Pre-K to 12 school entity with contact tracing and may request information regarding potential close school contacts from school nurses/health staff. Decisions to track additional health information (i.e., quarantine timeframes) will be made at the local school level.