



# BETHLEHEM

## AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bethlehem Area School District  
COVID-19 Revised Guidance  
February 2022

- The City of Bethlehem Health Bureau and the St. Luke's team we have consulted with throughout the pandemic support a move to optional masking. The combination of the availability of vaccines, the decline in cases, and the individual option to wear a mask now make ending the current mask mandate a reasonable balance between safety and normalcy. Additionally, a mask optional approach aligns schools with guidance for public places where masks are not currently mandated.
- BASD Healthroom Data Districtwide: Over the first five months of the school year our school nurses sent an average of 90 covid symptomatic students home per day. The average is now 50 students per day out of 13,000 students across 22 schools. Pre-COVID, our nurses sent home an average of 30 students per day. We are obviously taking a more cautious approach regarding sending children home when they have symptoms than we did pre-COVID.
- BASD Positive Case Numbers: Student/staff case numbers have dropped from 245 the week in mid-January (35 new cases per day) to 63 cases (9 per day) this week.
- Northampton County Case Rates: On January 21st, the county case rate was 1,045 per 100,000 residents. On February 4th the county case rate was 606 per 100,000 residents. On February 11th (Friday) the case rate was 153 per 100,000 residents.
- Severity of Pediatric Cases: There are very low rates of serious illness due to covid in the pediatric population.
- Attendance: During the first week of January, districtwide student daily attendance hovered in the 82%-84% range. Currently, districtwide student daily attendance rates are in the 92% - 94% range. Teacher daily absentee numbers ranged from 95-100 (out of roughly 1,000 teachers) during the first week of January to a daily average of 55 currently with only 3-5 cases per day, the result of COVID infections.
- Student Vaccination Rates:
  - 54% of high school students are vaccinated
  - 46% of middle school students are vaccinated with two middle schools over 50%
  - 17% of elementary school students are vaccinated with school rates ranging from a low of 3.56% to a high of 48.5%
- Faculty/Staff Vaccination Rates: 83% of employees are vaccinated as of the fall. We do not have an update on the percentage of employees also boosted.