



BETHEL PARK

SCHOOL DISTRICT

July 9, 2021

Dear Families,

Re: Updated COVID-19 Safety Guidance from PDE

Yesterday, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) announced that going forward, it will strictly follow the guidance it receives for safely operating schools from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In turn, all public schools in Pennsylvania, including Bethel Park School District, are similarly required to follow CDC guidelines.

This change is significant because it represents a shift in some of the measures Bethel Park has taken in its schools in recent weeks. Most notably, it means that **starting on Monday, anyone who is unvaccinated, including all children under the age of 12, must now wear a face mask when inside district facilities. The CDC also requires face coverings, regardless of vaccination status, when on public transportation, including school buses.** Individuals are not required to wear masks when they are outside. Also, the District will continue to conduct contact tracing in the event that a positive case is reported to school district officials.

We recognize that the shifting guidance can be frustrating to parents and school officials alike. Previously, the PDE and its member schools used a hybrid approach of CDC, state, and local guidance. However, yesterday's announcement should help eliminate any confusion as the PDE aligns its prevention and mitigation practices and policies with the CDC.

Thank you for your continued efforts and patience.

Sincerely,

James Walsh, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Bethel Park School District