



## EASTERN LANCASTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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October 30, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Community Members-at-Large,

I once again must update you on developments relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on our School District. Yesterday, we confirmed a positive COVID-19 case at the High School which was related to quarantine put in place early this week. This brings the total to three onsite COVID-19 positive cases since the beginning of the school year with approximately a dozen “probable” cases districtwide also since the start of the school year. One of these “probable” cases identified at Garden Spot High School affected the Garden Spot football team which now must quarantine for the next 14 days. Further, Blue Ball Elementary School has a second “probable” case, resulting in some additional quarantines there.

I remind parents and the community that the District is making these decisions based on recommendations from the PA Department of Health and Penn Medicine and that we are applying those measures equally and consistently across the District. Below I share with you the general protocol that we are using as a District, again as dictated by the Department of Health in partnership with Penn Medicine:

- If someone is identified as a positive COVID-19 case based on a test, then anyone, student or adult, around that positive case six feet or closer for 15 minutes or more with symptoms is considered a “probable” case.
- “Probable” cases are considered positive by the Department of Health/Penn Medicine and must maintain a 14-day quarantine from date of exposure, even if the “probable” is tested and the test comes back negative. We understand that this is difficult to accept, but this is the medical recommendation at this present time.
- Any person who is around, within six feet for 15 minutes or more, a positive COVID-19 case or a “probable” (symptomatic) is considered “contact” case and must quarantine for 14 days from date of exposure. If this person chooses to be tested and the test comes back negative, they must remain in quarantine for the full 14 days.
- Ironically, those that test positive for COVID-19 may return to school sooner than those who are quarantined as “probables” as the disease has run its course once symptoms subside for at least 24 hours and no fever.
- The 14-day quarantine begins from the moment or day of exposure, which has led some to believe that protocols are being enforced inconsistently. They are not.

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- There exist nuances with each case that we must consider as well that may appear as inconsistent protocols. They are not.
- These standards are equally and evenly applied in every case.

These are extremely difficult and stressful times for all and the District continues to ask for your support and patience as we attempt to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to keep everyone safe to the best of our ability. Further, we ask that you do not take your frustrations and anger out on our District faculty who are doing their jobs. Many are tired, anxious, and experiencing losses as well.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robert M. Hollister". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R" and "H".

Robert M. Hollister, Ed.D.

jwj