

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Bandera ISD superintendent addresses CoViD concerns

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Addressing what has been a concern for many, Bandera ISD Superintendent Dr. Jerry Hollingsworth said the school district has seen an increase in positive CoViD-19 cases, however he attempted to level those concerns by sharing the steps staff are taking to combat the sickness.

“Over the last week, we have seen an increase. Today we sit at nine cases,” Hollingsworth said.

Clarifying the district does not disclose whether the people affected are students or staff, Hollingsworth said there are three cases at the high school, two at the middle school, two at Hill Country Elementary and two district level employees. He said at least two of the people who tested positive were already quarantined.

“Close contact procedures work,” Hollingsworth said. “When we’ve quarantined, it’s worked. That’s a positive sign. We don’t have a massive cluster of cases on a particular campus.”

Detailing how the classrooms are regularly cleaned, Hollingsworth said the district uses the Clorox Total 360 System - a fumigating machine that is EPA-approved to kill the CoViD-19 virus.

“It doesn’t just land on surfaces, it adheres to the bottom of furniture, tables and desks,” he said, adding all students and staff wear face coverings, receive temperature checks and wash hands often. “School is one of the safest places that our kids can be.”

Hollingsworth said BISD is not likely to shut down an entire campus unless the positive case numbers grow so high that the staff is no longer able to provide instruction.

“We will not in a knee jerk fashion shut down a campus. If we did, the purpose would be to clean, and we are cleaning on a regular basis,” Hollingsworth said. “I am not telling you we will never close, I am telling you we will be hesitant. The numbers at our four campuses are very manageable.”

Bandera ISD just wrapped up week 13 of the 2020-21 school year. For the most part, athletics and other extracurricular UIL activities have taken place as scheduled. Hollingsworth reiterated that any families not comfortable with on-campus instruction have the option of transitioning to remote learning.

“We’ve received a lot of positive comments, and a lot of no-so-positive comments. But that’s social media. I’ve learned that,” Hollingsworth said. “We’re learning. We’re doing in person and remote instruction. We’re having basketball games. Cross country girls and boys are going to state. Marching band starts next week. We’re having school because everyone is following protocol. We’re all wearing masks that none of us want to wear. Our kids need for us to make things as normal as we can, and that’s what we’re committed to.”