

Texas high school football coach pleads with 'knuckleheaded' parents to stop parties

By [Mac Engel](#) November 10, 2020 05:00 AM

Armed with age, tenure, and [multiple state football titles](#), [Aledo football coach](#) Tim Buchanan has put the parents of his community on blast.

He does believe a [football season](#) that is daily jeopardy because of COVID will finish, but the only way to ensure that is if a community that loves the sport follows the rules.

"We went from June 8 to November 1 without having to quarantine more than one or two kids," Buchanan said in a recent phone interview. "Then we started having these dang parties on weekends. It's started to kick our tails."

"All the stuff we are seeing right now, all of these positive cases, is pretty much from homecoming and Halloween parties. None of them are from the school. We have these knuckleheaded parents out here who are renting venues and holding gigantic parties for homecoming and Halloween for high school kids, and they were charging admission. That is what is causing our spread."

[Aledo](#) High School principal Angela Tims said via email, "Students are doing a great job following our health and safety protocols while at school. We're asking parents to continue partnering with us to keep students healthy, learning in-person, and doing what they love."

According to [Aledo ISD's COVID tracker](#), as of Monday evening, 38 students and three employees have active cases, however, 10 times that number are in quarantine. A total of 414 individuals (390 students and 24 employees) are not allowed to attend school and related activities because they have tested positive, currently have COVID-related symptoms or have had exposure to someone with a lab-confirmed positive case.

According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, as of Monday, the state leads the nation with 960,000 confirmed cases of COVID. [Parker County, where Aledo](#) High School is located, has 2,691 total cases and 55 deaths.

Buchanan has warned his players that if he hears one of them is attending a party, he will personally retrieve their items from the locker room and hand them over in a trash bag.

"I lost four starters this week because of a damn party," he said.

As of Friday, Nov. 6, Buchanan said that out of the 225 players, 30 athletic trainers and 15 coaches who are with the Aledo High School football program, five tested positive for COVID. None of the positive cases were adults.

But because of contact tracing, 32 players had to miss practices last week.

Buchanan said he is not told if a player who is out is because of a positive COVID test, or contact tracing. He just knows the kid isn't at practice because of one or the other.

Rumors have flown around Aledo, [much like in every other school](#)

[district in the state](#), that a shutdown is coming and that all students will have to return to remote learning. As of right now, it's more myth than reality as remote learning is just an option for Aledo students.

The concern at Aledo, and elsewhere, is that if the case count continues to rise local health officials will press school administrators to suspend in-person learning.

Buchanan said the team has taken steps to try to reduce the likelihood of spreading coronavirus. The team has a 12-minute rule in the locker room — a kid must do everything in 12 minutes and get out.

He also believes some of the surge in positive cases is related to students getting relaxed at lunch time since kids are allowed to remove their masks to eat.

"I think the students thought you can take off your mask at lunch that you won't get quarantined," he said. "If someone at your lunch table tests positive, you are going to get quarantined."

Ultimately, Buchanan does believe [Aledo](#), and the rest of the state, will be able to play out what has been, and will continue to be, a mess of a football season.

The question of who is eligible and clear to play will remain a daily guess.

It's not as if the season is close to completion. For Aledo, the playoffs won't start until the week of [Dec. 7, and the title game is the week of Jan. 11.](#)

Aledo has not missed the playoffs in 24 years, and has won nine state

titles, including the 5A championship in 2019. The Bearcats have reached the state title game in four straight years.

They are currently 4-1, and while another state title is never guaranteed, a deep playoff run would be considerably easier if the head coach doesn't have a bunch of kids at home because of quarantine.