

To: President's Cabinet  
From: Denise M. Trauth  
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting  
March 1, 2021

### **Impact of COVID-19 (#770)**

Guest Dr. Emilio Carranco compared data from the week of February 8, 2021, to data from the week of February 22, 2021. Testing data for the week of February 15, 2021, was not reviewed given the interruption in testing that week due to the winter storm. Two-week comparisons revealed:

- In Texas, the average daily case counts decreased from 8,357 to 4,243 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 10.3 to 9.9 percent.
- In Hays county, the average daily case counts decreased from 72 to 62 cases per day, and the positivity rate was 8.9 percent.
- In Williamson county, the average daily case counts decreased from 167 to 71 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate remained stable at 8.3 percent.

For the week of February 22, 2021, Texas State conducted 1,209 tests, with 28 returning positive for a positivity rate of 2.3 percent.

As of February 28, 2021, there were 39 active cases at Texas State; two students were in on-campus quarantine and three students were in isolation.

In comparison to other Texas institutions of higher education, for the week of February 22, 2021, The University of Texas at Austin reported 82 positive results out of 3,960 tests for a positivity rate of 2.1 percent.

Dr. Carranco provided a vaccination update:

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency has established community vaccination sites in Dallas, Arlington, and Houston.
- The FDA recently issued Emergency Use Authorization for a third COVID-19 vaccine. The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine is a one-shot vaccine that can be stored in a refrigerator. AstraZeneca and Novavax are likely to be the next vaccines approved in about one to two months. With more vaccines coming online, Dr. Carranco remains optimistic that college-aged individuals will have the opportunity for vaccination in May 2021.
- The state of Texas has not identified the next priority groups. Thus, it remains unclear when educators will have the opportunity for vaccination.

Dr. Carranco, Dr. Hernandez, and guest Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman continued the discussion regarding spring break. Dr. Sriraman shared that the Continuity of Education Work Group recommended that for the week following spring break the university not transition to all virtual

instruction. Courses should be held according to the instructional delivery modality that was assigned at the beginning of the semester. Only on a case-by-case basis should faculty move classes to online/remote delivery after consulting with their department chair/school director.

Dr. Carranco reviewed the recommendations from the Health, Wellness, and Safety Work Group. The 12 current health and safety guidelines have been shown to work, as there has been no evidence of transmission on the campuses. Despite these guidelines, two additional mitigation strategies will be implemented:

- Messages to raise awareness about the latest CDC travel guidelines, and
- Encourage testing of faculty, staff, and students the week following spring break.

Cabinet members discussed student, faculty, and staff travel during spring break. Travel, especially by bus, plane, and train, increases the risk of transmission of COVID-19. While the CDC recommends that people not travel during this time, it is expected that some faculty, staff, and students will travel during spring break. University messaging will address how to travel safely and mitigate the spread upon return.

Dr. Lloyd discussed current travel restrictions for employers. Cabinet members agreed that all international and domestic travel remains canceled until further notice. Travel between the San Marcos and Round Rock Campuses or The Texas State University System Office in Austin is still permitted and does not require pre-approval. There is an exception process for essential travel approval. The traveler's Cabinet Officer must approve the travel. The rationale and qualification as essential travel must be detailed, and include safety and wellness protocols. This information will be posted to the Roadmap.

**RTA: 3/22/21 Discuss employee travel guidance for fall 2021.**

Provost Bourgeois discussed whether face coverings will be required in fall 2021. It will likely depend on the number of people who get vaccinated prior to fall 2021 as well as guidance from the CDC, state public health authorities, and the Office of the Governor. Cabinet members will continue to monitor the situation and will make a decision at a future cabinet meeting.

Provost Bourgeois and Dr. Lloyd discussed whether to extend workplace modifications beyond May 31, 2021. This, too, will likely depend on the number of people who get vaccinated before the summer and the fall and guidance from federal and state agencies. Cabinet members will continue to monitor the situation and make a decision at a future cabinet meeting.

**RTA: 4/5/2021 Discuss COVID-19 related workplace modifications.**

President Trauth discussed whether to require participants to produce a negative test upon check-in for summer camp programs offered at Texas State. To provide a layer of convenience for parents, Mr. Algoe suggested providing a COVID-19 rapid test during the check-in process. At a previous meeting, President's Cabinet members approved the hosting of summer camps at Texas State during summer 2021; however, the safety protocols still need to be finalized. President

Trauth asked Dr. Teis and Dr. Hernandez to benchmark testing requirements for summer camps with other higher education institutions in Texas.

**RTA: 4/19/21 Discuss testing requirements for summer athletic camps.**

### **Budget Development Calendar**

Mr. Algoe presented the Budget Development Calendar for fiscal year 2022. Dr. Trauth shared that the highest priority during budget development is to determine whether the three-percent bonus, at a cost of about \$6 million, can be moved permanently into the base salaries.

### **President's Update (#556)**

President Trauth reviewed the meetings that she will be attending this week, including the Texas House Appropriations Committee meeting on March 2, 2021, the Faculty Senate meeting on March 3, 2021, and the Council of Chairs meeting on March 4, 2021.

### **Significant Issues (#01)**

Mr. Algoe discussed the three-percent bonus that will be awarded for all merit-eligible faculty and staff starting with their October 2021 paychecks and addressed the issues that some grant-funded programs have with awarding bonuses due to policies of certain funding agencies.

Provost Bourgeois discussed funding opportunities that his office is pursuing to support recruiting and re-enrolling stop-outs, and supporting displaced Texas workers who need to reskill or upskill to get back into the workforce.

Mr. Algoe announced that the next University Police Department Virtual Forum will be on March 3, 2021.

Mr. Algoe announced that the spring San Marcos River Clean-Up will be on March 6, 2021.

Dr. Hernandez provided an update on student programming. Beginning in March 2021, chartered student organizations will be allowed to host certain types of programming, provided detailed mitigation plans are in place. When to begin allowing student performances to be held will be discussed at a future President's Cabinet meeting.

Due to the recent winter storm, Mr. Pierce announced that migration of the Student Information System (Ellucian Banner) from on-premises hosting to hosting by Ellucian in its managed hosting environment has been postponed from February 2021 to April 2021.

DMT:ta

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