

To: President's Cabinet
From: Denise M. Trauth
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting

September 27, 2021

Impact of COVID-19 (#770)

Dr. Carranco compared data from the week of September 20, 2021, to data from the week of September 13, 2021. In general, case counts and positivity rates are continuing a slow decent.

Week-to-week comparisons revealed:

- In Texas, the average daily case counts decreased from 12,559 to 8,747 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 16.1 to 12.3 percent;
- In Williamson county, the average daily case counts decreased from 290 to 228, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 10.6 to 9.4 percent;
- In Travis county, the average daily case counts decreased from 349 to 282 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 9.7 to 8.3 percent; and
- In Hays county, the average daily case counts increased from 129 to 86 cases per day. The average daily positivity rate had not been reported by meeting time.

Across Texas, hospitalizations have decreased from 11,838 to 9,937, and in Travis county, hospitalizations have decreased from 518 to 441.

Preliminary data for the week of September 20, 2021, indicate that Texas State had 35 positive tests out of 1,940 tests for a positivity rate of 1.8 percent.

On September 19, 2021, active cases at Texas State were 267 cases, and on September 26, 2021, that number declined to 197 active cases.

New cases per day reported to the Dashboard decreased by nearly 70 percent from 52 cases per day on August 31, 2021, to 16 cases per day on September 24, 2021.

Data indicate that the transmission level on the Texas State campuses is low, thereby not likely to result in broad transmission. Thanksgiving will be the next test; while a bump is expected, another surge is not expected. Nevertheless, those who are not vaccinated and can get vaccinated are encouraged to get fully vaccinated before the holiday season.

COVID-19 fully vaccination rates of those who are 12 years of age and older are:

- 61.2 percent of the Texas population,
- 62.4 percent of Hays county,
- 69.2 percent of Williamson county,
- 70.6 percent of Travis county, and

- 64.7 percent of the U. S. population.

Pfizer COVID-19 Booster vaccinations have been approved by the CDC/FDA for four groups:

- Severely immunocompromised persons with second dose received at least one month ago,
- Persons 65 and older with second dose received at least six months ago,
- Persons 18-64 years of age with underlying medical conditions at increased risk from COVID-19 with second dose received at least six months ago, and
- Persons 18-64 years of age with increased risk for COVID-19 exposure due to an occupational setting such as healthcare workers, teachers, and childcare workers with second dose received at least six months ago.

The Student Health Center will host a mass vaccination event on October 1, 2021, at the Student Recreation Center on the San Marcos Campus for those who fall into any one of these groups. Dr. Carranco stated that the Student Health Center is prepared with more than 1,200 doses of the Pfizer vaccine on hand.

Dr. Carranco provided an update on an enhancement to the Bobcat Trace notification system. Effective September 28, 2021, a new Bobcat Trace Faculty Notice Process will be implemented. As soon as a positive case submits a report to the Bobcat Trace notification system, an automated notice will be sent to the instructor of the class informing them that a student in their class has reported being positive for COVID-19. The new Bobcat Trace Faculty Notice will provide a link to the Bobcat Trace Faculty Portal where faculty will see the name of the positive case and their period of infectiousness. Faculty will be able to submit close contact information (persons within six feet for 15 minutes or longer) by entering the name of students in a search box and creating a list of close contacts in Bobcat Trace. An automated Bobcat Trace notification will be sent to each student when faculty save the list of close contacts. This new faculty notice will replace the general notice that has been sent in the past to the instructor and students in the class. Messaging from Provost Bourgeois will be sent to faculty and deans with more details.

Dr. Debbie Thorne, Associate Provost, discussed results of the first fall 2021 COVID-19 survey, implemented on September 10, 2021. The survey is part of a three-part series to formally seek feedback, provide a platform for all university members to respond, and inform future actions and plans. More than 1,900 faculty, staff, and students participated. When asked, "Based on pandemic-related concerns and expectations for the fall 2021 semester, how would you rate the first few weeks of the semester in terms of classes, university operations, and/or activities," the results -- just over 49 percent of the respondents answered "just as I expected," "better than I expected," and "much better than I expected." Approximately 51 percent answered "worse than I expected" or "much worse than I expected." Review of the qualitative responses revealed consistent themes, with both positive and negative responses across five themes: face coverings/masks; delivery of courses, services, and activities; vaccine/vaccination; health and safety measures; and communication. Recommendations from the comments were discussed.

The next survey will focus on faculty and staff morale and be disseminated on October 8, 2021. The Faculty and Staff Morale Work Group will be asked to reconvene to analyze the results and bring recommendations to President's Cabinet.

Tuition and Fee Plans (#380)

President Trauth provided context to the planning and budget processes. New dollars will be committed to new academic programs that meet documented workforce needs and will, thus, most likely result in new students.

Mr. Algoe discussed the tuition and fees increases proposal that will be presented at the November 2021 Board of Regents meeting. Most of the 2.95 percent increase in tuition and fees will be used to support strategic initiatives, including new academic programs and financial aid and scholarships, as well to cover expected increases in health care costs. Additionally, Texas State will propose to:

- Implement differential tuition for the College of Health Professions degrees program (\$10 in 2023 and \$20 in 2024), as College of Health Professions classes are more expensive to teach. Thus increase is in line with similar increases instituted in – and - two years ago.
- Change tuition and fees for 13 cohort fully online graduate programs such that the out-of-state costs will be the same as the in-state costs.

Mr. Algoe discussed the criteria for waiving on campus fees for students who are only enrolled in remote programs. Cabinet members provided feedback, and given the limited time, President Trauth asked that this conversation continue outside of the Cabinet meeting.

President's Update (#556)

President Trauth announced that Texas State University System Vice Chancellor John Hayek and an executive search firm hired to facilitate the Texas State presidential search will conduct listening sessions across a wide range of constituent groups. President Trauth noted that the search committee membership and size were determined by Texas State University System Chancellor Brian McCall.

Significant Issues (#01)

Mr. Pierce discussed the Ray Benson – In Conversation with Hector Saldaña event held at The Wittliff on September 26, 2021.

Mr. Coryell provided an update on upcoming events for faculty and staff. To date, more than 500 game tickets and more than 400 tailgating tickets have been claimed for the October 9, 2021, and November 13, 2021, football games.

Mr. Algoe announced that in preparation for the next university president, TSUS is investigating the first renovation to the entrance and to the 11th floor of the J. C. Kellam building in nearly 30

years since. As the front door to the university for dignitaries, visitors, new employees, and guests of the President, this project is also important in recruiting the next President.

Mr. Algoe discussed the implication of President Biden's Executive Order that mandates COVID-19 vaccination of federal government contractors. Specific guidelines have yet to be issued. So far, there has been no indication that employees funded on grants will fall under the requirement. However, Texas State will continue to monitor the situation.

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Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on October 4, 2021.