

To: President's Cabinet  
From: Denise M. Trauth  
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting  
May 24, 2021

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

Dr. Carranco compared data from the week of May 3, 2021, to data from the week of May 17, 2021. Two-week comparisons revealed:

- In Texas, the average daily case counts decreased from 1,557 to 954 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 4.3 to 3.2 percent;
- In Williamson county, the average daily case counts decreased from 45 to 25, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 4.0 to 3.0 percent;
- In Hays county, the average daily case counts decreased from 30 to 20 cases per day. By meeting time, Hays county had not yet reported data for the week of May 17, 2021.

In Travis county, for the week of May 17, 2021, the average daily case count was 38 cases per day and the average daily positivity rate was 2.7 percent. These metrics indicate the situation in Texas looks promising.

As of May 21, 2021, there were 19 active cases at Texas State. Testing has dropped off significantly. For the week of May 17, 2021, only 148 tests were performed. With a low testing volume, the positivity rate becomes an inaccurate reflection of community transmission. Throughout this pandemic, positivity rates at Texas State have tracked lower than those reported by local counties. Based on this trend, the true positivity rate of the Texas State community is two to three percent.

As of May 24, 2021, the one-dose COVID-19 vaccination rates of those 12 and older are:

- 51 percent of the Texas population,
- 55 percent of Hays county,
- 63 percent of Travis county, and
- 61 percent of Williamson county.

President's Cabinet discussed questions generated from Faculty Senate after Governor Abbott rescinded the face covering requirement. Using a method developed by MIT researchers based on physics and data from past spreading events, Dr. Carranco reported that the community transmission in the local area and across Texas has dropped to the point that the risk of being exposed to someone with COVID-19 is very low, and the classroom environment is likely to be very safe, even without the face covering requirement. To reduce risk even further, community members are urged to get vaccinated, and if not vaccinated, to wear a face covering, and to get tested before classes begin and test periodically, thereafter. Those who test positive are asked to report to Bobcat Trace.

People living with high-risk individuals and/or children unable to access vaccine are encouraged to get a vaccine and wear a face covering. Dr. Carranco addressed false information and shared key take-aways from research studies: transmission is low schools; children are resilient to COVID-19; and the number of people who would have a contraindication to the vaccine is very small.

Dr. Hernandez will provide clarification to Faculty Senate as to the extent to which students can request online accommodations.

Provost Bourgeois stated that it is too late to pivot a summer in-person class to online if students are already registered for the class. If the latter is the case and a faculty member previously scheduled to teach in-person no longer wants to, then they must find a replacement in consultation with the chair/director.

Select work groups of faculty and staff -- including the Health, Wellness, and Safety Work Group and the Continuity of Research Work Group -- will be reconvened to share guidance and feedback with the President's Cabinet, discuss scenarios, and update the Roadmap for fall.

President Trauth will send an update to the university community mid-week and the Roadmap will be updated accordingly.

### **Commencement (#143)**

Provost Bourgeois and guest Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman finalized plans for the August 2021 ceremonies. Summer 2021 commencement ceremonies will take place in Strahan Arena at the University Events Center, and candidates will be spaced three apart and allowed to invite up to six guests.

### **Board of Regents Follow-Up (#57)**

Mr. Algoe discussed the May 2021 Board of Regents meeting.

### **Chancellor's Meeting with the Presidents Follow-Up (#623)**

President Trauth reviewed topics from the latest meeting. The Texas State University System has begun the process of identifying Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the next five years, and Texas State has the opportunity to propose additional KPIs or to modify existing KPIs. President Trauth asked Cabinet members to review the current set of KPIs and share their recommendations with her.

President Trauth reviewed the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislative Budget Update.

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

President Trauth requested that Cabinet members identify effective ways to inform freshmen of opportunities they have to get involved/engaged outside of the classroom. Dr. Hernandez shared that the new format of Bobcat Preview will be one way to connect with freshmen early and raise their awareness of such opportunities.

President Trauth discussed the communication plan recently developed in preparation for heavy rains and possible flooding during the recent BOR meeting. President Trauth asked that the plan be updated in case there is flooding later in the month.

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

Provost Bourgeois discussed the Connected Infrastructure for Education, Demonstration, and Applied Research (CIEDAR) presentation to the BOR. CIEDAR, a new research strategy for Texas State, is expected to significantly increase research and development revenues over the next 10 years.

Provost Bourgeois provided an update on fall enrollment and scholarship awards.

Mr. Algoe provided several updates: summer renovation and repair projects have begun; and several initiatives to enhance employee morale and demonstrate appreciation are in the planning stages.

Mr. Coryell announced that:

- The Texas State baseball team will play Appalachian State on May 25, 2021, at the Sun Belt Conference Championships in Montgomery, Alabama.
- Ten student-athletes will compete in the outdoor track and field NCAA West Preliminary at Texas A&M University May 26-29, 2021.

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Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on June 7, 2021.