



## San Diego Community College District Office of the Chancellor

January 27, 2022

As we begin the spring semester, I hope you and your loved ones are healthy and safe. Across the San Diego Community College District, and especially at our colleges, this is a very busy time. I appreciate everyone's flexibility as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and do our best to ensure the District is able to accomplish its important mission of safely serving our students.

I apologize for the length of this message but encourage you to read the important updates below.

### **Student Enrollment**

Entering the first week of classes, enrollment remains sluggish across the District. Currently, we are down about 11% compared with spring 2021, although the colleges have seen a significant uptick in the last two weeks. None of this is a surprise as students continue to struggle through the pandemic here and across the state. Unlike four-year colleges, community college students are most impacted due to their relative financial situation and lack of access to technology. The District and its colleges remain proactive in connecting with students and encouraging them to stay enrolled. This includes a districtwide enrollment marketing campaign and other innovative outreach efforts. We also continue to offer significant financial aid and other services to support student retention. Some planned in-person classes have been converted to online, and others shifted to later start dates to sidestep the omicron variant and the current spike in positive cases. The college presidents and I appreciate all you are doing to serve our students safely and help them meet their educational goals.

### **Spring Operations Update**

As you know from previous email updates, we have delayed the return to in-person work assignments for many employees until Tuesday, February 22. Employees whose job duties cannot be performed remotely are continuing to work onsite as previously directed in Vice Chancellor Greg Smith's January 11 email. Specific decisions on class modalities and work assignments are being made within each college and District division based on operational


needs and communicated to employees directly. Employees working remotely should plan to return to in-person work assignments three days per week for the weeks of February 22 – 25 and February 28 – March 4 and full-time beginning Monday, March 7. In addition, the colleges will be delaying the start of in-person instruction until the week of February 22 for courses that can be delivered effectively online. Specific information on individual courses will be provided locally at each college.

Looking at this timeline, we are encouraged by what appears to be a leveling off in positive cases as was predicted weeks ago by many health experts. Other parts of the country also are experiencing a significant drop in case rates, which bodes well for a full return to in-person operations in March. I remind everyone to continue to take steps to minimize the spread of COVID-19. This includes consistently wearing face coverings indoors, avoiding large gatherings of people, and getting tested if you believe you may have been exposed. We encourage all employees to get tested before returning to work, regardless of vaccination status, and of course stay home if you are not feeling well.

Operationally, ahead of a full return to in-person work, many teams throughout the District are helping to prepare for the transition. This includes our IT professionals and others who are getting our computers and other equipment ready for use. It includes facilities staff who are preparing our campuses and offices. It includes food service staff who will be reopening our cafeterias and kitchens so we have fresh food available. I urge your patience and understanding as we return, as some departments remain short staffed.

Thank you for your time and your part in the future success of the San Diego Community College District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Turner'.

*Carlos O. Turner Cortez, Ph.D.*  
*Chancellor*  
San Diego Community College District