

To: President's Cabinet
From: Denise M. Trauth
Subject: President's Cabinet Meeting
January 20, 2022

Impact of COVID-19 (#770)

Dr. Carranco compared data for the week ending on January 16, 2022, to data for the week ending January 9, 2022.

Week-to-week comparisons revealed:

- In Texas, the average daily case counts increased from 42,045 to 50,943 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 37.2 to 34.4 percent.
- In Williamson county, the average daily case counts decreased from 1,217 to 1,043, and the average daily positivity rate decreased from 29.1 to 25.8 percent.
- In Travis county, the average daily case counts increased from 841 to 969 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate increased from 30 to 31.1 percent.
- In Hays county, the average daily case counts decreased from 503 to 145 cases per day, and the average daily positivity rate increased from 31 to 31.8 percent.
- In Texas, hospitalizations increased from 9,872 to 12,220.

On the Texas State campuses, there were 196 positives out of 935 tests for a positivity rate of 21 percent.

COVID-19 transmission levels, as defined by the CDC, in Texas as well as Hays, Williamson, and Travis counties were "high" during the past week.

Dr. Carranco provided several additional updates:

- Absenteeism. Modeling forecasts indicate that the surge is peaking, with declines expected beginning the week of January 24, 2022. High transmission, and thus absenteeism, are expected through February. Guidance will continue to be shared by the Provost's Office with faculty about managing student absences and by Human Resources with supervisors about managing employee absences.
- Testing. Access to testing remains difficult due to demand, limited supply, and workforce disruption. Texas State offers two testing locations on the San Marcos Campus and one on the Round Rock Campus. Every home in the U. S. is eligible to order four free at-home tests at [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov).

As a State Agency, Texas State can require an employee, who appears visibly ill, to go home, but it cannot require an employee to take a COVID-19 test and present a negative test result in order to be allowed to return to work. An employee, who is visibly ill and refuses to go home, is subject to disciplinary action.

- If an employee has run out of sick leave, options are available, including administrative leave with pay, sick leave pool, and remote work.

RTA 1/27/22 Discuss possible changes to the sick leave pool eligibility.

- Face Masks. Wearing high-quality, well-fitted face masks (e.g., surgical, KN95, or N95 masks) remain a key mitigation strategy. Departments may order face masks using departmental funds.

As a State Agency, Texas State cannot require employees or students to wear masks.

- Contact Tracing. Contact Tracing is being automated to assist with timely feedback on quarantine and isolation. Enhancements will be made prior to the start of in-person classes.
- Communication. Dr. Carranco will continue to inform the university community of COVID-19 trends, mitigation strategies, and updates to processes and guidelines. The Roadmap will continue to be updated as information changes. A link will be added directing faculty and supervisors from the Roadmap to FAQs located on the Student Health Center webpage.

Commencement (#143)

Guest Dr. Vedaraman Sriraman, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, discussed the fiscal year 2022 Commencement budget. Despite prior changes to reduce overall cost, overages are expected. Although Cabinet members discussed the possibility of implementing additional cost cutting measures, Cabinet members supported the motion that Commencement at Texas State is a special tradition that needs to continue at the current funding level.

Coordinating Board Meeting (#5)

Dr. Lloyd discussed the Coordinating Board meeting scheduled for January 27, 2022.

- The minutes from the October 21, 2021, meeting are on the agenda for approval. Included in those minutes is Board approval for Texas State to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering.
- Up for consideration is the approval of the certification for the National Research University Fund (NRUF) for fiscal year 2021. Texas State's pathway for achieving NRUF was discussed, which will include a comprehensive review of five doctoral programs.
- Texas State was listed as a performing agent for the following contracts executed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: GEER Funds Texas Reskilling Support Fund Amendment, GEER Funds Report Modernization Grant, and Texas College Work-Study Program.

President's Update (#556)

President Trauth announced that the February 2022 Board of Regents meeting will be held in person in Beaumont. Dr. Ting Liu, professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance, will be recognized as a Regents' Teacher during the meeting.

Significant Issues (#01)

Provost Bourgeois announced that the current fall to spring persistence rate is 92.9 percent.

Provost Bourgeois announced that Texas State received notice of a \$754,509 Health and Public Safety Workforce Resiliency Training Program grant award. With partners from the School of Social Work, the St. David's School of Nursing, and the Counseling Center in the Division of Student Affairs, he lauded the cross disciplinary approach to the successful submission.

Provost Bourgeois led a discussion on Texas State's approach to achieving R1 status. Dr. Ekin explained further that a team from the Division of Academic Affairs, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and Institutional Research have been analyzing the Carnegie 2021 classifications: to better understand the factors critical for Texas State to make significant progress toward R1 status, and to explore accurate reporting procedures required for R1 classification. The outcomes of the analyses will inform planning activities for the 2023-2029 University Plan.

Mr. Algoe announced that the material for the February 2022 Board of Regents meeting is being finalized.

Mr. Algoe discussed Texas State's efforts in preparing for the upcoming winter freeze.

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Posted to web at <http://cabinet.president.txstate.edu/> on January 31, 2022.