



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

April 28, 2020

Dear LACCD Faculty, Staff and Administrators:

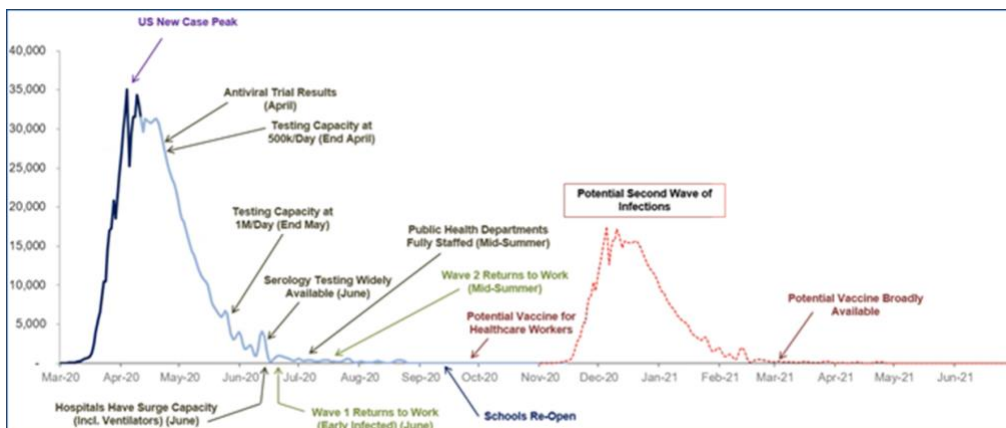
I hope this message finds you and your families well and safe. As we begin our fifth week of instruction in our “new normal,” I wanted to communicate with you on several important COVID-19 related matters.

In moving forward as one District, the goal has been to prioritize the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff, while maintaining the integrity of our teaching and learning and business environments, and sustaining operational continuity of a very large and complex organization.

We will remain committed in the days and months ahead to keeping our employees and students safe and informed. I am proud of the leadership of our administrative teams at the colleges and at the Educational Services Center (ESC), and I am fully confident that we will continue to make good decisions. Our faculty and professional classified staff have proven that they have the grace and intelligence to do astounding things under extraordinary pressure. Consider this, prior to March 30, 18% of our classes were online. Today, it is close to 95%—simply amazing and a real testament to the excellence and innovative spirit of our colleges and the grit of our students.

The District has taken extra precautionary measures and policies through our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to mitigate the spread of the virus by limiting the number of employees performing essential functions at our colleges and the ESC. The EOC has also helped coordinate districtwide communications, including the [www.laccd.edu/coronavirus](http://www.laccd.edu/coronavirus) website, and new training opportunities for District personnel—from Zoom usage and FEMA classes to workplace pathogen cleaning—while also coordinating the use of resources districtwide and leveraging purchases of new personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff.

While no one can predict the probable duration of this public health crisis, there are additional data that have emerged that will serve to inform our thinking of when and how to “return.” As one example, Morgan Stanley published the model below that illustrates the probable life of COVID-19:



Medical experts indicate a vaccine for COVID-19 currently remains about a year away, predicting the first three months of 2021 for a vaccine to be broadly available. Experts also are warning about a potential second wave of COVID-19, which is typical for widespread pandemic scenarios. Right now, there are so many known and unknown factors that could influence the acceleration or deceleration of our return to our physical campuses and normal way of life. The complete article is available here: <https://www.morganstanley.com/ideas/coronavirus-peak-recovery-timeline>

### **CURRENT COVID-19 STATUS AT LACCD**

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, the District's Spring 2020 classes at all nine colleges will continue in remote teaching and learning platforms for the remainder of the semester, currently scheduled to end on June 8, 2020. While all of the colleges and District facilities remain open for learning and business operations in remote platforms, all facilities are physically closed to all except for pre-identified essential staff.

As of April 28, LACCD has the following number of self-reported cases of staff, faculty and students reported to the EOC:

- 42 Self-reported testing positive for COVID-19
- 22 Self-reported symptomatic, but not tested
- 26 Self-reported case of possible exposure
- 1 Fatality (included in the 42 testing positive)

There is currently one (1) reported case of exposure that has been reported to the EOC within the 14-day window, and this individual is self-quarantined.

The County of Los Angeles, meanwhile, remains the epicenter for the outbreak in California, with more than 20,400 confirmed cases and 942 deaths.

The EOC continues to aggressively track all LACCD cases reported to the colleges and to the information hotline at (213) 221-5112 and by email at: [coronavirusinfo@laccd.edu](mailto:coronavirusinfo@laccd.edu)

As appropriate, and needed, notices continue to go out to the colleges and District personnel regarding these reports, including closure notices to campus facilities by essential staff for their own safety.

### **SUMMER AND FALL SESSIONS**

Given the present health and safety restrictions, all summer session classes, scheduled to begin June 15, 2020, and all fall semester classes will be offered in remote learning/online environments, at this point, with the possibility of returning for a limited number of "hard to convert" courses/programs, if health and safety allow at any point in the semester. Student support services and most of the District's business operations will continue to be conducted in similar remote service environments.

We are mindful of those classes that have been "hard to convert" to remote teaching and learning. We have been working with state agencies and faculty leaders to identify flexibility, simulations and solutions for laboratory, clinical, and other hands-on course and program requirements.

We ask for your patience and support as we work through these issues. Some spring semester classes, especially in the allied health and sciences, and career education areas may need to be extended into the summer session or modified to satisfy course and program requirements.

## **COMMENCEMENT**

A LACCD 2020 Virtual Graduation Planning Committee was formed on April 1, 2020, with representatives from each of the nine colleges and ESC, including student leaders from three of our colleges. A final proposal is expected by May 1 to plan and potentially organize a “virtual recognition” of 2020 graduates. We are also reaching out to all students who have filed petitions to graduate in June through a new survey issued last week. We will have more information from the survey soon, but preliminary responses indicate while there is some support for a virtual recognition, most wish to walk in a traditional commencement ceremony when health and safety restrictions allow. Stay tuned.

## **STUDENT BASIC NEEDS AND PHILANTHROPY**

LACCD has mobilized quickly to do our part to mitigate the community spread of COVID-19. However, this call to action in the public’s interest has had a deleterious impact on our District’s ending balance reserve—about \$15.0 million to date that has been or is projected to be spent to address COVID-19 matters.

COVID-19 has disrupted our students’ educational and career pathways, as well as their daily lives, and is particularly difficult for our neediest and most vulnerable students, who cannot complete online/remote learning because they do not have access to a computer or reliable internet connectivity. Many of our students come from families who work in service industries for minimum wages or have experienced job losses. At a time when many of our students are having a difficult time meeting basic needs, the impact of COVID-19 has only exacerbated these gaps. The District also continues to wait for federal monies through the approved CARES Act for direct student assistance. Our colleges stand ready to distribute these funds as soon as we receive the federal aid.

Meanwhile, thanks to the generous outpouring of personal giving, corporate philanthropy and local foundations, college foundations and Associated Students, LACCD has been able to respond quickly to meet some of these student basic needs addressing food insecurity, emergency aid and technology tools. Since March 15, I am proud to share that LACCD has raised more than \$1.5 million in support of students’ basic needs. While impressive, it only begins to address the vast needs of our amazing and resilient students. If you are compelled to support our students, the time is now. Just click “Donate” in the following link:

<http://laccd.edu/About/foundation/Pages/default.aspx>

## **LACCD RECOVERY PLANS**

The EOC has begun its work to outline our “recovery plan” for LACCD—that is, “when and how” we expect to return to our physical campuses and work environments. Our recovery will occur in phases over several weeks and months, guided by governmental and public health orders and guidelines on testing, social distancing, and congregations. Our recovery planning is being done in conjunction with the colleges and we’ll share more about our thinking at the May 6 Board of Trustees meeting.

## STAY INFORMED

While we continue to communicate with everyone on a districtwide and college-specific basis, I encourage you to stay informed using the following resources:

- District website: [www.laccd.edu/coronavirus](http://www.laccd.edu/coronavirus)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LACCD/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/laccd>
- Statewide information, California Community Colleges: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Communications-and-Marketing/Novel-Coronavirus>

## YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE OUR PRIORITY

These are troubling, unsettling times for all of us and it's natural to be concerned or anxious. Nothing is more important than your physical and mental health—and that of your family or loved ones—and I urge everyone to please take care of yourself and your families.

If you feel sick, stay home, notify your healthcare provider and let your supervisor know. If you do become ill from COVID-19, we want to know and want to help you if we can. You can report your status using the hotline number included in this report.

If you are feeling stressed, depressed or anxious and need to talk with someone, contact the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health 24 hours a day at (800) 854-7771; send a text message, "LA" at 741741, or at <https://dmh.lacounty.gov/>. All LACCD personnel also can take advantage of our Employee Assistance Program, online at <http://laccd.edu/Departments/HumanResources/Total-Wellness-Program/Pages/HR-ARFLbenefits.aspx>, or by phone, 24/7, at (800) 327-0449.

We'll get through this, and we'll be stronger and more unified. Thank you all for your uncommon dedication to our students, your resilience and your patience. Please stay safe.

**LACCD Proud. You are the best of us.**

With admiration and respect,



Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.  
Chancellor  
Los Angeles Community College District