

COVID-19 Updates

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board



Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board

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TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

P.O. Box 12788 Austin, Texas 78711

March 13, 2020

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Welcome Wilson, Jr.

Harrison Keller, Ph.D.

TO: Texas Institutions of Higher Education

**FROM: Harrison Keller, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education**

SUBJECT: Coronavirus Update for Higher Education

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is closely monitoring state and national information about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and will provide continuous

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(512) 427-6101
Fax (512) 427-6127

Web site:

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us>

updates for higher education stakeholders. We are also working with officials at Texas institutions of higher education to identify and address specific issues and concerns arising as campuses plan for and respond to coronavirus.

The THECB has created a dedicated webpage for coronavirus information relevant to higher education stakeholders:

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/misc/coronavirus-update-for-higher-education/>

This includes links to resources from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and other entities regarding coronavirus preparation and response. We've added resources regarding transitioning to online education, including guidance from the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) on considerations for making digital materials accessible to students with disabilities. And we are including a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) that we've received from the field.

The website will be updated frequently as we have more information to share that can help you make the best decisions for your students, faculty, staff and communities. Deputy Commissioner Ray Martinez is our agency lead on coronavirus issues. If the THECB can help answer additional questions I encourage you to contact him through Mary Smith at 512-427-6213 or mary.smith@thecb.state.tx.us.

c:

Governmental Relations Officers
Texas Association of Community Colleges
Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas
CTC Liaisons
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COVID-19 UPDATES

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Dear Colleagues:

Beginning today, Monday, March 9, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) will host **daily conference calls at 4:00 pm CST** for counties, school districts, and higher education to update stakeholders on COVID-19 and to answer questions. **THE BELOW CALL-IN INFORMATION HAS BEEN UPDATED.** Please forward to whomever on your campuses may be appropriate:

Conference call number: 800-289-0462
Passcode: 805539

If you have any questions or any difficulty connecting to the call, please contact Rachael Hendrickson at DSHS Government Affairs at 512-776-3765.

Respectfully,

John Wyatt
Senior Director of External Relations
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
1200 E. Anderson Lane
Austin, TX 78752

512-427-6586
512-427-6127 (fax)
john.wyatt@theccb.state.tx.us

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**TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION
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P.O. Box 12788 Austin, Texas 78711

March 6, 2020

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TO: Texas Institutions of Higher Education
FROM: Harrison Keller, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education
SUBJECT: Coronavirus Update for Higher Education

As campus leaders, you are on the front lines of evaluating circumstances and making decisions regarding the safety and wellbeing of your students, faculty and staff. The Coordinating Board is monitoring state and national information about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and will provide you with information and links to resources, so that you may effectively address growing concerns.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) established a webpage specifically to [provide guidance to institutions of higher education](#). The CDC also provided guidance recommending that institutions [consider postponing or cancelling](#) student foreign exchange programs. Additionally, the American College Health Association (ACHA) [published guidance](#) aimed at helping student health services and other campus stakeholders prepare for and respond to a potential coronavirus infection. I encourage you to review the recommendations and resources available at these sites.

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has the latest information about COVID-19 in Texas [on its website](#). Beginning Monday, March 9, DSHS will host daily calls at 4:00 pm CST for counties, school districts, and higher education to update stakeholders on COVID-19 and to answer questions. Use the following to join the call:

Conference call number: 888-207-0293

Passcode: 152545

While the risk of the virus remains low, it is critical that you as campus leaders have maximum flexibility to respond to COVID-19 in the most appropriate manner for your students. The U.S. Department of Education announced it will provide [as much flexibility as possible](#) in accommodating students and campuses disrupted by coronavirus.

I have designated Deputy Commissioner Ray Martinez to serve as the Coordinating Board point of contact for COVID-19-related issues. Commissioner Martinez and agency staff are fully engaged in the twice-weekly meetings of the Texas Emergency Management Council and are closely working with officials at DSHS and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to ensure that we receive and disseminate the latest information on COVID-19 to Texas institutions of higher education.

If you have any questions or the Coordinating Board can assist your institution regarding COVID-19, please contact Mary Smith at 512-427-6213 or mary.smith@thecb.state.tx.us.

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