



## Testing our Democratic Process

January 7, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Just as we bid farewell to the challenges of 2020 with renewed hope for 2021, we were again jolted by another crisis: an unprecedented insurrection of our U.S. Capitol, a true symbol of our democracy. Yet through it all, the democratic process prevailed, another reminder of the resilience of our nation. These horrible acts of the insurrectionists cannot be overlooked. While our nation has become more polarized, it is our mutual calling to service through education that binds us and is key to building a more perfect union.

The importance of the role public educational institutions play in our democracy cannot be understated. As a public institution, we are deeply committed to freedom of expression, civic engagement and the democratic process. We encourage inquiry and respectful discourse, and promote civility, regardless of one's background, beliefs, or status.

As educators, we must continue to seek justice, equity, and inclusion while simultaneously dismantling oppressive structures and institutions. We encourage you to channel your voice from yesterday's events and engage in the equity work happening at the District. It is work that will challenge us all, and every voice and leader is needed to make the work meaningful.

Many of us are still traumatized from the events of yesterday. Employees who need assistance can contact the [Employee Assistance Program](#). It is equally important to support one another.

Please take pride in the work that our colleges do to advance equity, civility and collegiality. Today, choose to use the power of education to end hate and bigotry. We are being called to make a difference.

Sincerely,

Lynn Ceresino Neault, Ed.D.  
Chancellor, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District

Julianna Barnes, Ed.D.  
President, Cuyamaca College

Marsha Gable, Ed.D.  
Interim President, Grossmont College