



Final Countdown to Fall

August 12, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

The District is buzzing with excitement as we get ready to begin our fall semester on August 22. The campuses are planning convocations and Welcome Back weeks, students are signing up for classes, and new students are attending events designed to welcome them and offer support. Most of all, we are looking forward to reconnecting with students and one another in the months ahead.



We have come a long way over the past few years. Not so long ago, in fall 2020, we were fully hunkered down, headed into the start of a school year 100 percent remote. We wondered how long COVID-19 would have a grip on our lives and how we would adjust.

While managing COVID-19 certainly remains a challenge, we have dug deep and shown great resilience even with rapidly rising costs of living, and fluctuating economic conditions. I am proud of the way we have risen to these

challenges, and kept students at the center of our mission.

Today, we are fully open and ready to serve students! This fall, about 50 percent of classes are scheduled on campus. The rest will be offered through some combination of online, hybrid and HyFlex, based on student need and demand. We will continue to ramp up our in-person operations over the coming months, with plans for even more in-person classes in the spring.

I wanted to share several updates as we head into fall.

Flexible Schedules

We are offering more schedule flexibility for employees again this fall. As Interim Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Aimee Gallagher announced, employees will have the option of continuing to work either a 4/10 schedule, or taking one remote day per week on a standard, 5-day-a-week, 8-hour day schedule, depending upon student needs, job duties, and continuity of operations. Managers and supervisors have been working individually with employees to determine the most appropriate option.

Human Resources also plans to begin developing a comprehensive flexible work policy this fall.



Districtwide Enrollment Management

I am proud to share that we are seeing clear signs of improvement in our fall student enrollment after five years of steady declines. The latest numbers show a reversal in the declines of recent years-- **fall enrollment is up** at both Cuyamaca College, and Grossmont College. The class fill rates are also looking promising, with on-campus classes filling at similar paces as those online. A districtwide enrollment management workshop that was held over

the summer was a critical chance for us to come together on this topic. We discussed action steps we can take in the coming months.

We will continue to move forward with a deep sense of urgency on student enrollment. Reconnecting with our students and communities, and reversing recent declines, are our most important priorities and at the core of our planning and decisions. This districtwide prioritization is making a difference thanks to the remarkable efforts of so many staff, faculty and administrators from throughout the district.

Budget Development and Forum

Over the summer, Governor Newsom signed the 2022-2023 state budget, which included significant new support for community colleges across the state. We are grateful for the increased support, and will continue to manage our finances with prudence. We are still operating under Hold Harmless provisions, meaning we are receiving funding for enrollment at higher levels than our actual enrollment, and are using our one-time balance to fill gaps. We continue to carefully control fixed costs to ensure a stable financial future.

Led by Vice Chancellor, Business Services, Sahar Abushaban, we are in the process of closing out our 2021-2022 budget and developing an adoption budget for 2022-2023. We will bring this to the Governing Board for approval in September.

A budget forum is planned for late September, which will be an opportunity for all employees to learn in depth about our budget status. We will present an overview, and answer questions that you have. An invitation is forthcoming.

Personnel Commission

Following the approval of a merit system by our classified professionals this spring, the District is working to support its successful implementation. Three personnel commissioners have been selected, and the Personnel Commission has begun to meet monthly in public sessions. The Commission is in the process of establishing a budget, determining its staffing, and developing merit rules. [A web page](#) has been set up on the District's website that allows employees to follow the work of the Personnel Commission.

Health and Safety Updates

The health and safety of our campus community remains a top priority.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, we are continuing to require masking and face-coverings indoors at this time. Outdoor face-coverings are not required but strongly recommended.

Monkeypox has recently emerged as a concern. The virus has been declared a public health emergency by the federal, state and County of San Diego governments. San Diego County is seeing an increasing number of cases, though the risk of contracting monkeypox for the public remains very low, according [to the County](#). The County of San Diego has established a [monkeypox website](#), with answers to frequently asked questions and the latest local data.

The District has also been busy this summer conducting campus safety assessments given a heightened awareness of safety in our communities. We are committed to mitigating those identified issues. The Public Safety Task Force is also going to be meeting again this fall, and members are currently being identified. The Task Force will review recommendations from the original team for consideration. One Sheriff's deputy will be assigned to each campus this fall, and other resources will be available including campus escort services. We will keep you updated on the status of safety initiatives in the months ahead.

Chancellor's Open Office Hours

I am looking forward to personally connecting with more of our employees this fall. I will be holding open office hours on a monthly basis starting in September. I am happy to listen and learn, and welcome innovative ideas for the future. Stay tuned for more information soon.

We have a big year ahead of us, and we have a lot to look forward to. Let's continue to work together to build back the vibrancy and energy of our very special GCCCD community, and guide our students to success!

With appreciation,

Lynn

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