March 12, 2020

Dear Campus Community:

I wanted to provide you with the latest information we have regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19) as it relates to College of the Desert.

The Desert Community College District is actively preparing the next steps in our response to the COVID-19 virus. The safety of our students, faculty and staff continues to be paramount in our evaluation of the situation and decision-making process.

Knowing that many of our students depend on the HaulPass program for transportation, College representatives have been in touch with SunLine. They have implemented some additional sanitation measures but are running their routes normally.

We are continuing to work closely with our Riverside County Public Health Department officials on any steps we need to take regarding campus closures or curtailing of activities. At this time, there are no recommendations to close schools or cancel events or activities that do not involve major crowds or travel through or to a location that has active cases. The Office of the Governor issued a statement this morning that defined a major crowd as 250 people or more.

While we have not yet postponed or canceled any activities, we are monitoring on a case-by-case basis. Currently, the College’s athletic and performing arts events are proceeding as scheduled. A matrix is being developed for utilization to determine which, if any, community events on campus should be canceled or restricted.

In light of the novel coronavirus outbreak, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office is encouraging colleges to offer as many classes as possible online. In order to be prepared should the college need to move some or all classes to an online format, additional professional development tutorials are being developed for faculty in partnership with Distance Education staff and the Office of the Vice President of Instruction. Those workshops will be available starting March 16th.

Later this afternoon, you will be receiving a joint email from the Dr. Nery, Vice President of Instruction and Dr. Dozier, Academic Senate President regarding this training and the next steps for moving as many classes as possible online.

I want to emphasize how much I appreciate the work being done by everyone in this rapidly changing environment. Once again, I am impressed by your dedication to College of the Desert.

Thank you,

Joel L. Kinnamon Ed.D.
Superintendent / President
College of the Desert