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Fw: Message to College Trustees Regarding

1 message

From: Neil Matkin <nmatkin@collin.edu>
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 1:49 PM
Subject: Message to College Trustees Regarding

Friends,

I sent the following message to our Board of Trustees earlier today. As I've thought about it, I wanted to send it to all college employees by way of an update on our enrollment. As always, your comments and thoughts are welcome.

Best regards,

Neil

—Begin Message—

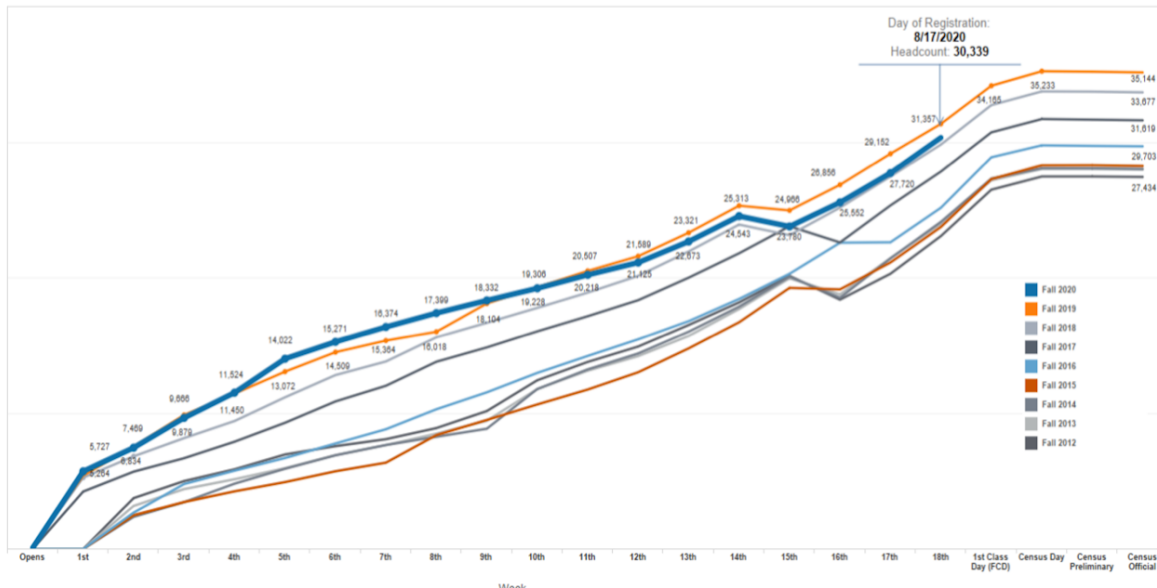
Dear Trustees:

I wanted to take a moment and update you this morning on enrollment for the Fall semester in the midsts of the Coronavirus pandemonium.

As of this morning, six days prior to the start of the Fall semester, our Fall 2020 headcount is 30,878. This is down from last year's headcount at this time of 31,798; a decrease of 920 students or 2.9%. We have seen a dramatic increase in enrollments this week as we were down almost 5% a week ago and this is good news.



Registration Trends - Fall 2012 to 2020



Please take a moment and reflect on this. It's an incredible achievement by our staff and faculty.

Across the nation, universities are experiencing significant enrollment drops due mostly to the anxiety surrounding the pandemic. Our community college peers are reporting deep drops often as much as 25% or more compared to the previous year. Yet at Collin we will start the year close to matching last fall's significant enrollment numbers. We may even exceed last year's enrollment as we add students in special part-of-term courses throughout the semester.

Why are these numbers possible for us?

First, we invested the incredible amount of time needed to inventory all of our facilities and courses and make decisions about what content could be offered in person, online, or a hybrid of the two. We have faculty and staff who demonstrated enormous flexibility and courage to make this work and put students first. They are to be commended. Chief among these is Dr. Toni Jenkins although she is but one of a cast of hundreds. Her tireless efforts have been nothing short of amazing. The faculty task force giving helpful insight to our reopening efforts has been a real plus as well.

As our original enrollment numbers started lower than hoped, we adjusted quickly as we always do, adding courses where students needed them and in new formats. We have once again demonstrated the responsiveness that has become our hallmark.

The accomplishment is all the more rewarding because of the environment we're operating in. In truth, if you take the entire number of people who have died from this virus across the United States - a number that is clearly inflated once you realize the number of deaths from other factors (e.g., flu, heart disease) have reported decreases over the same time period - and divide that number by the entire population of the United States, .04% of all people have died from the coronavirus. That's 4 for every 10,000 people.

In Collin County, we have had to date 10,169 cases with 100 deaths. With 1.035 million residents in Collin County, that comes to a death rate from coronavirus of .009662% or 9.6 deaths per 100,000 residents. To put it in perspective, the chance of dying in a motor vehicle accident in the State of Texas is 1 in 103 or slightly over 1%. That's over one hundred times more likely that dying from the Coronavirus. If you find better numbers, please enlighten me but, from my limited

perspective, the effects of this pandemic have been blown utterly out of proportion across our nation and reported with unfortunate sensationalism and few facts regardless of which news outlet one tunes into. It has become political in a pivotal election year and frankly, it has made our jobs all the more difficult.

What this means is that our college is attempting to sail against the currents with severe headwinds while dragging an anchor. Why do we do it? I witness the efforts of our faculty and staff - stalwart efforts, indeed - to achieve what is an absolutely noble mission. And, as difficult as it sometimes is, I am confident that we will continue to allow facts to guide us while insisting on providing the very best service we are able to provide to those students who have entrusted us to do so.

I count it as a small miracle that we have the numbers we have in this environment, but in truth, I believe it's a reflection of who we are as a college, as educators, and as public servants. I could not be more proud of Team Collin and know that each of you are as well. Thank you sincerely for your continuing support.

Best regards,

Neil

H. Neil Matkin, Ed.D.
District President



—End Message —