



Board Report

Chief Operating Officer

Elizabeth Martinez

Chief Operating Officer

What?

As I sit here writing this report from home, I find myself reflecting and asking, how are we back here again? This virus has plagued every aspect of our existence for two years almost to the date. As we prepared to come back for the second semester, the chatter and alarm bells were ringing loudly regarding the steep rise in COVID cases following the Christmas holiday. Personally, I know more people with COVID now than I did during the first wave of the virus back in 2020. Since the beginning of the school year, our approach to COVID prevention has been centered around masking, proper air circulation, vaccination, contact tracing, and routine surveillance testing. While all of those efforts kept infection rates low over the course of the first semester, the new data coming in from public health departments seemed to indicate that these efforts were not proving as effective in the face of Omicron. While some schools opened the first week after December break, they experienced a myriad of challenges including but not limited to: significant staffing shortages due to COVID, high positivity rate from students, student and staff walkouts due to safety concerns, schools closing individual classrooms on a sporadic basis, and significant drops in attendance (many below 70%).

So What?

Our commitment to students, employees, and families from the start of the year has been to prioritize safety to the best of our ability. Our COVID data from the fall indicates that we delivered on our commitment to safety. As we prepared for a return to campus, our CEO had the foresight to accurately anticipate the amount of disruption that schools would experience and, in consultation with myself and our CFO, he made the decision to delay the start of the semester. Our COVID Safety Team also accurately anticipated a surge and had our on-site COVID testing provider scheduled to start testing on Monday, January 3rd. Once we made the decision to close for in-person learning, we shifted our focus to testing everyone in our community (students, employees, and some service providers like FPA). We followed the data (Appendix A), collected input from employees, and maintained an accurate pulse on what was happening around us. As we assessed the data for the first week, we made the decision to remain closed for in-person instruction but to engage students virtually and optimize for social-emotional learning. Finally, at the end of the second week we evaluated both the testing data and surveyed employees to understand what could prevent them from returning to work. The survey showed that approximately 80% of our staff were ready to return but about 50% of them were experiencing some type of hardship that would prevent their return (lack of childcare, quarantine orders, caring for ill family members, or exposure to a positive case). Our data for the third week was trending in a much better direction and on a strong pathway to return with only 3 employees under quarantine orders and a positivity rate of 1.4% for employees compared to 20% in the first week. On Thursday, January 20th we made the decision to return to campus starting Monday, January 24th for employees and Tuesday, January 25th for students. All employees were required to work on site on Monday to prepare for a strong Welcome Back for our students.

Now What?

Given that students, and most employees, were not on campus I shifted my attention to operational elements that would prepare us for a strong return. During the closure, we:

- **Updated and communicated our staff COVID guidelines** to reflect the latest California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Guidelines
- **Updated and communicated our student COVID guidelines** to reflect the latest CDPH Guidelines
- Maintained our janitorial services who **cleaned the facilities nightly**
- **Inspected all facilities including our HVAC units** to make sure they are working properly
- **Launched a short-term independent study program** for the final 5 days of the closure
- **Secured a healthy supply of KN95 masks** for all staff and surgical masks for students. Additionally, we have enough KN95 masks to provide up to 3/week to students upon request at both front offices

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- **Collected input on options for recovering instructional minutes and instructional days** including:
 - **Parent-Teacher Conferences** – convert them from early release days to full days to capture back needed instructional minutes
 - **Full Day PD** – convert this day into a regular Friday but is also a Sustainability Friday
 - **End of Year** – be prepared to add June 9th and 10th as instructional days of the J-13A Waiver is not approved
 - **April Break** – be prepared to add some instructional days depending on the timing of learning of the decision about the J-13A Waiver
 - **February Break** – unfortunately plan to utilize some of those days as instructional days

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Appendix A: Testing Data by Week

COVID Testing Data Snapshots

The snapshot charts were utilized to make decisions about the following week. The CEO, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Senior School Director, and Senior Director of Academic Instruction met on Thursday afternoons to discuss the data available and make a decision about our return to in-person instruction.

January 6th, 1:00 PM

Employees

	Negative	Under Quarantine and/or Positive	Unknown
Teaching Employees Faculty, Subs	45	12*	17
Staff	49	5	8

Students

	Final Totals
Student Tests Collected	976
Confirmed Positives	83 students

Student data was finalized by the time we met.

January 13th, 1:00 PM

Employee Data

	Under Quarantine and/or Positive	
Teaching Employees Faculty, Subs	11*	
Staff	10**	

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Students

	Total to Date
Student Tests Collected	568, only 30 processed so far
Scheduled/Pending Student Tests	429
Confirmed Positives	2

Facilities & Operations Considerations

- Trash services have been delayed due to short staffing, they missed the last two pickups
- Mold in US3, closing off the library, open learning space and adjacent classrooms/offices
- Potential food delivery delay due to short staffing with food vendor

Thursday, January 20th, 1:00 PM

Employees

Negative	Pending Results	Under Quarantine and/or Positive	Results/Testing Status Unknown
69	28	3* *2 of the 3 under quarantine tested positive the week prior	47

Students

	As of January 20th
Student Tests Collected	478
Confirmed Positives	No results received yet
Scheduled Tests	~300

	Final Totals for Prior Week of 01/10
Student Tests Collected	896
Confirmed Positives	105, new positives and not duplicates from the week prior