LSC Employees:

Below is an article from the Greater Houston Partnership regarding the acceleration of COVID in Houston and the possible impact on exposure during the upcoming holiday period.

I am increasingly optimistic that we’ll have COVID under control across the nation by early fall, 2021, but we will move very cautiously the remainder of this year and into early 2021. As we gradually return to the office, we want employees to work with their respective campuses/locations for scheduling. Also, if you’re experiencing any symptoms, please consult with your supervisor about your options.

We’ll see what happens over the next few weeks and communicate accordingly.

Regards,
Steve Head
Chancellor

Good morning,

In recent weeks, we’ve all been encouraged by promising vaccine developments and the likely deployment of one or more vaccines on a limited basis in the weeks ahead. We can finally see the light at the end of a long tunnel, but the reality is we are not there yet.

Over the last several weeks, officials at the City, County, and Texas Medical Center have been increasingly concerned by the rising surge in cases in the Houston region. Their message is simple: we must continue to be vigilant, and we must not let our guard down.

The Texas Medical Center now reports that both the regional rate of transmission and test positivity rate are rising. Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases are up substantially, and new COVID-19 hospitalizations across TMC institutions are up 50 percent over the last month. The impact on total COVID-19 positive patients in our hospitals lags a bit, but we have seen a 50 percent increase in just the past nine days.

The data clearly indicates that the COVID-19 virus is actively spreading in our community in a fashion similar to early this past summer.

That said, when it comes to schools, we continue to see low in-school transmission of the virus. Most cases of COVID seem to be related to activity outside of the classroom, either through school-related extracurricular activities or group gatherings and parties in the evenings and weekends. There is little evidence of child-to-adult transmission in school settings. Neither is there much evidence of child-to-child transmission in the classroom.

Returning to the situation in the community generally, we are concerned about the possibility of increased transmission during and following the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday.

Updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strongly recommends that people avoid traveling this Thanksgiving to help stop the spread of the virus. This includes all forms of travel. The CDC also advises that we celebrate the holiday only with those in our immediate households and take extra precautions, including wearing a mask and staying six feet apart, when in contact with anyone not in our own household.

The holidays are usually a time for family and friends to come together, so these are unusual and difficult measures. But these are unusual and difficult times. To help protect the health of Houstonians and the safety of our region, we ask that you encourage your employees to follow this CDC guidance. It won’t be easy, but we have to get through the next few months to reach the other side of this challenge when the vaccine(s) will be fully deployed.
As always, thank you for your leadership and let us know if you have any questions. And please have a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Regards,

Bob

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