The Howard College Board will hold a telephonic meeting beginning at 4:00 p.m. CDT on March 27, 2020. To listen to the meeting, use the following option:

Join the conference call for audio
USA Toll-Free: 888-204-5987
Access Code: 3148424#

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone for visual presentation only (for audio call number above) https://www.gotomeet.me/HowardCollege/hcboardmtgmarch272020
You may also access the documents at the Howard College website.

Your phone will be automatically muted when you join the meeting, but opportunity will be given at the end of the meeting for public comment. Recording will be available on the website after the meeting.
ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION/REPORT

The administration recommends that the Board of Trustees adopt a resolution making certain delegations of authority to the President in order to efficiently and effectively prepare the college district in response to the declarations of emergency announced by the United States, the State of Texas, the surrounding cities and counties of the service area, as well as in preparation for any additional declarations of emergency.

BACKGROUND

The College’s top priority is the safety of our students and employees. The College’s main goal is to facilitate the continuance of operations in an altered operational format, allowing students to remain on track to meet their learning objectives and complete their studies. Retention of full-time and part-time employees, reduction in turnover, maintaining morale, and facilitating the future return to normal operations are also top strategic objectives.

Many decisions will need to be made outside of our normal method of operations, and in a timeframe that is outside of the College’s normal pattern.

IMPACT OF THIS ACTION

This action will delegate to the President the authority to act for the Board of Trustees in various areas, including scheduling of work and payments to employees, alteration to 2019-2020 calendar, ability to seek waivers from various agencies, and ability to procure needed items above the President’s normal threshold. This delegation is sought to facilitate the efficient and effective utilization of resources available to the College to maintain operations in an altered manner.

BUDGET INFORMATION (INCLUDING ANY STAFFING IMPLICATIONS)

Adoption of the resolution has no specific budget implications.

MONITORING AND REPORTING TIMELINE

The President will provide timely and reasonable information to the Board of Trustees with regard to decisions made pursuant to this Resolution.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Resolution of the Board of Trustees of Howard College – COVID-19 Virus

RESOURCE PERSONNEL

Cheryl Sparks  432-264-5030
csparks@howardcollege.edu
Julie Bailey  432-264-5051
jbailey@howardcollege.edu
RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HOWARD COLLEGE
COVID-19 Virus

WHEREAS, the Howard College Board of Trustees recognizes that city and county officials across the Howard County Junior College District service area have declared emergency status regarding the spread of coronavirus/COVID-19 (hereafter "COVID-19") and that the territory included in the Howard College service area is within the areas where an emergency has been declared; and,

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Governor of the State of Texas declared a statewide emergency, and, later that same day, the President of the United States declared a national emergency regarding COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the President released strict new guidelines to limit people’s interactions, including that Americans should avoid groups of more than 10 people, outlining the 15 Days to Slow the Spread national effort;

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, the Governor released an Executive Order that would remain in effect until April 3 until further notice and as part of that order indicated schools shall temporarily close;

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2020, the President at the request of the Governor, issued a major disaster declaration for Texas;

WHEREAS, the Howard College Board of Trustees recognizes that COVID-19 is an unforeseen and unavoidable emergency of urgent public necessity, that the World Health Organization has declared COVID-19 a pandemic, and that additional emergency declarations may follow in the coming days and weeks; and,

WHEREAS, the Howard College Board of Trustees has a substantial public interest in protecting the health and safety of its students, staff, and community and therefore desires to ensure that the college district and community are prepared to the fullest extent possible to protect the health and safety of students, staff, and community in light of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Howard College seeks to retain its employees, reduce turnover, increase morale, help employees focus on work-related matters while at work, and facilitate the return of employees to normal operations, and believes that an additional public purpose exists in doing so; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Howard College believes the public purposes described above are fulfilled by efficiently and effectively making certain delegations, as described more fully herein, to the President to address this ever-changing emergency situation in the best interest of the health, safety, and well-being of its students, staff, community, and the citizenship at-large.

IT IS THEREFORE:

RESOLVED THAT the Board of Trustees of Howard College finds a substantial public purpose exists in protecting the health and safety of its students, staff, and community and therefore in ensuring that the college district and community are prepared to the fullest extent possible to protect the health and safety of students, staff, and community in light of COVID-19; and,

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Trustees of Howard College finds a public purpose also exists in retaining its employees, reducing turnover, increasing morale, helping employees focus on work-related matters while at work, and facilitating the return of employees to normal operations; and,

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT in furtherance of the public purposes so stated in this Resolution, the Board of Trustees of Howard College makes the following delegations to the President in order to efficiently and effectively prepare the college district in response to the declarations of emergency announced by the United States, the State of Texas, the City of Big Spring and Howard County as well as declarations of emergencies by other local, state, and/or national and international officials:
The authority to act in the place of the Board under Board Policies 3.1, 3.3, 3.4 and 4.1 relative to compensation, and all related procedures, and thus make all decisions regarding the payment of employees during altered operations and/or a college closure, to implement the provisions of Board Policies 3.1, 3.3, 3.4 and 4.1 relative to compensation, and all related procedures, and to make determinations regarding the purpose and parameters of any such payments;

The authority to make decisions regarding the compensation, if any, of full-time and part-time employees, both exempt and non-exempt, who may be required to report to work or work remotely during altered operations and/or a college closure and to implement those decisions;

The authority to determine work days and hours, if any, for all employees during altered operations and/or a college closure;

The authority to implement an educational program for students during altered operations and/or a college closure;

The authority to postpone, suspend, or cancel regular Board meetings during altered operations and/or a college closure in the interest of health and safety after consultation with the Board Chairman;

The authority to alter the Howard College 2019-2020 calendar by changing and/or adding campus/instructional hours and work/campus days as necessitated by altered operations and/or a college closure or related concerns;

The authority to create guidelines and make determinations regarding absences, leave time, leave days, and compensation of any employee who is quarantined as a result of COVID-19 and/or who tests positive for COVID-19 and who presents appropriate medical documentation regarding themselves and/or an immediate family member, in the sole discretion of the President or her designee, in compliance with Texas and federal law;

The authority to seek any necessary waivers from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, SACSCOC, and any other accreditation or certifications agencies, without further action of the Board of Trustees regarding missed instructional days, low attendance, or any matters related to altered operations and/or a college closure as part of this Resolution;

The authority to take all actions as appropriate in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 552.233 regarding temporary suspension of the Texas Public Information Act;

In the event other waivers or immediate actions are needed, the President is authorized to take other action and to submit/apply for other waivers in accordance with guidance and instructions from the national, state and local authorities and/or agencies.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT (1) the emergence of COVID-19 and its spread constitute an unforeseen emergency/matter of urgent public necessity; (2) the delays posed by competitive procurement of contracts necessary to restore, replace and/or repair equipment, personal property, and/or school facilities will prevent or substantially impair the conduct of classes or other essential college activities; and (3) the President and her designee(s) are authorized to procure, negotiate, and execute contracts for goods and services that are necessary to mitigate, prevent, restore, and repair damage caused to Howard College equipment, personal property, and facilities or to protect the safety of Howard College students and employees; and (4) the President shall inform the Board of Trustees of all emergency purchases made hereunder at the next regular Board meeting following such purchases.

The President and/or designee(s) will provide timely and reasonable information to the Board of Trustees with regard to decisions made pursuant to this Resolution.

This Resolution shall remain in effect until rescinded by Board Action at a duly called Board Meeting.
CERTIFICATE FOR RESOLUTION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was presented to the Board of Trustees of Howard College during a special called emergency telephonic meeting March 27, 2020, a quorum of the Board of Trustees being then present, it was then duly moved and seconded that the resolution be adopted, and such resolution was then adopted according to the following vote:

Ayes:
Nays:
Abstentions:

To certify which, witness my hand and the official seal of the District this 27th day of March, 2020.

______________________________
Chair, Board of Trustees

ATTEST:

______________________________
Secretary, Board of Trustees
Howard College
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
RESPONSE TO COVID-19
MARCH 27, 2020
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To protect the health and safety of our students, employees and communities.
- To be prepared to begin completing the Spring semester through online, hybrid, and alternate classwork, depending on the type of course, and make up one week of lost instruction time, if possible.
- To keep students on track for completion through student services.
- To enable the majority of the College employees to work remotely, while continuing to provide necessary services, with some working on campus.
- To retain full-time and part-time employees, reduce turnover, increase morale, help employees focus on work, and facilitate future return to normal operations.
- To keep our communities informed.
ONGOING EXTERNAL INPUTS

ONGOING INFORMATION INFLOWS AND PARTICIPATION

- Daily state-wide calls with Texas Department of State Health Services as available.
- Once per week call with Howard County Emergency Response Team and area emergency teams.
- Daily state-wide call with Texas Association of Community Colleges, Legislators and staff members, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board representatives and other state leaders.
- Communication with area ISD Superintendents as needed.
- Calls as needed with peers, ISD contacts, TACC, TACCBO, THECB, LBB and others.
INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

WEEK OF PLANNING, PREPARATION, AND DEPLOYMENT - MARCH 16-20
CAMPUSES: DEANS, DEPARTMENT CHAIRS, FACULTY AND STUDENT SERVICES

- Develop strategies for course delivery, student support services, and broader campus operations.
- Assign experienced online faculty to help others who are not.
- Plan how to deal with the student access issues.
- Coordinate with ISDs regarding dual credit and ECHS students.
Develop strategies to continue to deliver needed college services, both remotely and in person.

Equip employees to work from home on regular tasks, as required.

Outline projects, policy and procedure development, and other meaningful tasks that will be fruitful for staff to work on during this period.

Redeploy employees into other departments or divisions as needed to meet needs.

Adapt to the changing daily environment and continue to adjust throughout the process.
GOVERNMENTAL AND LEGAL PARAMETERS

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY BY PRESIDENT AND GOVERNOR HAVE RESULTED IN:

- College's ability to use Emergency Meetings provision for Board meetings, as needed.
- State's waiver of normal state bidding/procurement rules.
- Other rules may be waived with permission from Office of the Governor.
- Possibility of some reimbursement of extra costs via state or federal resources.
- Relaxing of some requirements from various accreditation and oversight bodies.
ONGOING WORK

IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIALIZED PURCHASES - SAMPLE TYPES:

- Identity Access Management System - one-stop web portal for students and employees to sign into the College systems.
- Laptops, cellular wifi, other mobile computing devices, headsets, ad other peripherals to support remote working and student access needs.
- Additional software licensing to support increased demand.
- Additional sanitizer and sanitation supplies.
- Conference Options to include expanded call-in ports and toll-free number for public meetings.
- Screening equipment - thermal imaging, other.

MAINTAINING WORKFORCE STABILITY

- Identifying meaningful work for each employee (FT and PT).
- Dealing with individual circumstances of each employee (FT and PT).
- Travel form and underlying health conditions.
- Keeping safety and security paramount.
- Practicing social distancing.
- Maintaining meaningful and effective communication.
ONGOING WORK

SPECIAL CATEGORIES:
- Sports Teams.
- Continuing Education - CNA, Prisons.
- Child Care Center (Howard Cottage).
- Contractors delivering services, construction, etc.
- Federal and State work-study students.

UPCOMING DECISIONS
- Graduation.
- Recognition events.
- Hiring volume.
- Timeframe to resume normal operations.
- When to facilitate temporary face-to-face services.
- When to finalize and approve 2021 budget.
- Whether to completely close selected buildings.
- Decisions regarding election.
- Modifications to Summer registration.
- Modifications to Fall registration.
BOARD ACTIONS AND DECISIONS:

- Format of upcoming Board Meetings: Face-to-Face or by Telephone
- Consideration of proposed Resolution of the Board of Trustees - COVID-19
  - Delegates various authorities to President to act in place of Board:
    - Payment of employees during emergency closure
      - Implement provisions of Policy 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4
      - Compensation
      - Determine purpose and parameters of payments
    - Alter 2019-2020 calendar
    - Guidelines regarding time off
    - Ability to seek waivers from THECB, others
    - Ability to procure
Tough Times Don't Last...

#hawksflytogether

Tough Community Colleges Do!
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS

01  STAGE 1
- No confirmed cases in the college service area.

02  STAGE 2
- Moved to Stage 2 March 24th.
- First report of confirmed case in service area.
- Now five cases
  - Last one confirmed as community spread
Beginning in January, the Communicable Diseases Co-chairs officed on the Big Spring and San Angelo campuses began monitoring the growing COVID-19 concern, sharing information with district employees about recommended guidelines.

The Emergency Management leaders officed on the Big Spring and San Angelo campuses, as well as Cabinet, were monitoring the situation at the local, state, national and global levels and participating in local meetings as convened.

Beginning Monday, March 9th, of Spring Break, the Communicable Diseases Co-chairs and Emergency Management leaders interchangeably participated in daily calls with the Texas Department of Health Services, providing summaries of the calls.

As the week wore on, efforts to remain vigilant on the growing situation and actions being taken across the country and state were taken. It became apparent by Thursday, March 12th, additional action needed to be taken as confirmed cases were growing across the country and state.

For emergency operations planning, a COVID-19 Response Team was activated which included the Communicable Diseases Co-chairs, the Emergency Management leaders, Cabinet, Big Spring Instructional Deans, Student Services leaders for Big Spring and SWCD due to residence halls and food service, Athletic Director, Lamesa Campus Director, Human Resources, Chief Information officer, Distance Learning leader plus president's office staff. On the evening of March 12th, the group had its first meeting.

Staying in close contact, by the end of the weekend, it became apparent another meeting was needed. Sunday night, March 15th, a telephonic call was held to prepare for the week and assess changes that had occurred since the Thursday, March 12th call.
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS #1

ONGOING INFORMATION INFLOWS, PARTICIPATION & PLANNING

- Daily state-wide calls with Texas Department of State Health Services, as available, continued through the week of March 16th.
- Frequent contact with area city and county authorities and weekly meetings were attended.
- Hosting the Howard County Emergency Management meeting, first in person and following ones telephonic. Representative Darby participating by phone.
- Daily state-wide call with Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) that have included representatives from the Governor's office, Lieutenant Governor's office, Legislators and staff, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) representatives and other state leaders started on Tuesday, March 17th.
- Contacts were made as needed with peers, ISD contacts, TACC, Legislative Budget Board (LBB), and others.
- Meetings weeks of March 15-20 and March 23-27:
  - Meetings of COVID-19 Response team once or twice per day on implementation and as needed
  - Cabinet meetings held as needed
  - Using Microsoft Teams for meetings
On Monday, March 16th, faculty began the transition of all courses to the online, digital format, in order to go live by March 20th.

Health Professions programs immediately moved forward so that clinicals could be done according to the guidelines. Hospitals began to restrict entrance...except for Scenic Mountain Medical Center and the VA in Big Spring and Shannon Medical Center and San Angelo Community Medical Center in San Angelo. Nursing homes restricted access. Other health entities did the same. Health Professions faculty designed clinical rotations around the clock to get as many clinical hours for students as possible, not knowing what the future would hold. The weekend of March 20th, the Governor issued directions to relax some guidelines so that health professions students could be prepared to enter the workforce quickly. NCLEX testing sites for nurses will be expanded across the nation to provide increased opportunities for students to test upon graduation.

Dental Hygiene continued with online, using Zoom for classroom. Clinicals will not be held until April 21st following signed mandates from the Governor. It could possibly be summer before clinical hours can be completed for this program. Dental Hygiene Clinical Boards have been postponed.

Faculty participated in professional development provided by the eTrainers and collaborated on ways to enhance the online format. The biggest challenge was how to approach those courses with hands-on training such as welding, etc. The plan was to begin delivering those opportunities in small groups by March 30th. As time has advanced, extensions of some courses for a few weeks may be the better solution.
On March 20th, the plan for each course was posted and an alert was sent to each student to check the online format for their schedule beginning on March 23rd.

- Links to resources were added to Blackboard.
- Working with Correctional Facilities relative to instructional delivery.
- Creation of faculty resources page for faculty transitioning to online instruction.
- Libraries sharing national research guide with COVID-19 resources and also developing interactive databases for faculty to use with various courses.
Facebook Live sessions multiple times each week to provide assistance, encouragement, support, etc. for students.

- Added communications@howardcollege.edu email address to field questions, needs, etc.
- Created COVID-19 webpage with resources for students and employees.
- Assessing student technology needs through online form; providing laptops and other equipment; helping with internet service.
- Monitoring student engagement in courses: faculty and advisors are calling them to encourage the need to begin working.
- HC Alerts are being utilized to inform students and employees of important information.
- Implementing chatbot texting system to communicate with students in real time.
- Dorms: Takeout meals being provided to those still on campus.
- Mailing items to students at their homes.
- Assisting students with travel arrangements and needs.
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS #1

COLLEGE SERVICE DEPARTMENT PLANNING, PREPARATION AND DEPLOYMENT: MARCH 16-20; MARCH 23-27

- Reaching out to dual credit schools to ensure connection with students and counselors, plus instructional formats as needed.
- Reached out to student leaders to assist with communicating with the student body to address questions, concerns and needs.
- Offering virtual tutoring using Upswing, Zoom, Skype and video phones.
- Forwarding phone lines in order to respond to student calls.
- Planning underway for updates/encouragement for students from the president in different formats.
- Accommodation needs for students changing to online format being analyzed and addressed.
- Using jump-drives between faculty and students to share information.
- Providing options for students to access food and personal hygiene pantries through appointment.
- Remote WiFi access points in areas such as Ackerly, Garden City, Coahoma and Sand Springs being offered by WesTex.
- Online mental health counseling being provided to students.
- Determination of residence hall rules in relation to social distancing and visitors.
- Libraries sharing tips for students in social media formats.
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS #1

IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIALIZED PURCHASES

- Laptops, cellular WiFi, other mobile computing devices, headsets, and other peripherals to support remote working and student access needs.
- Additional software licensing to support increased demand for remote working and online instruction or best proctoring of tests.
- Expanding conferencing capability by increasing number of call-in ports as well as contracting for toll-free number for public meetings.
- Zoom meetings.
- Expanded GoToMeetings capacity for participants.
- Online virtual simulation for some programs.
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS #1

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY BY PRESIDENT AND GOVERNOR HAVE RESULTED IN:

- College's ability to use Emergency Meetings provisions for Board meetings, as needed.
- Temporary lifting of restrictive guidelines for virtual meetings and participation as required in the Open Meetings Act.
- State's waiver of normal state bidding/procurement rules.
- Other rules may be waived with permission from Office of the Governor.
- Possibility of some reimbursement of extra costs via state or federal resources.
- Relaxing of some requirements from various accreditation and oversight bodies.
Prior to Spring Break, district maintenance staff began increased efforts to clean and disinfect spaces, leaving the buildings ready for return. Purchasing efforts were made by maintenance staff to increase disinfectant supplies, etc. for all locations.

March 12th, decisions were made regarding extending Spring Break for the students until March 23rd due to out-of-state students returning and area students having traveled. An online survey for students and employees to report travel or exposure concerns was prepared and posted on the website. Faculty and staff were asked to return on the 16th as planned to begin preparation for transition to a totally online, digital format by March 23rd and to prepare the campuses for student return when appropriate. The decision was made at that time to keep the Harold Davis Fitness Center open as well as Howard Cottage for childcare services, both located on the Big Spring campus. Campuses would remain open to the public. Athletic seasons would continue as planned.

March 16th, President Trump initiated the 15-day effort. Action was taken to close the campuses, moving into an altered operations status until March 30th. Prior to leaving, employees were told to take what they needed to work from home. the Harold Davis Fitness Center was closed beginning on Tuesday, March 17th. Howard Cottage was kept open until Wednesday, March 18th to give parents time to make other arrangements.

Wednesday, March 18th, began to formulate a strategic plan of action based on information shared by Chancellor Brenda Hellyer, San Jacinto Community College District, that they were implementing in the Houston area. Also conferred with Johnette McKown, President, McLennan College, concerning actions they were taking relative to telephonic meetings for the Board of Trustees.
On Thursday, March 19th, Governor Abbott took action to close schools, later clarified that included colleges, until April 3rd. He also moved Texas into a more restricted status. At that point extended the closure of campuses until April 3rd, transitioning to an altered operations status until that time.

National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) and National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) ended seasons for all sports. Worked with athletes as decisions were made relative to staying on campus or returning home. Monitoring national decisions relative to eligibility. Following face-to-face restrictions imposed by NJCAA until April 15th for all types of recruiting although virtual is allowed.

CANCELED activities going forward.

Local, state and national meetings and conferences began to be canceled for the weeks ahead.

Limited college travel to service area only.

Have adjusted guidance to students regarding residence halls as the situation has evolved.

Changed the drop date to April 24th.

Expanded the four conference call lines to host 44 callers to be used for college and community meetings, classes, etc.

Secured toll-free number to be used for public meetings with 500 caller capability.

Cancelled March 23rd Regular Board of Trustees meeting and items will be considered by Board at later date.

Expanded Go-To-Meeting capability to 250 participants.
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS #1

STAGE 1 ACTIONS CONTINUED

- FCI lock-down for 30 days resulting in no workforce training.
- GEO facilities making decisions relative to instructional operations.
- Due to self-report of employee exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, followed guidelines as if a confirmed case relative to impacted employees, closed San Angelo campus on March 26th for disinfecting processes on Monday, March 30th. Reported status to employees and media.
- On March 27th, seek Major Resolution Delegation for COVID-19 delegating additional authorities to President beyond existing authority to act in place of Board but to notify Board.
Responding to national, state and local actions taken.
Transitional decisions needed as moving into Stage 2 - reported cases in service area.
Items to be included on the Legislative Budget Board request for related expenditures to COVID-19 and estimated lost revenue for FY2020.
Health Professions Pinnings and Commencement - to be determined.
All campus events postponed and to be determined for final cancellation.
Howard Cottage: consideration of re-opening for student parents and faculty serving in first responder roles.
Time-frame to resume normal operations - as information is available.
Extension of registration for summer and fall.
Periodic needs to return to campus (for some employees).
Registration schedules.
Responses to students.
Contractors delivering services, construction.
Federal work-study students.
Finalizing compensation plans.
Purchasing of resources to support students or operations during altered operations status.
Approach to 2021 budget and ongoing projects.
Trustee election - May 2nd or move to general election on November 3rd, as allowed by Governor.
COVID-19 RESPONSE STATUS #1

UPCOMING DECISIONS

- Instructional mode for Mini and Summer sessions.
- Tuition and fees refund or credit requests.
- Refund or credits request related to room and board.
- Consideration of Incompletes and/or Pass/Fail options being discussed at the state level.
- Responding to needs of students located in remote areas without robust internet.
- Completion of CTE course requirements deemed difficult to accomplish virtually.
- Completion of Health Professions program requirements in some fields if COVID-19 spreads in the service area.
- Focusing on cybersecurity as advancement of virtual, remote altered operations continues.
- Potential actions being taken at state level impacting budgets as economy being strained.
- Increasing simulation as needed.
- Working with donors interested in providing support for students/employees struggling.
- Determination of essential services positions required to be on-campus in the event "stay-at-home" measures are mandated.
- Updating of Continuity Plan.
- Inventory of potential items that could be used for medical community if needed.
- Completion of state reports within extended deadlines following "stay-at-home" mandates.
- Adjusting budget due to reduced revenue if necessary.
Tough Times Don't Last... Tough Community Colleges Do!

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