



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate President Ronald D. Kouchi
FROM: Senate Special Committee on COVID-19
RE: Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 Report

Dear Senate President,

Please see the attached report prepared following the March 24, 2020, Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 meeting with the following:

- University of Hawaii
- Department of Education
- Hawaii Tourism Authority

Sincerely,

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Senator Jarrett Keohokalole
Senator Michelle N. Kidani
Senator Donna Mercado Kim
Senator Sharon Moriwaki
Senator Kurt Fevella

Attachment

Cc: All Senators

University of Hawaii

The University of Hawaii, represented by President David Lassner, Board of Regents Chairman Ben Kudo, and Vice President Jan Gouveia (Lead Emergency Management Executive) provided the committee the following update.

Communication

- UH is closely monitoring the situation and has daily calls with the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency and administrative cabinet meetings.
 - Calls include President Lassner, or an Executive Officer, and a Secretary to the Board of Regent.

Distance Learning

- Main concerns are safety and that students can finish the semester as planned.
- UH anticipated a possible shutdown and began work early to arrange for distance learning and work from home policies.
 - Some curriculum had to be altered to accommodate distance learning
 - UH began distance learning on March 23 and report no major issues.
- UH added technology and increased capacity for distance learning.
 - Prior to this emergency only 10% of UH classes were done through distance learning.
- Research in labs still has to be done in person and being done in person as no alternative is available, these classes will be cancelled.
- Faculty and staff who can help students complete the semester are considered to be essential.

Non-essential Travel

- All non-essential travel has been suspended.
- Some students could not return home over spring break, either due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, home location being in an area with community spread, or personal home situations.

Student Safety

- Campuses are closed to the public.
- Students are being monitored for safety (UH to provide the number of students).
- Students have been advised to avoid gatherings.
- Safety check-ins by staff member (UH to provide details on these check ins).
- Isolation rooms have been set up in the event a student needs to be isolated.
 - No students have needed to be isolated at this time.

Commencement

- Commencement has been canceled.
- UH is exploring alternatives to provide students with the graduation ceremony experience. Online ceremony is an option.
- Hybrid online/in person ceremony may be an option depending on situation
- Ceremony at a later date may be an option.

Residence Halls

- Residence halls remain open at Manoa and Hawaii Island campuses.
- Students who remain in the residence halls are not being charged extra.
- Students who left residence halls will be refunded the costs on a pro rata basis.
- Residence managers are being instructed on social distance protocol.
- Food service is “grab and go”.

Tuition

- Goal is to complete the semester’s work therefore refunds will not be issued.
- CTE students will be allowed to complete classes at a later date.

Athletics

- UH has offered refunds or credits to athletic ticket holders.
- Approximately 50% of those ticketholders are willing to take a credit or allow their ticket purchase amount to become converted into a contribution to UH.

Construction

- Construction projects are ongoing.

Future Planning

- Six-year plans are no longer valid.
- Budget needs to be adapted to the future developing situation.
- Education planning also needs to be adapted.
- Students need to be educated for non-tourism related careers.
- Innovation and entrepreneurial mindset need to part of education so that UH educates future job creators.
- Need to preserve the research focus of UH. Graduate students and faculty working on these research projects are approved to continue their work.
- Continue working to support the shift to a technology-based economy.

Department of Education

Dr. Christina Kishimoto, Superintendent for the Department of Education, presented the current status of school building closures and next steps. The superintendent emphasized that circumstances surrounding COVID-19 are constantly changing, but the Department is working to meet the diverse needs of students while they are away from school. The department intends to carry out instruction during the building closures through distance learning but emphasized classroom instructional time will be lost and cannot be recouped this summer. The following are specific areas of DOE’s progress and intentions.

School Closure

- Beginning March 24 through April 30, school buildings will remain closed. May be extended should circumstances change.

Distance Learning

- Teachers will be preparing lesson plans.

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- For students without access to technology or internet, they will be given lesson packets that will be provided by the schools on a staggered basis.
- Students with access to technology and internet, DOE will provide resources including activities for enrichment activities, reading materials, and virtual fieldtrips.
- Plans are teacher-based and school-based.

Future Planning

- DOE is preparing a “State of Work” document setting out in specific detail how DOE intends to meet the needs of students, such as food and nutrition, special education services, graduation requirements, and credits for continuing on next year.
- DOE will review how social distancing could occur if school buildings reopen after April 30th and social distancing restrictions remain in place.

Food and Nutrition

- DOE opened 40 feeding sites that allows all kids aged 18 and younger to pick up free meals. Only students are allowed to pick up (not parents). Sites are monitoring numbers so adequate numbers of meals are available each day.
- DOE is monitoring whether the neediest children can access sites. If not, the department is prepared to partner with private organizations to operate new locations.

Special Education

- DOE is reviewing how it could provide services that may require one on one instruction and the physical care necessary to facilitate learning for these students

Graduation

- DOE is preparing to modify graduation requirements for the ten thousand graduating seniors.
- These modifications would only apply for the fourth quarter.
- U.S. Department of Education waived standardized testing requirements.
- DOE will work with colleges and the military on how graduating seniors may continue on without impediments.
- DOE is reviewing how students can complete CTE certifications so they can enter the workforce or begin apprenticeships after graduation.

Vulnerable Students

- DOE is creating options to keep in touch with and provide support for the most vulnerable students including those who are houseless.
- Actions will include linking students to social, emotional, and health services.

Instruction Time

- DOE will work with transition services in the following school year to make up the instructional time as the cost to continue instruction past the normal school year would be \$5 million per month.
- By looking at alternative instructional methods and reducing other costs during the closures, the DOE is preparing for budget constraints moving forward.

Construction and Maintenance

- DOE intends to request extensions on projects that are disrupted by the building closures.
- Social distancing requirements are slowing progress on other projects.

Hawaii Tourism Authority

Chris Tatum, CEO for Hawaii Tourism Authority, presented current information on how the COVID-19 crisis was impacting the Tourism Industry.

Visitor and Resident Arrivals

- Arrival numbers dropped dramatically.
- Normal average of arrivals per day was 50,000.
- As of March 16, average arrivals per day has reduced to 20,000.
- As of the March 22, average arrivals per day has reduced to 7,000 which includes returning residents (average is 4,000 residents per day).

Hospitality Industry

- 26 hotels closed across the state.
- Emphasized the hotels' concerns about their employees and ensuring that they are able to access unemployment and keeping medical insurance in place for employees for at least a 30-day period.
- Hotels may carry medical insurance for at least 30 days (up to 90 days).
- Industry has offered to help with filing for claims.
- Hotels have offered to use their rooms for healthcare workers, isolation, etc. HTA coordinating. At least one hotel open on each island.

Quarantine Process for Hotels

- Visitors arriving must go through a checkpoint at the airport.
- State will use Department of Agricultural form and identification.
- HTA will get the forms from the Department of Transportation, scan and input information into a database.
- Using the information, HTA will call the hotels where the passengers are staying.
- Hotels will provide information to people as they check-in.
- If issues arise, hotels will contact the police.

Quarantine Process for Short-Term Rentals

- Visitor must fill in address of vacation rental on Department of Agriculture form.
- HTA will contact vacation rentals.

-End of Report-