



TO: ALL STAFF

From: Cheryl Marshall, Chancellor

Date: November 15, 2016

For many Americans, this election season has proved to be highly disturbing in its tenor and divisiveness. The uncertainty a lot of us feel heading into this new presidency is appropriate given some of the rhetoric of the campaign trail. Reports have already started to come in of our students feeling fearful for themselves, their families, and their future as Americans. I think it's imperative that the faculty and staff of the North Orange County Community College District take actions that will bring healing and restore some hope—for our students and for ourselves. Please consider the following responses as possible ways for moving forward.

- Let our students know they are safe on our campuses. Continue to connect with our students in ways that communicate our care and concern for them. Have a one-on-one talk or facilitate voluntary group discussions. Send positive messages through social media. Report any and all bullying to administrators.
- Support our students psychologically and emotionally. If you see students struggling, talk to them about seeing a counselor. If extra services are needed right now, we will find the funds to provide additional hours. We can also organize events to provide opportunities for healing and expressing our concerns. Most of all, let our students know how much we value them. I am reminded of a famous quote by Dr. Martin Luther King: "*Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.*"
- Take comfort in the State's support of education. The voters of California really showed their support of education by passing two big propositions this November: Props 51 and 55. Prop 55 is an extension of Prop 30's tax increases, and is expected to generate between \$2 to 4.5 million annually for education. Proposition 51 will provide community colleges with \$2 billion for much needed construction projects. Voters in 11 California community college districts also approved local bond measures totaling \$7.3 billion. By focusing on these amazing results, we can take comfort in knowing that our state remains a safe bastion of education for all.
- Be role models of respectful behavior. We have an opportunity to demonstrate how passionate debate does not require name-calling or personal attacks. Valuing diverse opinions and viewpoints is one of our core values and an essential part of the educational process. On CSPAN this weekend there was an interview with

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg about her recently published memoirs. During the course of the conversation, the host asked about her close friendship with Justice Scalia, and she described a warm relationship with regular dinners together. I was surprised at first, but then I felt encouraged that individuals with completely opposite political ideologies could not only co-exist but become close friends. We should aim for this same kind of collegiality, friendship, and respect. It is essential for collaboration and good decision-making.

As we move through the coming months, don't hesitate to suggest ways we can work together for the benefit of our students and our nation. Thank you for your work, and I wish you a peaceful Thanksgiving holiday.

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