Lynn Neault

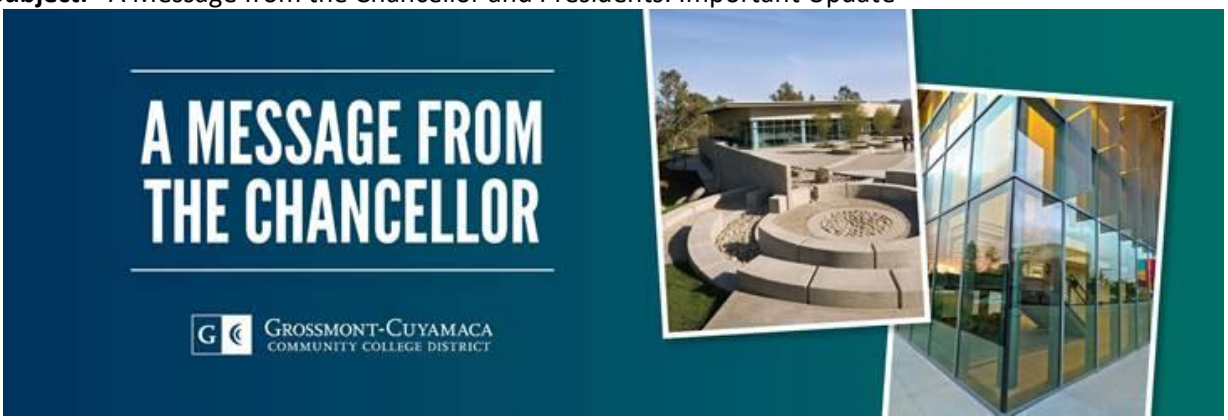
Outlook

From: Lynn Neault

Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2026 8:30 AM

To:

Subject: A Message from the Chancellor and Presidents: Important Update



Dear Colleagues,

It is with grave concern that we inform you that our colleges have been targeted by a financial aid fraud ring impacting hundreds of students enrolled in online classes. These are not Bots; these are individuals residing in our community.

District employees discovered the fraudulent activity early this year and immediately reported it to the authorities. Since that time, we have been working closely with law enforcement providing records and other information, as well as monitoring enrollment patterns closely.

Given the magnitude of the fraudulent activity, we have placed holds on the records of the students that we know are fraudulent so that they are unable to enroll or receive financial aid for spring. **Financial aid fraud is a federal crime.**

What you need to know:

- **Faculty teaching online classes** will likely see an immediate impact where students stop submitting work and disappear.
    - Faculty should drop the students and report the information to admissions and records right away.

- **Student services offices** may receive questions from students who receive emails about their holds.
    - The inquiries may or may not be from the actual students, so staff should not provide any information.
    - Staff should refer the students to District Educational Support Services, who is following up with the students individually.

- **Because we know there are more students than we have identified, faculty teaching online classes** should be on high alert for suspicious patterns in their classes such as:
    - Patterns in submitting assignments
    - Similar test errors and/or patterns
    - AI-generated papers and assignments
    - Multiple excuses for delays in submitting assignments

  Faculty should report all suspicious activity in online classes to their dean.

- **If there are inquiries from the media**, please refer them to Jennifer Kearns in the District office (jennifer.kearns@gcccd.edu).

In the meantime, this is an active investigation. We will continue to report all suspicious activity to law enforcement and fully cooperate to ensure the criminals are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Sincerely,

Lynn Ceresino Neault, Ed.D.

Chancellor

Pamela Luster, Ed.D.

Interim President

Grossmont College

Jessica Robinson, Ed.D.

President

Cuyamaca College