

Campus Life and Safety and Security Task Force

MINUTES

Monday, October 13, 2008, 2 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Chancellor Glen D. Johnson welcomed the attendees and called roll. Other members in attendance were: Phil Berkenbile, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education; Janet Cunningham, Northwestern Oklahoma State University; Tom McDaniel, Oklahoma City University; Brent Campbell for Tom McKeon, Tulsa Community College; Donnie Nero, Connors State College; Melissa Houston for Kerry Pettingill, Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security; Anil Gollahalli, University of Oklahoma; and Terri White, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. Also in attendance were: Shelby Jay Blundell and Keith Ogans, Rose State College; Jeanette Nance, Governor's Office; Adam Lovell, Southeastern Oklahoma State University / Student Advisory Board; Bryan Smith, ecapitol.net; Susan Simpson, The Oklahoman; and Pam Boatright, Katharine Gaddis, Kurt Snodgrass, Ben Hardcastle, Rebecca Richardson, Bob Anthony, Amanda Paliotta, Tony Hutchison and Kermit McMurry, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 15 MEETING: Johnson asked task force members to review the minutes of the Aug. 15, 2008, meeting. The minutes were approved by a voice vote.

OPENING REMARKS: Johnson outlined the many items to be discussed on that day's agenda, including recent campus safety seminars, the task force's legislative agenda, an update on the follow-up surveys and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act's effect on student safety. Phil Berkenbile said he would forego any opening remarks in order to proceed directly to the items on the agenda.

REPORT ON SEPTEMBER 2-5 TRAINING: Johnson noted that Campus Safety and Security Seminars were held at the University of Central Oklahoma and Tulsa Community College in early September. He said the seminars, sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, were well attended, and he asked Melissa Houston to provide a report on the training.

Houston said the trainings were held at UCO on Sept. 2-3 and at TCC on Sept. 4-5, during which Homeland Security provided technical assistance and a planning template and checklist for a total of 137 campus emergency planners. She added that a panel of campus safety experts provided information on developing plans, providing staff training and improving communications between agencies and departments, including law enforcement. She said all levels were represented at the seminars, including law, counseling and student affairs, and that organizers had received positive feedback about the trainings.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: Johnson outlined possible recommendations for the group's 2009 legislative agenda and asked task force members for their input. He began by asking Amanda Paliotta to discuss the funding aspect of the agenda.

Paliotta stated that the previous budget survey results showed that notification, response and mental health counseling budgets should equal approximately \$100 per student (headcount) and that \$16 million was needed to bring all institutions to the annual baseline funding amount of \$40.7 million. She said this was the request that was made to the Legislature for FY2009, but that no funding was received. She said the same request could be made for FY2010 but added that another budget survey might reveal more in-depth information and that there was a possibility that the per-student cost would change. She said the survey was in draft form and should be ready to distribute by the end of October.

Johnson noted that it would make sense to request that the funding be appropriated through the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security and then distributed to public and private higher education institutions and career technology centers. Tom McDaniel pointed out that would also make it easier for private institutions to get funding.

Terri White asked what amount would be going directly to counseling needs. Paliotta responded that there were two sections of the budget survey – security and counseling. White asked if the request would be broken down that way, and Paliotta said it would. Berkenbile asked if the survey would designate whether the counseling was academic or mental. Paliotta stated that would be included in the instructions and definitions.

Johnson then asked Bob Anthony to discuss the request to exempt campus emergency plans from the Oklahoma Open Records Act.

Anthony said that questions about this issue arose last year due to the campus surveys. He said there are currently some exemptions to the Open Records Act, but they are restrictive and may not necessarily apply to campus emergency plans. He suggested that the task force request an amendment that specifically exempts higher education and career technology emergency notification and response plans from the Oklahoma Open Records Act.

Johnson then noted that the “guns on campus” issue would likely resurface during the next legislative session and suggested that the task force look at comprehensive effort that makes clear that strong opposition continues. White asked if Sen. Todd Lamb could speak to the task force about the issue. Johnson noted that Lamb was very helpful in efforts earlier in the year and is willing to help again, including by carrying legislation. He said an invitation would be extended to Lamb to address the task force at the next meeting.

McDaniel noted that the “guns on campus” efforts did not apply to private institutions last time, so the institutions hadn’t taken it up as an issue. However, he said the presidents had met since then and discussed the proposal and had decided to join public postsecondary education in opposing it.

Berkenbile suggested a proactive approach that would include a letter to the governor and legislative leadership from all three groups – public higher education, private higher education and the career technology system – stating that they are unanimous in their opposition to concealed weapons on campus.

Johnson offered the three recommendations discussed – funding, exemption of emergency plans from open records and the guns on campus issue – as the framework for the task force’s legislative agenda. There being no further discussion, White made a motion to approve, and McDaniel seconded. The motion passed by a voice vote.

SURVEY UPDATES: Johnson asked Ben Hardcastle to provide an update on the second round of campus surveys. Hardcastle noted that Paliotta had provided information on the funding survey and added that the notification and counseling surveys were also in draft form and would be distributed by the Office of Homeland Security in the next few weeks. He said that the information would be included in the annual report due from the task force in January 2009 and that there was good baseline information from the previous report/surveys. He added that some questions on the surveys would be repeats from the first time but that there would be new questions as well.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION IMPACT ON STUDENT SAFETY ISSUES: Johnson noted that the HEA reauthorization passed in late July and was signed into law by

President George W. Bush in August. Johnson said the legislation is more than 1,000 pages, and he asked Hardcastle to provide an overview of the act as it pertains to CLASS activities. Hardcastle noted the following areas of relevance covered in the act:

Requirement that institutions establish notification procedures for emergency situations, publicize response and evacuation procedures on an annual basis and test response and evacuation procedures.

A new competitive grant program for higher education institutions to pay for certain safety initiatives.

Guidance for higher education institutions in reporting issues related to students' mental health.

Hardcastle said that State Regents' staff would continue to analyze the legislation to determine the impact on CLASS-related activities.

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT TRAINING AND EXERCISES: Johnson asked Hardcastle and White to update the group on the plans for early 2009. Hardcastle said that he, White, Kermit McMurry and Lee Bird would be working together to coordinate the event, including seeking funding for the training, which would consist of at least one, two-day exercise. Bird suggested that Oklahoma State University could be used as a venue for the event. White noted the importance of talking in-depth about the subject, providing factual information and dispelling myths. Donnie Nero suggested utilizing technology so that more people can participate.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: Johnson asked subcommittee chairs provide updates on recent activities.

Notification: Kurt Snodgrass reported for Doug Major and Tom McKeon, who were unable to attend. He said the subcommittee had been meeting via e-mail to discuss the task force's legislative agenda and questions for the follow-up survey. He also said Major and McKeon wanted to explore options for a vendor forum where institution representatives could meet with companies providing notification systems and services and compare and contrast products, etc. that would meet the needs of their campuses.

Response: Houston reported for Pettingill, who was unable to attend. She said the subcommittee had reviewed questions for the follow-up survey and that, since most of the relevant information had been captured with the first survey, the second survey would serve to measure the progress. She added that the follow-up survey had been scaled back to make it more user-friendly.

Counseling: White said the subcommittee had been considering recommendations for funding and questions for the follow-up survey. She stated the need for increased funding to resolve the issues revealed by the first survey, including lack of available counselors and the need for more training and improved communications between agencies/offices.

Laws and Policies: Anil Gollahalli said the subcommittee had been reviewing the impact of the new HEA legislation on CLASS-related activities and would continue to provide updates. He noted that there would be a session on HEA at the upcoming Legal Issues in Higher Education Conference. Bob Anthony said the conference would be held Oct. 28 at the University of Oklahoma Student Union. He said, of the 12 breakout sessions in the conference, six were linked to CLASS.

Funding: Janet Cunningham reported that she and Kay Martin had been working closely with Paliotta on the funding survey. She added that she strongly supported the funding going through the OHS instead of education.

OPEN DISCUSSION: White pointed out the continuing need for more mental health professionals available to campuses and asked that the recommendation remain on the forefront as the task force prepares its annual report.

Johnson asked for recommendations for future meeting speakers. Houston suggested Sen. Lamb.

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE: Hardcastle proposed the following meeting schedule:

Monday, Dec. 8, 2008, 2 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 2, 2009, 2 p.m.
Friday, April 10, 2009, 2 p.m.
Tuesday, June 9, 2009, 2 p.m.

Johnson asked if the February date coincided near the start of the legislative session and said the task force wouldn't want that to conflict. Hardcastle said he thought it was the following week but that he would check.

Johnson said the task force would discuss a rollout plan for the annual report at the December meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.