

WELCOMING REMARKS

Task Force on Ohio College Campus Safety & Security

Chancellor Eric Fingerhut

Fawcett Center

The Ohio State University

August 1, 2007

Thank you, Curt.

Thank you for hosting us here at the Fawcett Center and also for all of the time Ohio State professionals have spent working with the task force this summer.

I look forward to working with you and incoming president Gordon Gee in the future.

I also want to thank our task force participants from the many colleges, universities, state agencies and other sectors across the state who have shared in the work to make this summit today a reality. I see many of you here, and I thank you for your service.

I want to welcome all of you this morning who have come to the Fawcett Center here at The Ohio State University for the summit on Ohio college campus safety and security.

I am told that we have more than 350 people attending from public and private colleges and universities, law

enforcement, mental health and other interested organizations from every part of the state.

This public Summit is the direct action of the task force that Governor Ted Strickland asked me to convene in the aftermath of the tragedy at Virginia Tech University last spring.

The governor will be here after lunch to talk to us all about college campus safety.

We are holding the Summit today, August 1, to get us together with enough time left in the summer so that the information we share will be able to be used this fall to improve campus safety.

You will be hearing more about Virginia Tech in a few moments from Colonel Steven Flaherty, superintendent of the Virginia State Police, as well as Corinne Geller, public relations manager of the Virginia State Police, who will be participating in a crisis communications breakout session later this afternoon.

Colonel Flaherty is leading the investigation of that tragic incident.

Before you hear from Colonel Flaherty, I want to share with you some of what the task force learned and, again, acknowledge and thank those who have participated in its work this summer.

We have had representatives from our biggest universities to our smallest colleges. Each has devoted many hours to discussion and research and problem solving.

This task force has learned one very obvious fact... each and every Ohio college has its own unique safety and security challenges ...

We have learned that there is no simple cookie-cutter solution that fits all... and that we shouldn't expect that there are any simple one-size-fits-all quick fixes when it comes to this issue.

Just ask the people at Bowling Green ... Marietta ... Rio Grande ... Central State ... Tri-C... Sinclair ...Ohio State ... Miami ... Cleveland State ... Akron ... Denison ... Youngstown State ... or any other school.

Given the overarching security challenge on Ohio's diverse college campuses, we have been busy exploring best practices to make our campuses as safe and secure as possible in what every day seems to be a less secure world.

You will hear more about our work after Colonel Flaherty concludes his remarks about lessons lived and learned at Virginia Tech.

This morning at this summit we will report and focus on short-term actions the task force and its members have taken before the start of this school year.

After lunch, and after the governor speaks, we will talk about the work we have yet to do and the next steps the state government and our colleges and universities, both public and private, need to take.

Under Governor Strickland's directions, several key state agencies have participated in the call to action after the tragedy at Virginia Tech.

They have been valued participants in the task force.

I believe their active participation is an example of how seriously our governor and state government takes this issue ... and it shows the new sense of teamwork in tackling serious issues.

And we also know how seriously our state's colleges and universities are taking the safety and security of their students and staffs.

The task force has heard from many colleges that are actively and seriously reviewing and enhancing their safety and security programs.

Yes, the tragedy of Virginia Tech has been a wake-up call to this country ... and it certainly has been one to Ohio and all of our colleges and universities.

Since that fateful day in April, much work has been done in Ohio, and we know that much more needs to be done as we strive to stay ever vigilant.

That is why we are here today.

To remind everyone that safety on a college campus means a new type of activism and vigilance.

It means that everyone on a college campus ... from professor to student to dean to other staff ... must be aware and participate in maintaining public safety.

Today, you will hear reports from the Attorney General and the Departments of Mental Health and Public Safety.

You will also hear from the task force's four committee chairs and be able to ask them questions this morning.

And, of course, you will be hearing more from me after the governor joins us right after lunch.

At that time I'll talk about next steps.

I do want to emphasize one "next step" at this point, however.

The governor has asked me to report to him on the work of the task force by August 30th.

Included in that report will be a summary of what we know about the preparedness of each campus in Ohio.

As the elected representative of all the people of this state, the governor needs to know what has been done to prepare our campuses for the fall as well as what further steps need to be taken in the future.

In order to respond to the governor's charge to me, I will be asking each campus to complete a checklist regarding campus preparedness and steps that have been taken since April to respond to the need for heightened awareness.

The checklist will be due to me by Friday, August 24, 2007.

I urge you to use the checklist during today's meeting to determine where your campus stands today and any assistance we might provide before August 24th.

Our purpose today is to tell you that we take the safety and security of our college campuses and everyone on them very seriously.

Very, very seriously NOW.....

**INTRODUCTION OF
Colonel W. Steven Flaherty
Virginia State Police
By Chancellor Eric Fingerhut**

On April 16, America was stunned by the news that 32 persons ... students and staff ... were gunned down in a shooting rampage at Virginia Tech University.

This shocking news stopped all of us in our tracks.

Many questions popped into people's minds...

Who did it?

Why did it happen?

How could this happen on one of America's great college campuses?

Some questions have been answered.

Others never will.

But what has happened since Virginia Tech is an attitude of "never again can we let this happen at one of our colleges."

And there has been a virtual state-by-state effort to do everything possible to make sure there is no repeat.

One person who knows more about the lessons lived and the lessons learned from Virginia Tech is Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, the superintendent of the Virginia State police, who is in charge of the investigation.

A 31-year veteran of the state police, Colonel Flaherty was reappointed to his job by Governor Tim Kaine after first being named to his position by Governor Mark R. Warner in 2003.

Colonel Flaherty is here with us today at what is being called “a seminal moment for law enforcement” because now we know more than ever that every minute is crucial in a critical incident situation.

It is my privilege to introduce Colonel W. Stephen Flaherty.

Colonel Flaherty....

REMARKS ABOUT WORK OF TASK FORCE

Chancellor Eric Fingerhut

Fawcett Center

The Ohio State University

August 1, 2007

Thank you, Colonel Flaherty.

Your insights and advice will be taken to heart by the people of Ohio.

Although the headlines may fade, the pain and experience and lessons learned of Virginia Tech will never be forgotten.

We here in Ohio, like elsewhere, have been mobilized to action and have learned we need to be even more vigilant.

Your visit today helps remind us it is our job to keep our college students... and everyone who works or steps foot on a college campus ... as safe as humanly possible.

And, you remind us, the time to do it is now.

Clearly, we all know that we cannot wave a magic wand and create a dome of safety over Ohio to keep the world's evils and accidents from hurting us.

But we must do the best we can to prevent bad things from happening ... and if they do happen, we must act quickly and appropriately to aid, comfort and carry on.

This task force may have been instituted as a reaction to the shootings at Virginia Tech, but this summer we are talking about making sure that Ohio college campuses are ready for all kinds of critical incidents.

It could be anything from an act of nature ... to an experiment gone wrong ... to an act of man. There is a lot of unknown to prepare for.

We have been reminded this summer that Ohio has a very diverse system of public and private colleges that each seem to have different needs and resources, as well as differing relationships with both local and state law enforcement.

You will hear more about that later.

Right now, I'd like to tell you about the task force's work.

Since it was formed in late April, we have held two statewide teleconferences from campuses around the state attended by scores of people.

We have created four committees with more than 70 representatives from colleges, law enforcement, state government and other groups.

Those committees ... Prevention chaired by Jon Allison....Response chaired by Steve Dettlebach...Communications chaired by Teri Geiger...and Resources chaired by Mark Griffin ... held several meetings each at the Board of Regents offices.

Those meetings focused on both short-term actions and long-term needs to deal with college campus safety and security.

First, as I said earlier, we focused on what we could do before school starts in the fall ...

And, by the way, it goes beyond the headlines of just registering student cell phone numbers, which is one of many good ideas being implemented at various campuses around Ohio.

The Task Force is also looking at near- and long-range actions that we can do throughout this school year and beyond.

I'll discuss those ideas after the governor's speech right after lunch, as well as what I plan to report to the governor at the end of August.

But right now ... this morning ...we will focus on short-term actions that should be ready when students return to campuses this fall.

This Summit ... and the information provided ... let me remind you ... is one of the major action steps the task force recommended.

The Task Force thought it was important to bring everyone from across the state together in Columbus to share what we have already learned and done, and to keep the spotlight shining on college campus safety and security.

One topic that came up repeatedly at Task Force meetings, and which we are addressing today, are legal issues and law enforcement policies in situations similar to Virginia Tech involving student privacy.

In a few moments, the Attorney General's office will clarify many of the concerns the Task Force has heard regarding privacy and liability as they pertain to federal and state statutes. There will also be a session on this topic later this afternoon.

We will also hear from representatives from the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Safety about action steps they have taken.

The Board of Regents is also allocating resources to provide better assistance to Ohio's campuses on safety and security.

I will talk more about what the Board is doing after lunch.

Right now, I'd like to introduce Todd Stewart, Ph. D., one of our campus security task force members from The Ohio State University.

Todd has been a great asset to the task force. He is a retired major general in the U.S. Air Force. At OSU, he is the director of the Program for International and Homeland Security. He is also the executive director of the National Academic Consortium for Homeland Security. Ladies and gentleman, please help me welcome Todd Stewart.

INTRODUCTION OF STATE AGENCY REPS (Todd Stewart Remarks)

Thank you, Chancellor. I'm very happy to be of service this way. The agency representatives here today have been asked to give "succinct" reports on what they have done so far.

Our agency representatives are:

Tom Winters, First Assistant Attorney General at the Attorney General's Office

Sandra Stephenson, Director of the Department of Mental Health, and

George Maier, Assistant Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety

We'll begin with First Assistant Attorney General Tom Winters, who will report on the work his office has done to help clarify legal issues regarding critical incident events like Virginia Tech.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Todd Stewart Remarks)

Thank you all for your hard work. We appreciate it.

Now, I'd like to ask the leaders of our task force ... our committee chairs Teri Geiger...Steve Dettlebach ... Mark Griffin... and Richard Hollingsworth filling in for Jon Allison ... to come on up, take a seat and talk for a few minutes each about what their committees are doing.

After that, they'll take your questions and open discussion with you. We are also here to listen to your ideas and concerns.

AFTERNOON REMARKS
Task Force on Ohio College Campus Safety & Security
Chancellor Eric Fingerhut
Fawcett Center
The Ohio State University
August 1, 2007

Thank you, Governor Strickland.

We are gathered here today at this Summit because you asked us to take action and pull together as a state in an effort to make sure all of Ohio's college campuses ... both public and private ... are as safe and secure as we can make them.

Your words of support and encouragement have been taken to heart. I ... we all ... look forward to working together to accomplish this important task.

In fact, this Summit shows how we are pulling together to do just that.

Earlier today you heard about what is being done already by state agencies and others to make campuses safer at the beginning of this school year.

There is, of course, much more to do. And that is what I will now be talking about.

As everyone knows, the state is now making an unprecedented financial commitment to its colleges and universities.

The governor and legislature ... in an act of faith in our state's future ... have increased state support by \$1 billion over the next two years for higher education.

In the months ahead, we will be announcing exciting new changes and programs to implement the state's vision of the role that higher education can play in our future.

But to make that investment and dream a reality, we must also ensure that our world-class college and university system is also a safe and secure campus environment in the best traditions of academia and public safety.

That is why the work of our Task Force is so important. So let me review quickly with you what our next steps are.

As you have heard, the Task Force divided its work into two parts – first, what could we do this summer to use existing knowledge and resources to make our campuses as safe as they can be when students return this fall. This Summit is part of that effort. The remaining part of that effort is for each campus to take the information gained today and, if you have not already done so, review and update your safety and security plans with an eye to implementing best practices. And then, by August 24th at noon, send me a completed checklist so that I can include

in my report to the governor – which is due August 30th – an assessment of the readiness of our campuses.

As you can see, the checklist makes clear that assistance is available from the state and from task force members on any of the areas you may feel that you need to pay particular attention to. That assistance will be available at the break-out sessions that follow the close of this session today. In addition, the Board of Regents will be happy to help organize assistance teams to come out to your campus at any time. Please speak to Deborah Gavlik, Associate Vice Chancellor, if you would like this type of help.

The second part of the Task Force’s work was to ask what long-term changes are necessary to make sure we remain ever vigilant and that we are constantly updating and improving our safety and security practices. The working groups of the task force have met on this subject, and they will, in the next few weeks, be reporting back to the full task force. These recommendations will also be included in my report to the governor on August 30th.

While this part of our task force work is not yet finalized, some clear themes are evident. The task force believes that we have much more work to do to achieve and deploy world-class, safety-and-security protocols.

Therefore, the report I will deliver to the governor will likely include several suggestions that the governor and our state legislature should consider to keep our campuses safe and secure.

These suggestions include long-range ideas for our colleges and universities to improve everyday safety and security while protecting individual student privacy in critical incident situations.

The suggestions report will also include ways our colleges and universities can improve training and services for those professionals who deal with students who may be at risk themselves and pose a risk for others.

The suggestions will also include ways of using our state's expertise and resources to enhance campus safety.

The suggestions will also include looking at best practices to aid college campus safety programs, such as ways to ensure better coordination among law-enforcement agencies and enhanced training programs.

The suggestions may include best practices for the training and certification of professionals involved in college student public safety, security and mental health.

The suggestions may include ways the Board of Regents can assist colleges and universities on campus safety and security issues and what we will do to consistently push the process forward.

And, finally, the suggestions will make clear the importance of making sure that individuals and institutions should not have to fear serious legal liability if they are

acting in good faith to protect their campus community, and the public at large, from a student who may be dangerous.

There is still time for you to offer suggestions on any issues the Task Force is considering. Please feel free to talk to any of our working group co-chairs or Deborah Gavlik while you are here, or email your suggestions to Deborah as soon as you get home.

And please, do not forget the checklist. This document, developed as a consensus of the task force, helps you make sure your campus is fully prepared. It is a tool for you – and for me to know how we are doing in Ohio. I take that responsibility seriously, and I know you do too.