



Louisiana Board of Regents Press Statement



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LA Regents Responds to Sexual Assault Report as Requested

Baton Rouge, LA- Growing concerns over sexual assault on university campuses have spurred legislative and fact-finding efforts at both state and national levels. On July 11, 2014, Senator J.P. Morrell made a request to the Board of Regents, in conjunction with the four system management boards, to prepare a comprehensive report detailing information pertaining to sexual assaults in our state. The Board of Regents gave immediate and serious consideration to Sen. Morrell's request for this information, and promptly sent official communication to each system president that afternoon. Most responses were received by our office by September 5, 2014. At that time, we reviewed and compiled the data as stipulated in Senator Morrell's request. Further dialogue among campus leaders and other stakeholders is needed to identify best practices and key areas to be addressed.

Sexual assault on campuses is within the purview of management boards. The Board of Regents has no legal authority to adopt any statewide policy on this administrative matter. Management boards must ensure that appropriate policies are adopted and enforced to protect the students at their member institutions. Specifically, the Association of Governing of Universities and Colleges (AGB) state that governing boards have the "fiduciary duty and overall responsibility to collaborate with institutional leadership to address issues related to sexual misconduct." AGB has issued an advisory statement to provide specific guidance to governing boards, which the Board of Regents shared with the four system presidents of Louisiana's public institutions.

The Louisiana Board of Regents will assist with statewide efforts to prevent sexual assault. In fact, this past summer, the student leaders participated in a statewide planning conference call on sexual assault with the National Campus Leadership Council (NCLC) and the White House. The discussion was coordinated by the Board of Regents, and students were introduced to helpful resources provided through national enforcement efforts. They will continue to work collaboratively with the NCLC and the White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault. Further, the Board of Regents is partnering with the public and private institutions in the state to host a day-long workshop on Title IX matters in fall of 2014.

The Board of Regents remains committed to assist Senator Morrell, the systems, campuses, and students on this important issue to make certain that the prevention of sexual assault is a priority.