USHE Campus Safety Task Force Report

October 2, 2026

UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Task Force Membership

Representation from the Utah System of Higher Education

Utah Board of Higher Education and Commissioner's Office

- Board Vice Chair Jon Cox
- Commissioner Geoffrey Landward
- (Staffing): Associate Commissioner Katie Mazzie and Associate General Counsel Hilary Renshaw

USHE Presidents

- President Mindy Benson (Southern Utah University)
- President Jim Taggart (Ogden-Weber Technical College; designee Vice President Tyler Call)

Campus Safety and Emergency Management

- Keith Squires (Chief Safety Officer, University of Utah)
- Wes LiCalzi (Chief of Police, Utah Tech University)
- Jason Huntsman (Associate Director of Campus Security, UU)
- Stuart Moffatt (Emergency Mgmt. Director, UU)
- Keith Livingston (Associate Director of Threat Assessment and Management, UU)

Communications

- Amanda DeRito (Associate Vice President of Strategic Communication, Utah State University)

General Counsel

- Anastasia Morgan (General Counsel, Salt Lake Community College)
- Clark Collings (General Counsel, Utah Valley University)

Student Affairs

- Jessica Oyler (Former Vice President for Student Success and Access at Weber State University; Current Chief of Staff at USU)

Task Force Membership (Continued)

Representation from External Partners

Law Enforcement, Public Safety, and Event and Venue Security

- Matt Pennington (State Security Chief, Utah Department of Public Safety)
- Brian Redd (Chief of Police, Salt Lake City Police Department; designee Bill Manzanares)
- Blake Paris (Senior Vice President of Public Safety, Guest Experience and Executive Protection, Smith Entertainment Group)
- Randy Watt (Extensive military and law enforcement experience, cofounder of SRW, Inc., assists regularly in consulting on campus security)

Communications

- Chris Thomas (President, Intrepid)

Risk Management

- Rachel Terry (Former Director of State Risk Management, current USHE Chief of Staff)

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Key Takeaways

Safety is a priority for all of Utah's public colleges and universities.

Protecting students, faculty, and staff requires ongoing attention to prevention, preparedness, and emergency response while preserving campuses as vibrant, open marketplaces of ideas.

A unified, systemwide approach strengthens campus safety.

The task force's recommendations build on existing institutional efforts through consistent policies and practices, shared services, and collaboration across institutions and with local partners.

The report provides concrete actions to move this work forward.

The report contains more than 25 policy, practice, and resource recommendations, and specific key actions to implement and scale them at each USHE institution, providing a shared plan to strengthen safety before, during, and after emergencies.

Report Recommendations

Area 1: Behavioral Threat Intervention and Management

- **Recommendation 1:** Foster a culture of vigilance across USHE institutions.
- **Recommendation 2:** Adopt a “funnel” approach for reporting and responding to threatening behavior.
- **Recommendation 3:** Establish shared service partnerships between USHE degree-granting institutions and technical colleges to support scalable behavioral threat intervention.

Area 2: Safety of Events, Facilities, and Operations

- **Recommendation 4:** Develop consistent standards and protocols for requesting and planning campus events.
- **Recommendation 5:** Standardize protocols for assessing and managing risk related to campus events and daily campus operations and activities.

Report Recommendations (Continued)

Area 3: Responding in Emergencies – Individuals in the Campus Community

- **Recommendation 6:** Promote a more consistent and effective emergency response for students, faculty, staff, and visitors through common nomenclature and training.

Area 4: Responding in Emergencies – Professionals

- **Recommendation 7:** Achieve more consistent institutional responses to emergencies by leveraging a System-based approach.
- **Recommendation 8:** Enhance coordination between USHE institutions and with partners external to higher education (local, state, federal, and private entities).

Report Recommendations (Continued)

Area 5: Post-Emergency Communications, Debriefing, and Continuous Improvement

- **Recommendation 9:** Adopt consistent, formalized methods for debriefing emergencies and a System-focused approach to continuous improvement related to campus safety.