

GCCCD Public Safety Department
Commitment to Safety, Security and Inclusiveness Efforts
4/2/2021

Campus safety is a critical component of successful and flourishing academic programs. It is a delicate balance maintaining an open and welcoming learning environment while ensuring the safety of the campus community and security of facilities. While the types of threats are fluid and changing from year to year, planning and adaptation must continue. Administrators, policy makers, enforcement officials, and other providers must take an adaptive approach to address such risks.

In August 2020, Chancellor Neault called for the formation of a Public Safety Special Taskforce to assess existing policies and practices regarding campus safety as well as research national best practices to make recommendations for enhancement to safety and security at the Grossmont and Cuyamaca College campuses. The task force consisted of students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

As part of their deliberations, taskforce members shared the following assumptions and acknowledged these general principles regarding the process (note: these are not listed in order of importance):

- i. Systemic racism exists in the United States and in policing, and must be eliminated wherever possible.*
- ii. Campus safety must address the needs of the District's diverse student body and community, including those who feel less safe in the presence of law enforcement.*
- iii. Evidence-based alternatives to traditional law enforcement that demonstrably improve, not degrade, public safety must be pursued.*
- iv. Center the experiences and leadership of marginalized and highly vulnerable communities in campus reform conversations.*
- v. The work of the Public Safety Special Taskforce is only a first step toward improving public and campus safety.*

All community input submitted through meetings, open forums, email, and online surveys were reviewed by task force members, and helped to inform discussions and recommendations. Below is a list of challenges frequently brought forth coupled with principles and recommendations for moving forward.

Strategic Challenges

1. Social Justice Concerns

- a. The drive to eliminate racism and promote anti-racism on our campuses seems to be a slow-moving goal.
- b. Historical patterns nationwide demonstrate that students of color were more likely to be arrested for classroom disruptions than their white peers.

- c. Policing culture throughout the nation has always presented as a warrior mind set rather than protect and serve.
- d. Employees are not required to attend training in a variety of topics which include social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion; personal safety, observer and bystander intervention, allyship, and de-escalation tactics.

2. Weak partnerships, on and off campus

- a. Muddled cultures and resistance to security measures often stifle communication and cooperation.
- b. Ambivalence, internal conflict or disagreement of goals amongst campus leadership hinders progress.
- c. The District does not have reliable and/or realistic policies about enforcement and campus safety.

3. Insufficient training in all areas of public safety including emergency preparedness

- a. Gaps in knowledge and skills regarding safety requirements, particularly between leadership and the department of public safety.
- b. Budgets are limited and essentially limit training opportunities.
- c. Several members of the staff are considered Campus Security Authorities or mandated reporters, which has historically been ignored or pushed aside.
- d. Interest levels are low and job expectations do not focus on campus safety.
- e. Culture of “someone else will handle it” exists and assumes other departments can handle all issues regardless of severity.

4. Limited support or funding for technological and physical improvements

- a. Community buy-in on the importance of funding safety initiatives is low or inconsistent. There is little understanding of deterrence initiatives and long-range savings when deterrents work properly to prevent violence and vandalism. In addition, there is a nationwide push to reallocate funding to other departments which may further deter and deescalate potential crimes such as mental health.

Recommendations

1. Social Justice Concerns

- a. Provide the campuses with recommendations to make systematic changes to the culture of policing and enforcement on campus at a swift pace.
- b. Train and remind employees who to call and what type of response is necessary for classroom situations. Campus security and local law enforcement should have limited involvement in non-emergency campus situations.
- c. Implement regular trainings on cultural competence, including implicit bias and microaggressions, in collaboration with District Human Resources, and develop a shared

understanding of the following: anti-Blackness, anti-BIPOC, and anti-LGBT societal context; intersectionality; institutional and systemic forms of discrimination and inequity; and respectful, inclusive and trauma-informed communication/interview practices. These trainings should extend to the Districts contracted personnel including contracted law enforcement.

- d. Provide employees with proper de-escalation and conflict resolution training to ensure they can successfully carry out these tactics when necessary.
- e. Pilot a behavioral health response team or employ a greater mental health services presence at both campus during day and night courses. Rely on the professionals who are trained to respond to non-emergency mental health issues.
- f. Continue to utilize the Sheriff's Department contract fringe benefits including but not limited to PERT, Homeless Outreach Team, Domestic Violence Experts, and Clery Act Report Mandates.
- g. Ensure that the enforcement personnel employed by or contracted with the District act more as "guardians" than "enforcers," ensuring that they are trained to protect and serve while supporting student success.
- h. Significantly strengthen accountability measures for the District's Public Safety Department, including an anonymous complaint system and creation of an oversight committee comprised of faculty, students, and staff to investigate complaints.
- i. Improve transparency and the use of data to understand how and when campus incidents occur.

2. Weak partnerships, on and off campus

- a. Provide a quarterly report from the Director of Public Safety to the Chancellor's Cabinet or Presidents Cabinet to reinforce the importance of campus safety streamline information and ensure it is correctly flowing to the top which.
- b. Cultural competence trainings should also pull from the scholarship, teachings, and recommendations produced by students and faculty with relevant subject matter expertise in the Cuyamaca College Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Division and the Grossmont College English and Social/Behavioral Sciences Division.
- c. Public Safety outreach to Inter-Club Council and other student organizations and clubs.
- d. Require leadership to participate in the continuity of operations planning and after-action reporting which includes deadlines and follow-ups.
- e. Integrate campus safety activities, including prevention and response, more deliberately with existing campus-based programs that address issues such as mental health, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and drug or alcohol abuse, such as those units within Student Affairs, Human Resources, and Title IX; and pursue innovative models to pair and cross-train public safety personnel with campus practitioners.
- f. Offer to host trainings in campus facilities in return for free attendance for District and college employees.
- g. Work collaboratively with Student Services to improve and invest in services related to basic needs, mental health, and homelessness. Particular investment should be directed toward marginalized and highly vulnerable communities, including but not limited to

Undocumented, International, Native, Black, Brown, Queer, Trans, Neurodiverse, and Disabled groups.

- h. Proper staffing of all campus resources and administrative support, particularly during night courses which run until 10:00 p.m.

3. Insufficient training in all areas of public safety including emergency preparedness

- a. Implement mandatory training for all employees. If faculty and staff are properly trained for responding to campus violence, regardless of the severity, it can ensure lower crime rates and simpler disciplinary measures.
- b. Ensure supervisors, managerial and evening administrators duties include a requirement to provide training as well as obtain it to help them fulfill their roles as Campus Security Authorities or mandated reporters.
- c. Offer train-the-trainer certifications to current employees. Allows for cost saving measures when in-house training is needed and potential earnings when inviting others from off campus.
- d. Explore MOU's with outside agencies that may provide free or low cost training. Often inviting other agencies or sharing the cost is an overlooked, but viable option.
- e. Orient new employees about expectations. Presentations to new staff members regarding campus safety should be part of on-boarding.

4. Limited support or funding for technological and physical improvements

- a. Safeguard the District grounds and campus community with proper public safety staffing. Based on feedback from the District constituents there is a desire to maintain minimal coverage by local law enforcement particularly during evening hours, supplemented with other forms of Public Safety personnel including community service specialists and a broader reach for Campus and Parking Services personnel.
- b. Fund and recognize all functional departments which promote campus safety, such as Public Safety, Facilities, and Student Services. Grant expertise and local partnerships should be utilized to full capacity to bolster budgets and stretch dollars.

Conclusion

Policing and enforcement is often dictated and shaped by legislation, lawsuits, political leaders and public perceptions. Narrowing the District's traditional law enforcement scope and integrating it into a more comprehensive Public Safety Department will help enhance campus safety. This change will signal the intended shift from law enforcement and "policing" toward a broader focus on supporting the safety and well-being of the District's highly diverse campus community. It is important to concentrate on the campus-specific issues and shape policy based on those needs as well as maintain fluidity and transparency. Successful campus safety operations work cooperatively and efficiently with local law enforcement, community organizations, student groups, faculty associations, and other campus constituents. Campus safety should encompass protecting and advancing the overall physical as well as mental well-being of the entire District community – including those groups that have been marginalized, intimidated, or traumatized by various police or other law enforcement personnel, by providing an array of coordinated services, resources, and structures to serve this purpose.

Sources used for information:

UC RIVERSIDE CAMPUS SAFETY TASK FORCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, March 2021

Campus Safety Magazine: UC Riverside Campus Safety Task Force Releases Police Reform Recommendations

Campus Police Reform is a DEI Moving Forward on the Call to Action, Executive Vice Chancellor for Educational Services and Support, Marty J. Alvarado

Timeline and Membership

The task force was formally established in August 2020 and charged with providing the campus preliminary recommendations in April 2021, followed by implementation in May 2021. The task force consists of the following membership and staff support personnel:

Sahar Abushaban, Interim Vice Chancellor of Business Services

Hiam Abdulahad

Elaine Adlam

Gaby Avila Garcia, Supervisor of Campus and Parking Services

Johnny Barner

Nicole Conklin, Director of Public Safety

Tiffany Hungerford, Supervisor of Campus and Parking Services

Tania Jabour

Daryl Johnson

Eric Klein

Anne Krueger, PIO

Frank Laveaga, Supervisor of Campus and Parking Services

Manuel Mancillas-Gomez

Bill McGreevy, Vice President

Matthew Ring

Nicole Salgado, Vice President

Julio Soto

Lauren Vaknin, Dean of Student Affairs

Sara Varghese, Dean of Student Affairs

Natalija Worrell

Enya C, Student Ambassador

Maryam Rammahi, Student Ambassador