



New Jersey Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness **NEWS**

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Campus Security Task Force Recommends Improving Emergency Management Plans, Mental Health Training and Information Sharing

NEW BRUNSWICK — New Jersey’s Campus Security Task Force today recommended to Governor Jon S. Corzine that colleges and universities take steps to improve their emergency management plans, enhance training for mental health awareness and increase information sharing, the Task Force co-chairs announced today.

In accepting the task force report, Governor Corzine acknowledged the pivotal role of Senator Richard J. Codey, who established the Task Force as Acting Governor in April.

“Enhancing the safety and security at places of learning is a priority for this administration,” Governor Corzine said. “Students, faculty and staff at our colleges and universities need to know that government leaders are committed to ensuring their safety on campus. “When fully implemented, these recommendations will establish New Jersey colleges and universities as national leaders in providing campus security.”

“We’ve worked hard over the last few years to make New Jersey a national leader in school safety. The task force’s recommendations will enable us to continue this progress by presenting a straight forward blue print for action to New Jersey’s higher education community,” said Sen. Codey. “While more recent attention has focused on the type of tragedy that took place at Virginia Tech, these recommendations are also helpful in the practical planning of responses to events like public health and weather-related emergencies. I’d like to thank the task force for their hard work in responding to such a sensitive issue in a timely manner.”

In short, the Campus Security Task Force recommended that colleges and universities:

- Amend their emergency management plans to include protocols and procedures for incidents that are likely to occur on campus, such as a person shooting a gun, the making of bomb-threats, and other acts of terror.
- Establish crisis intervention teams and provide mental health awareness training to students, faculty and staff to increase awareness of mental health issues facing campus community members.
- Develop procedures to properly and promptly deliver emergency notifications to campus community members.
- Establish formalized relationships with state and local law enforcement and first responder agencies to improve communication and information sharing practices.



“The Task Force recommendations build on the good work already being done by campus police and public safety departments,” Director Cañas said. “Ensuring that campus security forces maintain well-thought out emergency management plans that include regular communication with state and local partners, will help coordinate emergency response capabilities across all levels of government.”

“The Task Force is to be commended for its work in ensuring that improved security on campus remains consonant with the idea that our institutions of higher learning should be venues for the free exchange of ideas and intellectual exploration,” Executive Director Oates said. “These recommendations are designed to make our state’s college and university campuses safer, but they can be tailored to reflect the unique campus experiences offered at our many diverse and dynamic college settings.”

The Task Force was made up of representatives of college and university campus police, public safety and emergency management offices along with subject matter experts in higher education administration, law enforcement and mental health. It was created by Acting Governor Codey in response to the shootings that occurred that month on the campus of Virginia Tech University. The Task Force was charged with reviewing existing security practices and making recommendations to enhance these practices to prevent an incident like that of Virginia Tech from occurring on a New Jersey college or university campus.

The Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and the Commission on Higher Education will continue to work with colleges and universities to ensure the Campus Security Task Force recommendations are implemented. A copy of the full report along with a complete listing of Task Force members is available at <http://www.NJHomelandSecurity.gov/pdfs/10-02-07-campus-security.pdf>.

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