

SUS Safety Summit

NOVEMBER 2025



Summary

On October 8, 2025, the State University System (SUS) hosted a safety summit for university leadership and Florida College System (FCS) leaders. This event provided an opportunity for collaboration across the state on key safety issues, including building hardening, threat assessment, and communications.

Building Hardening

Following the events of April 17, 2025, at Florida State University, Chancellor Rodrigues requested that universities review facilities to determine if the doors had sufficient locks and that the doors could be locked from the inside of the room. During the summit, university and college leadership discussed enhancing facilities and physical security to reduce vulnerabilities. This included investments in reinforced access points, electronic door control systems, and modernized locking technologies. University leadership also mentioned that new tools using artificial intelligence, sensor-based detection systems, and integrated communication networks can improve situational awareness and facilitate faster emergency responses.

Threat Assessment & Prevention

During the summit, university leadership discussed threat assessment and proactive measures that enable universities to identify, evaluate, and mitigate potential risks before they escalate. Threat assessments can be helpful not only for the teams directly responsible for safety and security on campus but also for senior executive leadership. By spending time to evaluate potential threats effectively, university leadership can be better prepared to address future risks. Aside from identifying behavioral risks, comprehensive threat assessments are implemented to identify defects in on-campus security protocol or infrastructure. The assessment results allow campus officials to address areas of concern on their campus, whether that be a physical space, outdated technology, or ineffective security protocol.

Universities discussed the need for interdisciplinary threat assessment teams that combine expertise from law enforcement, counseling, student affairs, and human resources. These teams play a critical role in promoting early intervention, as they can identify behavioral indicators of distress or intent to harm and provide support before a crisis occurs.

Universities also discussed the potential to share information on behavioral risks across the university, college, and K-12 systems. Sharing information on behavioral risks across sectors would enable law enforcement to be prepared to mitigate any potential risks on campus and better provide support to students in need.

Communications

Communication was another focus of the summit. Universities discussed the value of establishing clear communication hierarchies, ensuring that updates are verified, synchronized, and distributed quickly through multiple channels. A challenge with communication is managing public perception during emergencies, particularly when misinformation spreads rapidly on social media. A strategy to address this challenge is to have key messaging and statements ready to be released and a timeline for releasing communications. Universities also shared strategies for post-incident communication, including balancing transparency with privacy and conveying empathy while providing factual updates.

Conclusion

As part of SUS 30, the System will come together to address critical issues important to Florida. The SUS Safety Summit served as an opportunity for the State University System and Florida College System to come together to address key safety issues for the higher education community in Florida. Through the leadership of the Board of Governors, System collaboration, and interagency support, Florida continues to set a national example for comprehensive campus safety initiatives.

Based on discussions at the summit and recent events on campuses, the following areas are recommended for universities to support campus safety, preparedness, coordination, and communication.

Recommendations	
Building Hardening	• Identify all interior doors that do not lock and a plan for putting measures in place to address these vulnerabilities. • Universities should develop a plan to address rooftop access to ensure these areas are secure.
Threat Assessment	• Establish a comprehensive threat assessment plan and an executive action framework. • Review campus vulnerabilities and threat management protocols regularly to identify and mitigate potential risks.
Training	• Ensure that faculty and staff have annual training to understand what to do in the event of an active shooter or campus threat. This training should include recognizing concerning behaviors and the steps to report these behaviors.
Communications	• Establish preapproved messaging protocols, including a timeline and leadership responsible for delivering messaging, to promote timely, accurate, and efficient communication. • Designate trained spokespersons who can deliver updates in emergencies.
Coordination	• Establish coordination across law enforcement agencies at Florida Colleges, K-12, and local agencies. Regular meetings and communications should occur across these entities regarding threats and behavioral risks. • Continue leveraging partnerships to enhance collaboration, coordination, and resource sharing.
Board Office	• Develop a plan with the Florida Colleges and K-12 to share information on threats and behavioral risks across systems. • Convene meetings of the SUS police chiefs to encourage better coordination across the System regarding safety, threat mitigation, and training. • Identify opportunities for collaboration with state law enforcement agencies. • Convene a follow-up to the SUS Safety Summit for university staff who work directly with safety, student affairs, and campus preparedness.



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