



# MEMORANDUM

Prepared for: Rep. Alonso Leon  
Date: 1/7/2022  
By: Matt Perreault, LPRO Analyst  
Re: Planning Meeting for Task Force

**LPRO: LEGISLATIVE POLICY AND RESEARCH OFFICE**

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This memo responds to your request for a summary of the main points discussed during the planning meeting for the Joint Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education (JTUSHE), also called the “Student Voice Task Force.”

## **SUMMARY**

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A group of stakeholders was convened January 4, 2022 in order to discuss and plan the future proceedings of the Student Voice Task Force. The planning group discussed the main topic areas to be covered by the task force, the format and agenda of site visits, whether visits will be in-person or virtual, and how to appropriately represent the geographic regions and the diversity of students served by Oregon’s public institutions of higher education. The planning group also considered a proposed strategic plan for communications and outreach to promote awareness of the task force’s activities among the intended audience of underrepresented students at Oregon’s public university and community college campuses. The feedback offered by members of the planning group is described in detail below.

## **PLANNING MEETING DETAILS**

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The planning group met on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 9:00 for approximately two hours. The planning group included members from the following groups:

- Legislative task force members
- Staff from the BIPOC caucus
- Employees of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and the Governor’s education policy office
- Representatives of Oregon’s public and private postsecondary institutions of education
- College access organizations
- Culturally specific community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Faculty and staff unions
- Student advocacy organizations
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) specialists at postsecondary institutions
- Financial aid, admissions, mental health, and student support services staff at postsecondary institutions
- Business and industry groups

The meeting agenda began with a presentation from LPRO staff on the task force's statutory charge. This was followed by a breakout group session during which attendees discussed how the task force could address its mission by conducting site visits in-person or remotely and which campuses and regions should be represented in the task force's itinerary, and examined a model site visit agenda based on the work of the Joint Committee on Student Success. Lastly, staff from the House Majority Office gave a presentation on the strategic plan for communications and outreach, which was similar to the presentation to the task force on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The planning group will meet again on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to finalize its recommendations to the task force.

## **DISCUSSION POINTS**

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### **Site Visit Programming**

The planning group divided into two breakout groups to discuss the format and programming of site visits based on a proposed model agenda. One group focused on in-person site visits, while the other considered how to adapt the agenda if the task force decided to conduct site visits remotely. The proposed format for the task force's site visits to college and university campuses is as follows:

1. A series of 1-hour listening sessions with stakeholder and community groups, including:
  - a. Community leaders, such as community-based organizations, business and industry groups, and local government leaders;
  - b. Tenured and adjunct faculty;
  - c. Student support staff, including those who specialize in mental health, disability services, financial aid, admissions, and academic advising; and
  - d. Other campus staff, such as facilities, nutrition, transportation, and housing.
2. A listening session with students from underrepresented backgrounds, in which task force members would rotate through a series of tables to ask questions to small groups of students.
3. Guided site tours of programs on campus that offer unique support services to students. This could include examples of successful programs as well as programs in need of support.
4. A public hearing to receive testimony from students on campus.

Upon review of this proposed model site visit agenda, planning group members offered feedback and suggestions for how best to adapt the model to address the unique needs of underrepresented students. Some of the suggestions included:

- Ensure the participation of college access organizations, BIPOC student leadership, benefits navigators, advising staff, multicultural and veteran support centers, first-generation and Pell grant recipients, behavioral intervention staff, and local school districts, in the listening sessions;
- Consider condensing the listening sessions thematically (e.g. access and affordability, student support, etc.) to ensure a wider array of participation;

- Organize culturally specific student roundtables with students of color to provide safe spaces for discussion;
- Ensure that students from all age ranges are included;
- Proactively reach out to less-engaged students and students who have left without graduating, possibly via academic advising offices;
- Add mental health facilities, childcare centers, CTE centers and career advising offices, and student housing as possible site visits;
- Focus on career counseling, workforce development, and knowledge and skill transfer post-graduation;
- Ensure the participation of local high schools and school district officials, parents, and local business leaders in public hearings;
- Ensure that public testimony can be submitted asynchronously in addition to the live event (e.g. in writing, by video or audio);
- Ensure that accessibility needs are met and planned for, including ASL interpretation and non-English language interpretation;
- Offer childcare services and catering to incentivize participation;
- Consider a hybrid approach to site visits to include both in-person and online events to widen participation; and
- Attempt to reach students through social media on campus as well as through personal invitations from faculty and staff.

### **Site Visit Locations**

The task force will engage in a series of campus site visits across the state during the remainder of the academic year. Site visits will occur roughly monthly, starting in March and continuing through June. The planning group considered the constraints of the academic calendar, including final exams, Spring Break, and the end of the school year, in addition to Oregon’s geographic diversity and the number of college and university campuses. Some of the planning group’s recommendations included:

- Visit certain regions of the state for multiple days with each full day on a particular campus;
- Visit universities and community colleges in the same area to gain a wider perspective;
- Visit the three largest public universities, at least one technical or regional university, and as many community colleges as possible;
- Prioritize institutions that are designated Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) by the U.S. Department of Education;
- Consider visiting each region based on its congressional district;
- Avoid planning site visits during the last two weeks of an academic term or during a break; and
- Consider a regional breakdown that includes the Coast, Southern Oregon, Eastern Oregon, and the urban areas of the I-5 corridor.

Members of the planning group also advocated for certain campuses as candidates for site visits, including:

- Oregon Institute of Technology (Klamath Falls);

- Mt. Hood Community College (Gresham);
- Western Oregon University (Monmouth);
- Chemeketa Community College (Salem);
- Oregon State University (Corvallis);
- Portland Community College (Portland);
- Treasure Valley Community College (Ontario);
- Southern Oregon University (Ashland);
- Blue Mountain Community College (Pendleton);
- Rogue Community College (Grants Pass); and
- Umpqua Community College (Roseburg).

## **Communications and Outreach**

Staff from the House Majority Office presented a plan for communications and outreach to the planning group. This presentation largely mirrored that given to the task force on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The planning group generally approved of the recommendations in the presentation. The communications and outreach plan includes the following components:

- A web page hosted by the legislature;
- Flyers and infographics to be distributed and displayed on college and university campuses;
- Content and graphics for social media;
- Outreach to media outlets, community groups, and on social media platforms;
- Appointed spokespeople and ambassadors willing to promote the task force's activities;
- Approval protocols for ensuring consistent messaging;
- Investments in paid media advertising; and
- Consideration of time and staffing limitations.