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# Bridgewater State to create sex assault task force

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| GLOBE CORRESPONDENT | OCTOBER 17, 2014



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JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

Bridgewater State University will create a task force to look at ways to improve prevention of sexual assaults and relationship violence.

The move was announced weeks after the college was criticized for its initial decision to keep quiet about two reported rapes that occurred there in September.

“Bridgewater State University has no tolerance for misconduct, abuse, or violence upon our community members or on our campus,” university President Dana Mohler-Faria wrote in a campuswide e-mail this week.

Mohler-Faria named more than two dozen people, including administrators, faculty, students, sexual assault survivors, parents, and trustees, to the task force. The group is scheduled to prepare a final report by December.

“I will be asking members to engage in a comprehensive

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discussion concerning how we might improve every aspect of campus safety relative to sexual assault and relationship violence, including matters of education, support for survivors, communications, and any other dimensions pertaining to this critical issue,” he wrote.

He said that in addition to establishing the task force, he has ordered an administrative team to review the school’s policies and notification processes. And he will participate in several open forums.

“We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensure that every member of our community understands their responsibilities, has access to knowledge to keep themselves safe, knows how to report any potential crime or violation, and feels safe in doing so,” Mohler-Faria wrote.

The school came under fire three weeks ago after it was revealed that administrators did not alert the campus community about two reports of rapes, one Sept. 3 and the other Sept. 20.

School officials have said that in each of the attacks, suspects were arrested within a few hours, and that the campus was not notified because there was no threat to public safety.

Two other sexual assaults have been reported at Bridgewater State this fall.

An alert was sent to the campus Sept. 26 about an incident on Sept. 18 and an alert was sent Oct. 7 regarding an incident on Sept. 28. The alerts were issued later because of a lag time between when the incidents occurred and when they were reported to university officials, campus spokesman Bryan Baldwin said.

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