

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Student Advisory Board  
FROM: Charles R. Matthews, Chancellor, Texas State University System  
RE: Response to Student Advisory Board Liaison Report

Thank you for your work and participation at the recent meeting of the Texas State University Student Board of Regents. As campus leaders, it is important to hear your thoughts and ideas in order to better understand student concerns. All of our efforts are for the good of students; therefore, your perspective is greatly appreciated. The Board of Regents, the campus presidents and I also value your contributions to the specialized initiatives such as the Diversity Enhancement Committee. Your insights are especially helpful in discerning the challenges and opportunities we face in making our campuses welcoming places for all students.

Let me also express my appreciation to the 2005-2006 Student Executive Board and Legislative Research Team. The time you devote in these efforts will benefit everyone enrolled in the System's component institutions. Additionally, Mr. Tom Neal is an excellent choice as the SGA advisor, and will be a great asset and advocate for you.

Furthermore, your selection of the motto "Together as One Voice" is appropriate as we address the challenges that lie ahead in higher education. Working with you and the student regent should enable us to serve campus constituents and state concerns in the most efficient manner.

The student liaison report you submitted at the recent board meeting presented many interesting ideas. We appreciate your attention to these matters and I would like to share my thoughts on each.

1. The proposal that Texas State University System institutions make a bid for George W. Bush's Presidential Library is a great idea, but the time has past for that proposal to be made. Additionally, the costs associated with that kind of venture are exceedingly high. Therefore, when one considers the impact on student costs, it may not have been a feasible project even in its early stages.
2. As a way of welcoming students in to the System, you suggested that an official letter from the System office be placed within each component institution's acceptance letter to students. This is an excellent way of letting students know about the larger organization which supports their education. We will look into the costs associated with this as well as the logistics of campus coordination.
3. A magazine for the System is also an excellent idea. In fact, we hope to publicize more events and news about the System through some kind of publication. At present, we are planning for a widely distributed online newsletter. Perhaps this could evolve over time into the printed document you propose.

4. The escalating costs of textbooks and other printed materials are major concerns of everyone associated with higher education. Each campus president is working closely with the bookstores on this matter. The Regents, presidents and I will discuss the feasibility of establishing a campus task force comprised of all stake holders to examine this issue and to compile a set of recommendations for consideration.
5. Student retention is one of the highest priorities for the Texas State University System. Each institution has invested significant resources addressing student success. However, your thoughts of developing strategies to retain students within the System are unique and will be explored.

While each of our campuses has formalized agreements with other institutions of higher education, as a system, we have charged Dr. Ken Craycraft, Vice Chancellor for Academics Affairs, with the task of exploring the various options available related to intra-system articulation agreements.

6. In Texas, the creation of a medical or law school is a very complex, hotly debated and highly politicized issue. Approval is not based just on a Coordinating Board proposal, but also on the basis of need and geographic location.

Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated. It is important for you to be a part of the process as we are in the business of education as partners. Because of the uncontestable importance of an educated citizenry to the future of this state and nation, in 2007, it is anticipated the Texas Legislature will ask many hard questions to those of us who represent higher education. With the added dimension your input brings, we will undoubtedly be better prepared.