

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

STRATEGIC RESPONSE TEAM UPDATE

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

Dear faculty and staff,

I am writing to share an update on the Strategic Response Team (SRT) I established last year in response to federal actions affecting higher education.

The SRT was charged with assessing how federal developments might impact Oakland, including their effects on student success, research, teaching, community engagement, diversity, equity and inclusion and Oakland's core values. The team also reviewed related financial, tax and legal considerations.

To carry out their work, SRT members closely monitored federal developments and reviewed analyses from leading higher education associations, including the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the American Council on Education, the Association of Public Land Grant Universities and the Michigan Association of State Universities. They also stayed in close contact with our peer universities.

The SRT served an important purpose during a period of heightened federal uncertainty. While concerns remain, the pace and intensity of federal actions focused on higher education have eased. For that reason, and after consulting with my executive leadership team, I have decided to conclude the SRT's work as a formal standing team.

Oakland's executive leadership team and Office of Legal Affairs will continue to carefully monitor federal directives and developments, in coordination with appropriate campus partners, as needed. If federal actions affecting higher education intensify, the SRT can be reactivated.

I would like to thank the members of the SRT for their thoughtful and diligent service. Their comprehensive assessments helped ensure that Oakland was prepared to respond to shifting federal guidance and able to act in a way that upheld our mission, maintained the quality of our research and supported a welcoming campus environment.

Although the SRT is concluding its work, our approach to federal directives remains the same: while we will always comply with the law, we will always stay true to our values. That includes safeguarding academic freedom, extending opportunity and fostering a safe and inclusive environment.

During uncertain times, we remained committed to our students, faculty and staff. We will continue to advance higher education as a force for greater understanding, civility and opportunity.

Sincerely,

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.

President, Oakland University