



Student Government Resolution 120.016

A Resolution Related to Emergency Weather Systems Tests

Sponsored by Owen Smith, Voting Senator; Kennedy Cooper, Diversity Committee Chair; Ethan Kershaw, Environmental Affairs Committee Chair; Adam Barker and Tori Woods, Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee Co-Chairs; Santino Bono, Incoming Senator

WHEREAS,

- The Student Government is the official governing body of the Student Association and exists to represent the present and long-term best interests of the Student Association in the formulation of University policy and in the fulfillment of the University's mission; and
- A statewide tornado drill was conducted at 10am on Tuesday, March 2nd, 2021 as part of Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Missouri¹; and
- This event was publicized and promoted by local and state safety officials, media outlets², and universities around the state, including the University of Missouri³ and Northwest Missouri State⁴; and
- On March 2nd, the National Weather Service (NWS) station at Kansas City issued a test Tornado Warning for Adair County from 9:58am to 10:15am⁵; and
- However, on mobile devices, the warning was not identified as a test due to internal errors at the NWS⁶; and
- The weather at the time was not severe⁷; but
- No information regarding this drill was communicated from campus officials to students in the days prior to, during, or after the event; and
- The drill's sirens and lack of severe weather confused students, who, without knowledge of the test, could have believed there was an actual severe weather situation; and

¹<https://www.regroup.com/networks/mo-kirksville/groups/city-news-announcements/posts/statewide-severe-weather-tornado-drill-this-tuesday>

²<https://www.kmbc.com/article/criticism-surrounds-lack-of-drill-messaging-for-severe-weather-emergency-alert-tuesday-national-weather-service/>

³ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ldNIA155ixCuhCJ8mab1HnkQTz-yEnZA/view?usp=drivesdk>

⁴ <https://www.nwmissouri.edu/media/news/2021/02/24tornadodrill.htm>

⁵<https://alerts-v2.weather.gov/>

⁶<https://www.kmbc.com/>

⁷ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ryp1wclLP15LSLfByijWMQ6QwOsCel24/view?usp=drivesdk>

- Persons in interior rooms of buildings or rooms without windows looking outside had no way of verifying the actual weather outside; and
- A lack of clarity and accuracy in emergency alerts can cause viewers to underestimate their importance⁸; and
- Student Government understands reserving the use of emergency messaging systems only for real emergencies, as to make such situations' severity abundantly clear⁹; but
- Infrequent usage of such systems may cause students to forget they exist and lead them to not utilize them appropriately should a real emergency occur; and
- Should a real severe weather event occur, students' lives could be put in danger if students do not quickly react to campus-wide safety instructions; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT:

- Asks DPS to coordinate with Kirksville city officials to publish, on the DPS website and through their various social media channels, the date and time of monthly tornado siren tests in Adair County, which occur at 10am on the last Friday of each month¹⁰; and
- Asks DPS, appropriate administrators, and Student Government to work collaboratively to create a notification for students to be sent via TruAlerts to be sent to students prior to tests of severe weather warning systems (such as tornado sirens); and
- If using TruAlerts is not possible, asks the above parties to craft a campus-wide email or similar alert to notify students of tests of severe weather warning systems; and
- Encourages students to sign up for TruAlerts¹¹ as well as the Kirksville weather alerts via the City of Kirksville's website¹²; and
- Asks the Physical Plant and ResLife to continue to ensure building-specific information relating to procedures during severe weather events are present and accessible in all on-campus buildings; and
- Expresses continued support for efforts by DPS to make campus residents aware of campus-related emergencies;

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT DIRECTS THAT,

Additional copies of this resolution are disseminated to Dr. Sue Thomas, President; Dr. Janet Gooch, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs; Janna Stoskopf, Vice President of Student Affairs; Sara Siefert, Director of Public Safety; Mari Macomber, Kirksville City Manager; Jon Cook, Kirksville E-911 Interim Director; Justin Jones, Kirksville Interim Chief of Police; Sam

⁸<https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/severe-weather-alerts-are-intended-to-protect-people-so-why-do-some-ignore-them/2019/11>

⁹ <https://its.truman.edu/docs/emergency-notification-policy/>

¹⁰ <https://ktvo.com/news/local/are-you-aware-of-tornado-sirens-in-your-area>

¹¹ <https://police.truman.edu/services-programs/trualert-messaging-service/>

¹² <http://www.kirksvillecity.com/alerts>

Guth, Director of Physical Plant; Jamie Van Boxel, Director of Resident Life; the Truman Media Network, and the University Archives.

Passed by unanimous consent, March 21, 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Katie Alexander". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Katie Alexander, President of the Student Association