

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

Lisa A. Rossbacher, Ph.D. President

4 February 2017

Tom Trepiak, Interim Athletic Director
Humboldt State University

Dear Tom:

At my request last fall, the Strategic Edge consulting group assessed intercollegiate athletics at Humboldt State University. As you know, the immediate catalyst for this review was growing budget overruns in Athletics that are projected to increase in 2016-17. The final report concluded, "If athletics is to be maintained at HSU, something must change." I agree, and, as president, I am ultimately responsible for determining what that "something" is and how to implement the necessary changes.

I initially considered convening a task force, but I have concluded that a task force would neither add to the analysis nor uncover new opinions or perspectives that haven't already been voiced. No task force of reasonable size could include all the areas of expertise that are relevant to this discussion, and the process would tend to exclude people who do not live in the area, thus limiting the input in another way. In addition, a task force would extend the time for deliberation and delay the difficult decisions that must be made as soon as possible; the potential delays could further disrupt student athletes and their academic and extracurricular programs.

Therefore, I have decided to seek individual perspectives and advice from a variety of people with a range of viewpoints, with a goal of making decisions as soon as possible this spring for immediate implementation. The process will involve my having conversations – both in person and on the phone – with a wide variety of people and small groups, to invite ideas, potential solutions, and insights into the options. In a sense, this is a "virtual" task force that includes a greater variety of opinion and more people than would be able to participate in a series of local meetings over the next month. I have already started this process, and I plan to conclude the consultations and share my decisions by about March 1.

The primary considerations in the final decision will be 1) providing an outstanding education to all students, including our student athletes, and 2) ensuring financial sustainability for the University and its intercollegiate athletics program.

I am keenly aware of the issues created by the sense of uncertainty surrounding the future of HSU athletics. I am committed to resolving the situation as quickly as possible, while also ensuring broad consultation. This groundwork prior to the search for a new Athletic Director will allow the revitalized program to flourish in the future.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in green ink, consisting of the letters 'LAR' in a stylized, cursive-like font.

Lisa A. Rossbacher, Ph.D.
President