

Group calls for reform of Baylor board of regents

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WACO—A group of prominent Baylor University alumni and donors have launched a nonprofit organization that will seek what its organizers call “wholesale reform” of the university’s board of regents in the wake of revelations about Baylor’s response to sexual violence.

Through social media, Bears for Leadership Reform announced its first public meeting, scheduled at 10 a.m., Nov. 10, in Knox Hall at the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, near the Baylor campus.



Members of the campaign’s board of directors include Drayton McLane of Temple, whose name is on Baylor’s football stadium, and former Gov. Mark White of Houston.

Others include Regent Emeritus Gale Galloway of Austin, former Texas state Sen. Don Adams of Horseshoe Bay, and Houston attorneys John Eddie Williams and James H. “Rell” Tipton.

By Tuesday morning, Nov. 7, more than 5,000 people had “liked” the group’s Facebook page.

In a media advisory, the group’s spokesperson, Julie Hillrichs, said Bears for Leadership Reform “is demanding greater transparency, accountability and wholesale reform of the Baylor board of regents to restore unity and trust with students, their families, the public and the entire Baylor family.”

The campaign is demanding what it calls “common-sense reform of the board of regents involving transparency, appointments, conflicts-of-interest, structure and authority.”

It also is calling for “an open search for a new university president that welcomes input from the Baylor family” and “best-in-class Title IX and sexual-assault response programs.”

The announcement about the Nov. 10 meeting followed about a week after Baylor Interim President David Garland pledged greater transparency.

“We are working diligently to ensure that Baylor University fulfills its mission to be a caring Christian community where our students thrive. As a part of this commitment, I have directed the university to be more transparent whenever possible about the sexual assault crisis that has severely impacted our campus, our alumni and the entire Baylor family,” Garland said.

“Both the administration and the board of regents are taking this step because we came to understand that, in order to heal, the Baylor family needs more information about what happened and why.”

Baylor made available several regents for interviews with multiple media outlets. Dennis Wiles, pastor of First Baptist Church in Arlington, and Neal Jeffrey, associate pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, sat down for an hour-long [interview](#) with the Baptist Standard Nov. 3.

Garland announced Baylor launched a new [webpage](#), www.baylor.edu/thetruth.

“We will be providing more details about what happened at Baylor and about our ongoing efforts to learn from our mistakes and to make the right decisions moving forward,” Garland said.