

# Campus text test yields mixed results

Phone service providers might cause hang-ups in University texting system

BY JULIE WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Cell phone service providers might be getting in the way of a very important message for Truman students.

The University tested its emergency text messaging system March 4, and although Tom Johnson, director of the Department of Public Safety, said everything went as planned at Truman, some hang-ups might have occurred down the line with phone service providers.

"Pretty much everybody got it within an hour, which is about as successful as it can be," he said. "It was off our equipment here within two minutes, but it's just a matter of when the phone service providers can get the message out."

Johnson said a lot of students have signed up to receive the text messages.

"Last I knew, we were right at about 4,500 students, which is actually pretty good. ... That's about two-thirds to three-fourths of our students," he said. "Nationwide, it's been about 30 percent."

Johnson said he placed his name near the bottom of the text messaging list so he would know about how long it took to get from the top to the bottom when the text was sent out. He said it took about 40 minutes for him to receive the text on his phone, but he thinks most people



**In the event of a campus-wide emergency, authorized individuals like Tom Johnson, director of Public Safety, would send out an emergency text message to alert students.**

received the message within about the first 10 minutes.

Matt Farwell, director of technical services for Information Technology Services, said part of the hang-up might have to do with text messaging being more of a best-attempt service than a guaranteed way of communicating.

"Everything left our systems in under three minutes, so it's up to the providers to deal with that and whether or not they can handle that load depending on how busy their systems are," he said. "When-

ever there's an emergency, you need multiple ways to reach people. You can't rely on any one service to deliver messages."

Farwell also said that in an emergency, cellular networks are even busier, and it often will take longer to deliver the messages. In addition, he said there is a chance the messages will not make it to their final destination at all.

In the event of an emergency, Farwell said an authorized individual, like Johnson, would send the message, and then the local server at ITS would take that message and send it to all the people who have signed up for the service. Once it leaves the ITS Internet connection, Farwell said it is up to mobile cellular providers to deliver the message to each individual cell phone.

"It's really a simple process," he said. "Most of the process-

ing and most of the things that can go wrong are out beyond us — it's with cellular carriers and whether or not people have their phones turned on or off."

Junior Amanda Happy said she added her name to the text message list just in case there is an emergency at Truman.

"I haven't thought about it all that much — no one expects that to happen at their school," Happy said.

Although she said she was a little disconcerted that it might take as long as 40 minutes to receive an emergency text, Happy said she understands that sometimes that's just the way technology works. She said she still thinks it's a good way to inform students of emergencies.

"That would be a subtle and safe way of letting me know," she said.

**"Whenever there's an emergency, you need multiple ways to reach people. You can't rely on any one service to deliver messages."**

**Matt Farwell**  
Director of Technical Services for ITS

# Bill would solidify Bright Flight changes

Modifications include minimum test scores, stricter ACT deadlines

BY BLAKE TOPPMEYER  
Assistant Sports Editor

A local lawmaker has sponsored a bill to pass into law select mandates of the Missouri Department of Higher Education about the Bright Flight scholarship program.

Rep. Wes Shoemaker, D-Kirksville, introduced Senate Bill No. 984, which was the subject of an Education Committee hearing on Feb. 20. The bill would modify the Bright Flight scholarship — which awards \$2,000 annually to students from Missouri who meet ACT requirements and attend state public institutions — in several ways.

Wendy Baker, press secretary for the Department of Higher Education, said in an e-mail that the bill, if passed, would make law the existing DHE regulations set to take effect in 2008-09.

"Basically, what this would do is codify what we're doing," Baker said.

Shoemaker said the most important modification is setting a strict ACT test deadline for students to receive Bright Flight money. With the modification, high school students will need to earn a qualifying ACT score by the June test date of their senior year. A student must have an ACT score in the top 3 percent of all Missouri students taking the test to qualify for the scholarship. The qualifying range is a score of 31 or

higher for 2008-09, according to the DHE Web site.

In the past, Shoemaker said there had been some confusion among students about whether they would receive Bright Flight money — confusion that he said the deadline date should eliminate.

"Whenever [the qualifying score] changed from 30 to 31, there were several kids who had taken tests previously in their junior year or sophomore year, and they thought, 'Well, shucks, I got it made,'" Shoemaker said. "And then all of a sudden they didn't, so then it became very important we got a timely date on that."

A student must maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher to renew the Bright Flight scholarship, also according to the bill. The Missouri DHE already has scheduled this GPA requirement to take effect for students entering college next year.

Shoemaker said that right now schools are allowed to set their own renewal guidelines.

"Currently it's based upon what the institution decided, and it could vary, so we just wanted standardization," he said. "[A 2.5 GPA] is probably about where most of the institutions fell in at, but there was nothing in statute to give some clarity — so family and students would know where they would have to fall into to maintain that scholarship."

Sue Neely, interim director of financial aid at Truman, said that as of now the University requires Bright Flight recipients to maintain a 2.0 GPA and full-time enrollment.

She said the University is prepared to raise its requirements to the 2.5 GPA level, starting with incoming students next year when the DHE regulation begins.

Sophomore Drew Van Boening, a Bright Flight recipient, said he thinks a minimum GPA of 2.5 for scholarship renewal is understandable.

"I feel like it's fair because the reason you're getting Bright Flight is because you scored 30 or 31 on the ACT," he said. "And if you're that intelligent that you can do that on such a standardized test, then getting below — in my opinion — like a 2.5, would seriously mean that you're not applying yourself to the best of your abilities."

Other modifications Shoemaker's bill would codify include offering the scholarship to GED recipients who meet ACT requirements and extending the scholarship offer to students for five undergraduate years instead of four.

Shoemaker said it's important to allow students access to Bright Flight for five years so they are prepared for careers.

"The tuition costs have skyrocketed over the past few years, and I'm wanting to capture as many of those MOHELA dollars and put

them back into scholarships that is possible," Shoemaker said.

Van Boening said he thinks it's fair to offer the scholarship to GED recipients and to home school students — whom the bill does not cover — in addition to high school graduates.

"My feeling is that if you get that composite score minimum, no matter what your education background, then you should be eligible for Bright Flight," he said.

But Shoemaker disagreed.

"Some folks wanted to put in home schooling, and I took that out," he said. "I think the GED is as far as I'm willing to go."

The Bright Flight program is scheduled to undergo even greater changes for students beginning college in 2010-11. Beginning in the 2010-11 academic

year, incoming students who have achieved an ACT score in the top 3 percent will receive \$3,000 annually and students in the top 5 percent will receive \$1,000 annually, according to the text of Shoemaker's bill.

Additionally, students who receive Bright Flight, then drop out of a Missouri institution, will be able to renew their scholarship upon re-admittance, as long as it is within 27 months, according to the bill.

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**Rep. Wes Shoemaker**  
D-Kirksville

## NEWS | In Brief

### Adair County arrests two for burglary

Steven M. Cunningham and Christopher L. Covington, both of Novinger, Mo., have been arrested on two counts of burglary, according to a press release issued by the Adair County Sheriff's Department.

The owner of Chevy's Bar notified the sheriff's department on March 18 that 10 30-packs of Natural Light Beer and 30 packs of cigarettes had been stolen from the establishment.

An investigation by the department resulted in Cunningham's and Covington's arrests, according to the release. The two men are being held at the Adair County Detention Facility on a \$25,000 cash-only bond.

### Appellate court will meet at University

The Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, will convene court March 27 at the University, according to a press release issued from that court.

A three-judge panel consisting of Chief Judge Victor C. Howard, Judge Lisa White Hardwick and Judge James Welsh will hear oral arguments in five cases in the Student Union Building Activities Room. The proceedings will begin at 1 p.m., according to the release.

The court has convened at the University on two previous occasions, and in Kirksville on 15 occasions, also according to the release.

The court regularly meets in Kansas City, and its jurisdiction includes 45 counties in northwest and central Missouri.

### Reception will honor swimming team

The Athletic Department will hold a reception in honor of the women's swimming team's seventh national championship in the last eight years.

Cake and punch will be served in the SUB Down Under, room 110 from 3:30 to 5:30 on March 26. The national trophy also will be on display.

## Student Senate | In Brief

- Senate approved a money motion for \$100 to be spent on Red Carpet Runway, a service event sponsored by Phi Sigma Pi. Proceeds will go to the Ronald McDonald House.
- Junior Phil Raine, who represents the Residence Hall Association on the Campus Safety Committee, gave a presentation about the committee's first meeting, which took place March 5. Raine said the committee discussed emergency planning (including an active shooter guide, emergency response guide and an emergency response plan) and facility security systems (mainly door-locking mechanisms in classrooms and automatic locking room doors in the residence halls). Raine said the committee also talked about the possibility of installing security cameras on the exteriors of residence halls and discussed perimeter access. Other topics included lighting and emergency phones around campus, crosswalks, security guards, the Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT) and the test of the emergency text message system.
- Senate first read a resolution that would promote safety education on campus.
- Senate first read a local incentive resolution that would help promote Kirksville businesses among Truman students.
- Senate approved a motion that changes the Student Senate Constitution to include a Senate Vice President in the voting membership of the Executive Committee (to go on Senate's spring ballot).
- Senate approved a motion to amend Senate standing rules and add a provision for students to run for positions that will appear on the future Student Senate Constitution.
- Senate passed a motion that requires candidates running for Senate Vice President to get 200 signatures on their election packet in order to be placed on the ballot.
- Senate approved a money motion for \$25 to be spent on Kirksville Cash as a survey incentive for a survey conducted regarding SUB hours of operation.
- Senate approved a motion to amend the Senate election packet to include requirements for a Senate Vice President.
- Senate discussed standing rules for program budgets. Senator senior Brett Wiley moved to amend the budgetary guidelines to require a three-fourths vote instead of a two-thirds vote to change standing rules.

## DPS | Reports

- 3/18 Report of property damage in Ryle Hall
- 3/18 Eric T. Mosley was issued a Missouri Uniform Complaint and Summons for minor in possession of intoxicants.
- 3/17 Four reports of burglary in Dobson Hall
- 3/16 Two reports of theft in Dobson Hall

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