



**City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey**

**Education, Truancy, Dropout and Literacy**

**Subcommittee**

**MINUTES**

**OF**

**EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE**

**SCHOOL SECURITY WORKGROUP**

**February 20, 2008**

# **The Jacksonville Journey – Education**

## **Education, Truancy, Dropout and Literacy Sub-Committee**

### **School Security Workgroup**

**February 20, 2008**

**1:00 p.m. Meeting**

PROCEEDINGS before the Jacksonville Journey - Education Sub-Committee, School Security Workgroup taken on Thursday, February 20, 2008, Edward Ball Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 851 - 214 N. Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida commencing at approximately 1:00 p.m.

#### **School Security Workgroup**

**Skip Cramer, Chair**  
**Tony Bellamy, Member**  
**Nancy Broner, Member**  
**Bobby Deal, Member**  
**Carolyn Floyd, Member**  
**Joe Henry, Member**  
**Nongongama Majova-Seane**  
**Paul Perez, Member**

## APPEARANCES

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS & MEMBERS:**

SKIP CRAMER, Chair

CAROLYN FLOYD, Member

### **ABSENTEE MEMBERS:**

Tony Bellamy

Nancy Broner

Bobby Deal

Joe Henry

Nongongama Majova-Seane

Paul Perez

### **STAFF:**

Renee Brust

Alice Checorski

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Debra Jahns-Nelsen

Dr. Lawanda Ravoira

Harris Warren

## **PROCEEDINGS**

February 20, 2008

Education Sub-Committee, School Security Workgroup 1:00 p.m.

**Call to Order and Comments.** Skip Cramer, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:15 p.m. at which time introductions were made.

### **1. Purpose of Meeting.**

Discuss the Mayor's crime initiative, *The Jacksonville Journey - Take a Step* Education, Truancy, Dropout and Literacy Subcommittee, School Security Workgroup.

### **2. Discussion Items**

Skip Cramer, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and reviewed the housekeeping notes and Sunshine Law before asking for introductions.

Mr. Cramer then called for approval of the minutes from the February 7, 2008 Workgroup meeting, with one amendment to page 4, "2007 JCCI Quality of Life Progress Report". Carolyn Floyd made a motion to approve and Mr. Cramer so moved to approve the minutes as amended.

The objectives for the meeting were to have Tony Bellamy, Principal, First Coast High School, report on feedback from the high school principals regarding school security, SROs, DCPS police, JSO and the State Attorney's Office. Renee Brust reported that Mr. Bellamy will not be able to attend the meeting today due to a school emergency.

Mr. Cramer distributed a memorandum with the workgroup's draft recommendations. He noted that some of these overlap with other

committees and their recommendations should be forthcoming.

Recommendation #1 - Full Service Schools - currently operating at less than capacity due to the number of referrals and the number of case workers available. The cost is modest as priced by United Way, amounting to approximately \$65,000 to provide 12-month full time social workers. To add the additional mental health staff, the cost is approximately \$720,000 annually for 12 therapists.

Recommendation #2 - Safe Students in Schools (SSIS) - similar to the MARS Program dealing with at-risk students. This is actively being considered by the school board at this time. There are concerns at what level of conduct violations should be enforced. This issue is a decision for the school board, JSO, SROs and the State Attorney's Office.

Recommendation #3 - Out of School Suspensions

Mr. Cramer stated this is one of the areas the Mayor identified when he implemented the *Jacksonville Journey*. We are at twice the rate of out of school suspensions as any of the other urban counties in Florida.

Carolyn Floyd asked if there has been any consideration to cost associated with the out of school suspensions? Mr. Cramer replied he did not know if there is a loss of revenue in the schools. The question is what to do with the 21,358 students while they are in the suspended status?

Recommendation #5 - Crime Watch Programs - Middle and high schools do not have adequate sponsorships. We are looking at the Crime Stopper Program next week. It is necessary to interact with the SROs to help re-cement a positive relationship on the campus.

These officers need to be viewed as role models for the students. Chairman Cramer next reviewed the Problem Matrix developed by the workgroup which identified 18 challenges. Discussion on this document will be held at the next meeting.

Mr. Cramer provided feedback from the Education sub-committee meeting which included the announcement of the timeline for deliverables from the workgroup. Final recommendations with costing are due by March 5, 2008. On March 12, 2008, the full sub-committee will review all of the workgroups' recommendations and prioritize these for the Steering Committee on March 13, 2008. At this time, Mr. Cramer introduced Dr. Lawanda Ravoira, National Council on Crime and Delinquency and the Children's Campaign. Dr. Ravoira was invited to provide highlights of the Blueprint Commission Report on Juvenile Justice. The purpose of the study was to develop recommendations that would focus on reforming Florida's Juvenile Justice system. The recommendations include a 5-year plan with 52 recommendations, 7 guiding principles and 12 key goals. The study was funded partly by the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation. Dr. Ravoira highlighted the report's focus on prevention and early-intervention at the community level. Funding needs to increase to implement the recommendations. There is a need for gender-specific programs as they are seeing an increase in the number of girls in the juvenile justice system. Dr. Ravoira was previously with the PACE Center for Girls at the state level. Over 70% of juveniles in the system are suffering from mental health or physical health needs. There is a 50% or higher turnover of case workers. Private agencies provide 86% of the

services in the system. School-based prevention and intervention efforts are being promoted. The Gun Free Schools Act requires legislation to be passed on the state level. Dr. Ravoira stated that 16% of referrals are coming from the public school system, 66% of which are for misdemeanors. Out of school suspensions make up 46% of the referrals. A recommendation to issue civil citations in teen court is being considered. Palm Beach County has one of the lowest referral rates in Florida, 7.8% out of school compared to 15% in Duval County. The Blueprint Commission is looking at first-time misdemeanors as well as gang prevention. A discussion centered around the function of the Juvenile Assessment Centers and the inclusion of substance abuse, mental health screening and follow up services.

Carolyn Floyd stated that Duval County has two juvenile justice residential facilities that house youth from other counties while our referrals are being sent out of the county. Dr. Ravoira suggested we call for the legislators to conduct a review.

Mr. Cramer asked Carolyn Floyd to write up a recommendation from the state and county standpoint regarding the issue of re-entry for children returning to school. We need to let our legislators know of the need for funding for juvenile programs. The state recommendations for adult substance abuse treatment is \$29 million; \$4.4 for new prison beds, while we are seeing a reduction of \$18 million in the juvenile justice budget.

Dr. Ravoira stated there is a gender-specific initiative in Duval County for girls. They are meeting with local leaders to address how to stop sending girls outside of the county. This will become

a model on how to help our children locally.

In summary of today's meeting, Chairman Cramer suggested the workgroup add recommendations to consider on the next agenda regarding after-school programs that are funded by JCC, United Way and DCPS and include an educational program. There are 55,000 children from low-income families who would benefit from after-school programs, but only 1 in 5 are participating. (i.e. Team Up). Look to extend Safe Students in Schools into After-School Programs. Renee Brust suggested inviting Linda Lanier to attend the next workgroup meeting. Mr. Cramer stated he has asked Ms. Lanier to provide cost and data analysis to expand current programs, focusing on the high-priority zip codes.

In addition to the five draft recommendations, the workgroup supports the immediate reactivation of the Juvenile Assessment Center, mentoring program (other workgroup recommendation; adding social workers and the development of a Truancy team as recommended by the Truancy workgroup.

Carolyn Floyd stated she is satisfied with the workgroup's recommendations. She would like to have a discussion on vocational education alternatives where students can become self-supporting and self-sufficient. She recommends a facility for suspension where they would engage in constructive activities.

Mr. Cramer agreed that there is a need for social workers and guidance counselors to engage students and families.

Renee Brust said that career academies vs. college education is high on the focus of the School Relevancy workgroup. We need to do a better job of advertising to the community that we have 6

career academies in Duval County. This is an opportunity to combine the School Security workgroup's ideas with the Truancy workgroup and recommend a vocational plan to keep students engaged in school.

Harris Warren asked if community agencies have been contacted to assist, to which Mr. Cramer replied that the Intervention and Rehabilitation sub-committee may be looking into this area.

Chairman Cramer stated that at the next meeting, Tony Bellamy will present his report from the principals and we will wrap up our recommendations.

### 3. Action Items

**Tony Bellamy** will present feedback from principals.

**Carolyn Floyd** was asked to write up a recommendation from the state and county standpoint regarding the issue of **re-entry for children returning to school.**

**Invite Linda Lanier** to next workgroup meeting.

Chairman Cramer scheduled the next meeting for **Friday, February 29, 2008 from 12:30-2:30 p.m.** (instead of March 6, 2008).

Finalize recommendations.

**Adjournment.** Meeting ended at 2:50 p.m.