



**City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey**

**Education, Truancy, Dropout and Literacy**

**Subcommittee**

**MINUTES**

**OF**

**EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE**

**SCHOOL SECURITY WORKGROUP**

**February 29, 2008**

# **The Jacksonville Journey – Education**

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

### **School Security Workgroup**

**February 29, 2008**

**12:30 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 12:30 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:**

Alice Checorski

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Debra Jahns-Nelsen, District 3 School Board Candidate

## **PROCEEDINGS**

February 29, 2008

Education Sub-Committee, School Security Workgroup 12:30 p.m.

**Call to Order and Comments.** Skip Cramer, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 12:40 p.m.

### **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 reminder before asking for introductions.

Mr. Cramer then called for approval of the minutes from the February 20, 2008 Workgroup meeting. There was one correction on page 7, line 4, which should read 16%. Carolyn Floyd asked for clarification on the statement "Out of school suspensions make up 46% of the referrals". Mr. Cramer said he would follow up with Dr. Ravoira and provide clarification. The minutes were approved with the one correction and subject to the clarification from Dr. Ravoira.

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. Mr. Bellamy was not in attendance. Chairman Cramer stated we will discuss and approve the draft recommendations at today's meeting.

Chairman Cramer reviewed a timeline for the *Jacksonville Journey* as of February 20, 2008. He stated we will be reporting out the results of this work group to City staff on Wednesday, March 5, 2008 and the report should include our concept paper and fiscal outcomes. The next Education, Literacy, Truancy & Dropouts Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, 2008 at 1 p.m. The subcommittee will prioritize the recommendations that have been brought forward by the workgroups. Our chair, W.C. Gentry will review and report to the Steering Committee on March 13, 2008. The Funding Committee review of the recommendations of our committee is on April 14, 2008. On April 24, 2008, the final Steering Committee review of the recommendations will be held. Implementation with the stakeholders will occur after that.

Mr. Cramer stated the workgroup agreed on the five recommendations that were in the report subject to hearing from Principal Bellamy. There was a recommendation for the following two items:

The expansion of non-fee based after school programs provided by the Jacksonville Children's Commission and the question regarding the re-entry of children who are in the Juvenile Justice System. Mr. Cramer had asked Carolyn Floyd to work with Dr. Ravoira on this item. Linda Lanier, JCC, will be providing data on the cost of out of school programs.

Ms. Floyd reported she had an opportunity to meet with several of what is considered an alternative education specialist at Maddie B. Rutherford. Youth will receive after-school education. There is a concern with children returning from the Juvenile Justice system assigned to alternative education to some it might be

construed as double jeopardy. There is a code of conduct for the alternative education on how the youth get to that program. Any youth who has committed a felony will be considered for the alternative education program. There is a process which includes an appeal. If they feel the child can benefit from an alternative education program, this process is used. If it is deemed that the youth is a threat to public safety or that school, the principal can make that recommendation. If a youth has served his time in a juvenile detention facility he can come back to school. The juvenile justice system looks at each case on an individual basis to ensure that the youth can benefit from returning to a regular public school.

Chairman Cramer stated our workgroup's endorsement or comments on other issues is the final bullet to our recommendations. There are now 6 recommendations that we are proposing to send forward next week. As noted in paragraph three of the February 28, 2008 memorandum from Chairman Cramer to the School Security Working Group, the following general philosophy was applied by the working group: The best outcome is students thriving inside a safe school environment where programs and services result in fully engaged students, lower truancy, absenteeism and dropout rates, decreased conduct incidents, and decreased recidivism. It is about keeping our youth inside structured environments. Mr. Cramer said we will be deciding the priorities we want to suggest.

**Draft Recommendation #1: Bring the Full Service Schools program to full operating capacity. (Lead: DCPS; United Way)**

Chairman Cramer stated that United Way provided information about  
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the expected outcomes and the challenges in running the program at less than capacity. The action is primarily an addition of DCPS full-time social case worker manager at the Full Service School sites. Chairman Cramer stated he received a telephone call from JSO Deputy Chief David Coffman who voiced this as his number one objective. He also endorsed **Draft Recommendation #2** as a priority for the JSO, **Safe Students In Schools**. This is under active review by the School Board. It has been briefed to the Intervention Subcommittee. Many of the concerns with the predecessor program have been addressed. We do not get into the level of infractions that qualify the students. This is being vigorously researched by others. The program is seen as a potentially high impact and outcome program. The fiscal impact is "zero" as provided by DCPS. It is already described in the contract with the SROs.

**Draft Recommendation #3: Reduce or end out-of-school suspensions**

Mr. Cramer said he has made changes dealing with what the fiscal impact would be and some new ideas have come forward in how to deal with those students who have been suspended and are out of school. Since there is a recommendation to expand the truancy centers, would the resources suggest there may be a possibility of providing a structured environment in this setting. It is not clear if there would be.

Bullet two: Nonprofit organization facilities. It was suggested that these nonprofit organization centers could be run on a contract basis with DCPS. Mr. Cramer has received an exchange of

emails with the DCPS that he would like to share. He asked the question about collaboration. From the superintendent, if a non-profit would provide the facility it would be possible to have four centers with two staff at each center for a total cost of \$100,000 per center per year for salaries and benefits. With the Compass Program, off campus instructional learning would be available as well as a focus on emotional and behavioral issues. The program would integrate with expansion of their mentoring efforts. Forty students would be the cap.

Ms. Floyd expressed concern that we should be looking at non-profits in another way. To reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions would be to keep the students in school. If we create four sites, they are still out of school but in other programs.

Ms. Floyd suggested we place the non-profit aspect under recommendation one or two and create an in-house educational plan to keep them in school.

Mr. Cramer stated there is nothing in the recommendation to challenge the superintendents to keep them in school.

Ms. Floyd said how are we going to keep students in school and keep schools safe. We have still not created an action plan per school on how they are going to reduce the out of school of school suspensions. Mr. Cramer stated he will go back to the school superintendent.

After further discussion, Mr. Cramer and Ms. Floyd determined that language is needed in their recommendation to challenge the DCPS to develop a plan that will reduce the number of out of school suspensions at some specific rate (a benchmark to achieve). DCPS

will know what the right number is, since they said the number won't get to zero. For those out of school suspensions, utilize a non-profit center.

Ms. Floyd recommended the creation of possible in-school suspensions as a consideration. If we cost the non-profit organizations at \$100,000, what does it cost for in-school suspension. We get FTE (full-time equivalent) funds of anywhere between \$2-4,000 per student and are these funds being lost while the youth is in another program.

Mr. Cramer agreed that if these children can remain in school, funding out of school facilities could cause the loss of FTE funding. There will be an interesting trade-off. Will that cause their in-school suspension rates to increase? Mr. Cramer will research this with the Office of the Superintendent.

The workgroup changed Recommendation #3 to read: Overall reduction of students receiving out of school suspensions.

**Recommendation #4:** Hiring an additional five School Police staff. The estimated cost update is \$400,000 per year.

**Recommendation #5:** Based on recommendations from the JSO and DCPS, the Student Crime Stoppers Program has worked within other school systems. Regarding cost, we will not get information on this. The person who will be providing this data will not be available until March 20, 2008.

**Recommendation #6:** This recommendation is designed to fill the gap for the hours between 3:00-6:00 p.m. Less than 20% of the target population is being served with either a 3- or 5-day per week

after school program. The emphasis for this recommendation is on academic enrichment. The dollar figure will be provided by the Jacksonville Children's Commission.

In addition to the above, the work group also supports the following:

- Reactivation of the Juvenile Assessment Center based on the Blueprint Commission report provided by Dr. Lawanda Ravoira.
- Expansion of mentoring programs as supported by the superintendent of schools.
- Supporting what the Truancy workgroup is recommending, which is to hire and deploy 30 additional attendance Social Workers
- Supporting what the Truancy workgroup is recommending, which is to develop a Truancy Team.
- Endorse recent initiatives to review policies and procedures addressing education needs of students with in the Juvenile Justice System.

Mr. Cramer stated that is what we are prepared to send forward in draft form to City Staff next Wednesday.

Ms. Floyd asked that as part of Recommendation #6, add an outcome measure to include not just conduct violations but law violations for juvenile crime. Mr. Cramer will add that.

At this time, Chairman Cramer entertained a motion to send forward the recommendations of the workgroup with additions or corrections as determined in today's meeting.

Debra Jahns-Nelsen said she thinks we have addressed providing a supervised controlled environment for out of school suspensions.

Mr. Cramer said he thinks the school suspension piece is probably

the one that will present some significant challenges.

Chairman Cramer adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m. He stated no meeting has been scheduled until after the March 12, 2008 Education subcommittee meeting. We might have to reconvene after that time. He will get the input Tony Bellamy received from the other principals to see if it in anyway effects the workgroup's recommendations.

At 1:35 p.m., it was decided to reopen the meeting to continue a conversation on the after-school programs.

Ms. Jahns-Nelsen asked if we will hear back from Linda Lanier.

Mr. Cramer stated she will be providing the cost data associated with after-school programs. It will be done on a sliding scale similar to the FSS Program. JCC's programs run about \$1,000 per child per year for 5 days of an academically enriched program.

Ms. Jahns-Nelsen said she assumes these after-school programs will be in school. Mr. Cramer stated yes and that is was emphasized that they do not require community centers or new facilities to be built. They will continue in the school environment with available resources.

Ms. Jahns-Nelsen stated she doesn't think the community knows what the Jacksonville Children's Commission does. Chairman Cramer said he would encourage anyone to look at the reporting from the JCC on the work they are doing and the State of the Child in Jacksonville report to get a picture of the challenges they are dealing with as well as the superb efforts they are doing for children in Jacksonville. He ended the meeting by stating he commends JCC and Linda Lanier for her leadership.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

### **3. Action Items**

**Chairman Cramer** will seek clarification from Dr. Lawanda Ravoira regarding her statement on page 7 of the February 20, 2008 minutes: "Out of school suspensions make up 46% of the referrals."

**Adjournment.** Meeting ended at 1:40 p.m.