

**City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey
Increasing School Safety Workgroup**

MINUTES

OF

INCREASING SCHOOL SAFETY

WORKGROUP

February 19, 2008

The Jacksonville Journey – Increasing School Safety

Workgroup

February 19, 2008

3:00 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS before the Jacksonville Journey –Increasing School Safety Workgroup held on Tuesday, February 19, 2008, at Edward Ball Building, 8th Floor – 214 N. Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida, commencing at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Increasing School Safety Workgroup

Joseph “Joe” Henry, Chair

Paul Perez, Member

APPEARANCES

COMMITTEE CHAIR & MEMBERS:

JOSEPH "JOE" HENRY, Chair

PAUL PEREZ, Member

STAFF:

MISTY SKIPPER

DANA OSNAC

GUEST SPEAKER:

DR. WALTER HARRIS

PROCEEDINGS

February 19, 2008

Increasing School Safety

3:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Comments.the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Purpose of Meeting. Chairman Henry began the meeting by introducing guest speaker, Dr. Walter Harris, of the Regional Unit of Florida who is a former principal in Duval County and a former school superintendent in Birmingham, Alabama. In both roles he worked to improve safety conditions in schools.

The workgroup discussed a potential plan to work with school officials, school safety officers, JSO representative and/or others deemed necessary to review existing school safety plans for three Duval County Public Schools to include one high school, one middle school and one elementary school. The review would include examination and recommendations on installation of video monitors, metal detectors, and other technology, visitor policies, School Safety Officer roles and responsibilities, and special events planning and security.

Joe Henry suggested that the schools selected be like: Northwestern Middle School, St. Clair Evans Elementary, Moncrief Elementary, and/or Raines Senior High School. Ms. Skipper recommended considering schools located in areas across the community and distributed a packet on

information of Duval County Public Schools “Zero Tolerance Offenses” that occurred in 2005 thru 2007.

Dr. Harris stated that rules should be articulated to students and parents and school officials should be accountable to the student for enforcing such rules. He went on to state that the reason why he was able to achieve great success as a Principal was that he enforced the rules and regulations student code of conduct by taking part in the enforcement process through such activities as monitoring the hallways for tardy students and enforcing the guidelines for students breaking the rules. School officials are responsible for being effective in this respect. Joe Henry agreed.

Ms. Skipper went over the list and suggested that the workgroup focus not only on bad schools, but also those which are enforcing the school’s rules.

Joe Henry stated that there is no standard enforcement protocol for schools and more police should be hired. As an example, Mr. Henry stated that Raines Senior High School should have and enforce a protocol for how to sponsor special events and visitors on school grounds. He recommended a program for each individual school with the focus on prevention, intervention and enforcement.

Paul Perez asked, “Should the school safety plan include every

school?”

Joe Henry stated, “yes, because after Columbine, schools came up with a plan to have special code to alert school officials when rules are broken.”

Mr. Perez suggested that the workgroup select a specific school, share this with the school administration, and then get in touch with other schools to see what principals could do as an option. Per Mr. Perez, not all schools have the same problem. All agreed that all schools do not have the same problem. Mr. Perez stated that each school should have a briefing relative to their school’s particular issues.

Dr. Harris stated that the key to anything is enforcing and implementing safety policy and practices in school. Schools need authority to enforce the importance of what needs to be done to improve the school’s safety.

Mr. Perez asks that schools provide the workgroup with school safety and security for review. School Resource Officers (SRO’s) he said need to become more professional and know their roles and responsibilities.

All parties agree that there should be an assembly to craft a training program to educate school officials, parents and students on the enforcement laws relating to assaults on school officials. All incidents in schools should

be reported. School officials should not hesitate to report violations of the school rules and regulations.

Ms. Skipper stated the Jacksonville Journey is a group of committees the Mayor put together and that each committee has its own focus.

The workgroup recommended that Ms. Skipper meet with school officials to ascertain school policies. Joe Henry is to determine the focus of the next meeting. Misty Skipper stated that the City is setting up a public website that will post data concerning all areas of the Jacksonville Journey.

Misty Skipper announced that the next workgroup meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 28, 2008, the time is to be determined.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:20 p.m.