

Jonesborough School Security

Meeting Minutes – December 19, 2019

Present: Chief Ron Street, Craig Ford, Vince Swiney – Communications (WCS), Phillip Patrick – Maintenance Supervisor (WCS), Curtis Fullbright – Director of Technology, Safety, and Security (WCS), Mayor Joe Grandy, Russell Jamison -Sheriff's Office Rusty Sells – Director Emergency Management, Jay McCusker-KRA, Bob Browning

Location: Jonesborough Visitor Center Community Room

Bob Browning opened the meeting asking if everyone had a copy of the notes on security from previous meetings, and handing out a page full of questions Browning said were being used to help generate a security plan that would help guide the design of the new Jonesborough School. He said it was important that security was a collaborative process with law enforcement, school personnel including IT staff, and the architect, working together as a team to create the safest environment possible for students, teachers, and school staff.

Jay McCusker of Ken Ross Architects said he wanted to know priorities related to security, and the larger scale measures that might impact design.

Craig Ford said he had studied school security a few years ago, especially at a school in Michigan and the efforts were in keeping outsiders from coming in, and to have people coming in directed to a lobby area in which they could be buzzed into a meeting room where interactions could take place. He said adults needing to access further into the school where chaperoned. The administrative staff had kinetic training to help them read body language. He said body language was a good way to be alerted to someone with ill intent.

Craig Ford also said in front of a school, he felt bollards with decorative covers were a great way from keeping someone from driving a vehicle through the front door. Panic alarms should be considered because if notice through the panic alarm went to the Jonesborough Police and Sheriff's Department it would cut down the response time dramatically.

Chief Ron Street said there should be a parking space out front of the school for the SRO to park and where the cruiser can be seen. He agreed that keeping people out was a priority, and it was important the SRO was in the building and not directing traffic.

Chief Street said cameras on outside doors are important and the video should go to the SRO and the administrative area. He said he prefers a kiosk type arrangement for the SRO where the officer can see the entrance but also see down main hallways. He feels the camera system should be complete enough that the SRO can see what is

going on in and around the school. He suggested people look at the ASR alert system that he feels provides the features needed.

Curtis Fullbright said the fob communication they use at Boones Creek only works while the teacher is in the classroom. He said there can be a panic button added to the fob but the teacher would still have to be in the classroom to use it. Mr. Fullbright said we can get the technology to do what we want in the school; it is just a matter of cost. He said after a certain point, there is a diminishing return.

Craig Ford said there are special programs and activities at schools in which the general public attends, and the school and participants are really vulnerable even if there is an officer at the event. He said he feels there should be better coordination between the school and the Sheriff's Department when those type of activities occur.

Phillip Patrick said if panic alarms are used there would need to be a good teacher training program.

A discussion took place about where the alarm would go to if panic buttons were used. Some people felt the alarm should go to the SRO and administrative area of the school, and if there was an issue either the SRO or someone in administration could make a 911 call. It was discussed that time was a critical factor in an active shooter incident and there could be a good deal of time spent with the SRO discovering why a panic button had been pushed and then if help was needed. A call would then be made to 911, then to dispatch and then to officers. The question was raised about how the SRO at Boones Creek School would take to go from his office to the gym area of the school, and the response was a number of minutes. Craig Ford said false alarms were part of what Public Safety has to deal with, but it was better to respond quickly in a school situation. Also, if the SRO was able to determine there was no problem, he could cancel the emergency.

Rusty Sells said he has been undertaking assessments in the Washington County schools for the last 6-7 weeks looking at emergency response planning. He discussed some of the security steps taken in the different schools. He said in some schools there is an internal threat with special needs students that may have some violent tendencies. He feels communication with teachers should be a priority, as well as to the SRO. He said he has found that SRO's in the school are often not part of the emergency planning process. He feels the SRO's should have more of a presence.

Rusty Sells said the high schools have kiosks outside at the entrance to the schools that have an attendant, and anyone entering the grounds by vehicle have to go through these people. He said there is a RAPTOR system at the guard shack. He feels there is a good system at South Central. There are fire doors on the sides that can be locked down.

Phillip Patrick said he thinks there are 15 outside doors at the Boones Creek School.

A discussion took place about overall priorities for the Jonesborough School from a security standpoint. Costs were discussed in general and Joe Grandy said he feels we should start with a "blank page"; that it was a lot cheaper to plan for the technology in the design as apposed to having to retrofit an existing building to get in what is needed. A discussion took place about fire protection and what could be accommodated in the building design that would allow students within certain areas of a school to stay inside during a fire alarm because there are certain rated fire walls in key locations allowing students in protected areas to stay inside. Rusty Sells said he has asked questions about what has to happen fire code wise to separate areas of the school so an alarm in one area doesn't require the entire school to be evacuated. He said he learned it would take a six-hour fire door protection. He pointed out that there is a big difference between standard fire code regulations and those protections that are needed to reduce the likelihood or prevent an active shooter. There are no formal standards with shooter prevention. He said while people say there hasn't been a child killed by a fire in a school for many decades, the fire code people will say that is because there are standard guidelines and regulations that work. These codes are important but there needs to be more of a balance.

The participants agreed to the following:

1. There needs to be at least one SRO in the school, and they should be in the school or just outside and not directing traffic.
2. Attention should be paid to stacking lanes for vehicles before and after school and enough room should be provided to reduce the need for law enforcement to direct traffic.
3. There should be limited access to the building, but it should not feel like a prison.
4. It would be best to have cameras on the outside of the school building allowing monitoring of all entrance doors, but the main entrance doors must have cameras.
5. The SRO office/kiosk must have monitors to receive video from the cameras as well as the administrative area.
6. The administrative area should have bullet proof glass for protection.
7. The lower levels of glass around the school should have built-in protective bullet resistant film that keeps glass from shattering and allowing entry as well as some protection from non-assault weapons.
8. Natural light in a classroom is essential so it is imperative to think through how normal window placement can take place but still protect students inside from outside attack.

9. Because schools can be designed to lockdown, it is important to have an outside KnoxBox where public safety can get access to keys.
10. There needs to be some thought into how emergency vehicles can get access to the school building when vehicles are stacked waiting for student pick-up.

Bob Browning discussed the need for all parties to work together to develop an emergency response plan for the new Jonesborough School so there would be no question about how different agencies were expected to respond in various situations. All agreed a plan should be developed before the Jonesborough School is opened.

Jay McCusker said after some design elements were developed and options researched, the group would be asked to get back together to provide additional feedback.

Note: There needs to be serious attention to security lighting associated with the school, both inside and out. Also, the use of LED lighting is a major issue long term because of energy costs. Internal security lighting should be a separate circuit or designated so that every light in the building does not have to be on in order to have adequate security lighting. Should classrooms be locked after cleaning with lights out overnight, or should some light be on in each classroom? Because of energy costs there should be attention to only providing the lighting necessary overnight for adequate security.

Jonesborough School Project School System Information

DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO SCHOOL SECURITY – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

- A film is used in certain window applications that makes it difficult for regular (non-assault weapons) firearms to penetrate accurately.
- Ballistic glass was used in the administrative window area at Boones Creek.
- Some of the schools have a buzz-in door system, but once the person's in the school, there is no mechanism to keep them from going anywhere within the school building. Once buzzed-in, they should be where they have to go through the administration area.
- From a procedural standpoint, once students are within the school at the beginning of the day, the school building should be "locked down".
- Entry areas into the school in the morning have to be monitored.
- The presence of the SRO (deputy's) cruiser out in front of the building is a great deterrent.
- SRO officers are frequently asked to direct traffic where school access drives meet public streets. This takes them quite a distance from the school building especially when there is so much foot traffic going in and out of the school.
- There is usually one SRO deputy assigned to a school, and that is throughout the school day. What the SRO does during the school day can vary from school to school.
- The Sherriff's Department has a difficult time at schools with traffic safety when there is not enough vehicle stacking lanes to keep vehicles waiting for child pick-up from backing up into the public streets. The majority of students are brought to and from school in vehicles not busses. Boones Creek School has vehicles backed up almost every day into Highland Church Rd.
- There are 6-7 buses that serve the Jonesborough Schools.
- Bus areas need to be separate from the car riders.
- Classrooms with outside doors must lock behind them when they close with no way to get back in. The teacher and students need to come around to a keyed entrance door. The teacher's key to their hallway door should open the monitored outside entrance door.
- Doors into classrooms can be locked to the outside as long as they have panic bars that allow students/occupants to get out in an emergency.
- Hollow metal doors were used for most doors at Boones Creek K-8.

- Doors into classrooms from the hallway should be close to room corners to give students the protection of most of the classroom where someone outside the door cannot see most of the classroom through the door window. Doors with windows from hallway could have shades.
- To the extent possible, the number of entry points into the school should be very limited, and as close to the administrative area as possible.
- It helps security to reduce the footprint of the school building as much as possible so that it is not so far to get help from one end to the other.
- In a larger school, it will help to color code or name areas so that the code is used to alert emergency personnel where they need to go as quickly as possible within the school.
- Outside school gates can be locked as long as there is a mechanism to get out in an emergency.
- New safety lock systems are being developed and should be researched.
- Classroom doors from hallways need to be lockable (no thumb deadbolts), but with push handle for emergency exit.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Roundabout may help eliminate need for police directing traffic.
- A long right-hand turn lane coming up N. Cherokee Street may help create additional stacking.
- Could have a right-turn bypass lane at round-about to reduce traffic in round-about.
- It may be feasible with drive along athletic fields to use as stacking lanes, for drop-off/pick-up drivers and to have the end section double one-way lanes before and after school.
- The exit lane after drop off could go all the way by athletic fields and then back to traffic circle to avoid crossing in-bound traffic.
- Is it feasible to have a card system entry to activate gates?

COMMENTS FROM JONESBOROUGH POLICE & FIRE DEPARTMENTS

- A SRO kiosk should be considered just beyond the administration area so that the SRO officer can see who comes in the main entrance. It would be helpful if the location of the SRO office could be where the deputy can see down all hallways. The camera system should go to terminals in the SRO kiosk office as well as administration.

- There should be an alarm system that goes to the SRO kiosk or office that alerts the deputy anytime an outside door is opened. If the door is kept open with a door stop or other object, the alarm system should indicate it is still open. This helps prevent a problem if a teacher purposefully keeps an outside door open with a door stop or a student opens an outside door.
- Cameras are critical so the SRO can see what is happening at an outside entrance if the alarm goes off.
- The laminate film on all outside windows is really important because it not only helps deflect a shot from outside the building, but it keeps the glass intact. You want light in the building, but you do not want glass to be easily shot out to allow unwanted entry. The film is designed to keep the glass together.
- If possible, it would be helpful to use glass that you can see out but is opaque from the outside.
- There should be panic buttons in the classrooms and administrative area which go to SRO kiosk/office.
- Anyone allowed in the building after school starts is buzzed in and only has access to administration area. Anyone allowed further should be escorted.
- If SRO can see hallways, it will keep down fights and inappropriate behavior.
- Some buildings have fire doors that shut off areas automatically with an alarm. Could use automatic hallway doors locking with a panic button.
- There should be joint training with the Sheriff's Department and the Jonesborough Police Department so that first responders take the necessary action steps without delay.
- The Jonesborough Police and Fire Departments should have layout plans of the school and any area color or other type coding that would indicate where a problem or possible fire is occurring. Fire alarms should alert the Jonesborough Fire Department as well for fastest response time.
- Sprinkler systems should be inspected well to ensure nozzle heads are set properly where they will not turn accidentally.

ATHLETICS

Conversation with Danny Good, Josh Kite

- Outside entrance location is important because people need to be able to get to bleachers without having to cross the gym floor to get there. A person should be able to go to either side of the gym without being on the gym floor. Ridgeview is poorly designed.