Meeting at Jesse Hall – October 19, 2015

Making Our Students Safe at Mizzou

Attendees: Gary Ward (VCO), Doug Schwandt (MUPD), Mayor Bob McDavid, Ken Burton (Columbia Police Chief), Dee Baebler (Parent and Petition Sponsor)

# Why we are here

* Violent acts are on the increase both on and off campus.
* During a dinner discussion last year, female students told me every one at our table knew a girl who had been raped and/or assaulted. Another girl commented, “Everyone knows someone – it’s nothing new”. This was very disturbing to me. I started talking to other parents. They shared the same story. Parents were shocked.
* I heard of three young men who had been beaten for no reason – near campus. Two of them were lucky to be alive. Parents were emailing and calling with this news. There was frustration and fear in their voices. Why is this happening? Who is listening? What changes are taking place?
* Alumni joined the conversation. This is not the Mizzou many of them remember and cherish – not the Mizzou we want for our children.
* My daughter’s friends are afraid to walk to their home 4 blocks off campus. Everyone has purchased mace or tazers because of this looming fear of home invasions and assaults that have taken place on their street.
* Students are avoiding using the library after dark if they can’t a close place to park unless there is a group of three or more. Two students are no longer enough to feel secure.
* I am here representing this concerned individuals who have offered some common sense suggestions from a mom’s point of view.

# Suggestions

* Safety of our children is the baseline when choosing a college. The university, on campus police and the City of Columbia need to work hand in hand to protect them. In our opinion, a working group of these parties should be established to work on these issues.
* Lighting – Streets off campus are particularly dark. When lights are out, there is little if any response to students. This should be a priority to deter crime.
* Foot patrols and/or police car presence until 4:00 a.m. around and off campus - focusing on safety, not alcohol.
* Busses or other free transportation should be running in the evening taking students around and near campus to and from libraries. We have heard complaints from males, as well as females, who refuse to go into libraries unless they can park near the entrance or in a “safe place”. (Students should not fear utilizing the campus after dark)
* Garages should be required to have a security guard 24/7 and security cameras in place on and near campus. (A lot of crime happens in or near garages)
* Cameras installed at intersections surrounding the perimeter of off campus housing.
* Require landlords off campus to have proper lighting around their property, locks on windows and doors as a requirement at inspection.
* Offer neighborhood watch program instruction.
* Gang activity has been indicated relating to some of the assaults. Is there a gang crime unit specifically dealing with this issue?
* I am attaching a street specific list of suggestions provided by Mizzou alumni who are most familiar with the campus and near campus.
* I reached out to other parents and alumni who were likewise concerned. This Petition is manifestation of those concerns: [https://www.change.org/p/mizzou-administration-and-city-of-columbia-mo-improve-safety-and-security-of-mizzou-students-immediately?recruiter=190895821&utm\_source=share\_petition&utm\_medium=facebook&utm\_campaign=share\_facebook\_responsive&utm\_term=mob-xs-share\_petition-custom\_msg&fb\_ref=Default](https://west.exch032.serverdata.net/owa/redir.aspx?SURL=..&URL=https%3a%2f%2fwww.change.org%2fp%2fmizzou-administration-and-city-of-columbia-mo-improve-safety-and-security-of-mizzou-students-immediately%3frecruiter%3d190895821%26utm_source%3dshare_petition%26utm_medium%3dfacebook%26utm_campaign%3dshare_facebook_responsive%26utm_term%3dmob-xs-share_petition-custom_msg%26fb_ref%3dDefault)
* Feedback on all these items is requested. Timeline?