

MEMO **February 14, 2006**
To: **Albany Board of Education, City School District of Albany, NY**
From: **John Cutro, Yusuf Burgess, Dennis Mosley**
Re: **Youth Violence Intervention Restorative Conferencing**
 Impact Summary 09/21/2005 to 02/02/2006

During the 4.5 months from 09/21/05 to 02/02/06 a total of 8 Youth Violence Intervention Restorative Conferences associated with 6 significant clusters of directly related incidents were facilitated, with two in progress, directly involving 131 conference participants. Over 68 pre-conference assertive community engagements and interventions, including face-to-face home-visits and telephonic outreach to those at the epicenter of the violence occurred in connection with these 6 incident clusters. A short-term, strength-based case management approach augmented the natural community resource leveraging aspects of the restorative conferencing process.

These restorative conferences enabled virtually all participants to develop and express shared understandings they would not have otherwise. This is the change from the behavioral baseline of “shared misunderstandings” we intended to produce. Conferences produced other positive impacts beyond this primary performance target.

Six Incident Clusters	Conferences Facilitated	Participants Involved	Pre-Conference Engagements	Hours Invested	Impacts beyond virtually universal expression of shared understandings
Fatal shooting and 4+ subsequently related fights in school and community	3	54	23	64.6	Direct participation of victim’s family and key community stakeholders in violence intervention & prevention. Youth connected with appropriate services.
18 month series of fights between 2 rival groups of female students	3	49	28	52.8	Per school security director, 90+ days without a significant incident between conference participants
Gang recruitment related stabbing and 5+ subsequent fights among students and others	1	14	10	18.1	Interference with recruitment process, parent supported PINS diversion and family supported community relocation of at-risk youth.
Series of 4+ fights between two students and others in community involving display of baseball bat and knives	1	9	4	5.0	Per teacher, 10+ days with both students now getting along. Written safety plan signed by conference participants, including family of both students, teachers and staff.
Series of ongoing fights in school	In progress	4	2	3.1	In progress
Dispute between two students involving display of knives	In progress	1	1	0.6	In progress
Totals	8	131	68	144.0	

Investment in this project has been a collaborative effort among the Albany City School District, Trinity Institution, The Rhodes Memorial Fund and the International Institute for Restorative Practices. Less than \$8,000 of the \$18,000 patchwork investment remains. In the context of an increasing need for short-term strength-based case management and referral as an integral part of post-conference follow-up, **ongoing stable investment is required to keep this project afloat beyond April 2006.**

Other Developments:

Connie Fenton, social worker at Guilderland Central Schools, and John Cutro are currently training 3 Albany City School District social workers from Harriet Gibbons High School, Philip Livingston Magnet Academy and Hackett Middle School as conference facilitators, alongside 25 Averill Park School District administrators, faculty and staff.

The International Institute for Restorative Practices will be traveling to Albany in February to videotape interviews of past conference participants for educational and training purposes.

For more information, contact John Cutro: 518 256-8422 jcutro1@nycap.rr.com