

## MEMO

To: Amerita Tell  
From: Kelly Riley  
Date: February 14, 2000  
Subject: Janet Akers: Vicksburg/Warren School District

Mrs. Akers originally called on February 4 concerned w/ Vicksburg/Warren school district's renovation of 5 schools, particularly two elementaries: Redwood and Warrington. Apparently, large older windows were being replaced w/ much smaller windows. Mrs. Akers said that parents had expressed their concerns as to safety and lighting to the school board. Parents are concerned that the decreased lighting will affect test scores and performance. The administration says that the smaller windows will help w/ energy bills. I phoned Michael Ellis @ SDW who referred me to Rigina Ginn (91028) because the matter concerned facilities.

Mrs. Akers phoned on 2/7 to let me know that the architect is Bill Tompkins of Tompkin & Barron Architects here in Jackson. She phoned on 2/10 to let me know that the work is going to start on the window at Redwood Elementary on 2/14.

Mrs. Akers sent me 2 packets of information regarding studies of light in the classroom and letters from parents and faculty supporting the large windows in the classroom. These documents are attached.

Bill Welch, SDE Supervisor of School Facilities (91028) phoned me on 2/10 to let me know that SDE had sent the Deputy State Fire Marshall to the schools to check out the renovations. All work complies with life safety codes and building codes. Mr. Welch said that any concerns revert to the local district due to the work complying w/ all state regulations.

I spoke to Mrs. Akers on 2/11 and explained that the work met w/ all safety regulations and standards. She understood. While discussing the parents' accountability of the school board, she mentioned that they have filed to be a "Parents for Public Schools" chapter. I told her that the organization had had great success in Jackson. She thanked me for our office's assistance in getting SDE to review the project and to send the Deputy Fire Marshall.

This case is closed.