



**GREETINGS BY**

**MR. OMAR SWEENEY**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR-JSIF**

**AT THE**

**Launch**

**of**

**Safe Passages (Safe Routes to School) Road Safety Club**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 09, 2022**

## Salutations:

- Master of Ceremonies, Mrs. Anna-Alecia Lawrence,
- Hon. Fayval Williams - Minister of Education and Youth,
- Hon. Audley Shaw - Minister of Transport and Mining,
- Hon. Fayval Williams, Minister of Education and Youth,
- Mr. Gary McKenzie, Assistant Commissioner of Police and Head of Public Safety and the Traffic Enforcement Branch – Jamaica Constabulary Force,
- Ms. Charmin Shand – Acting Assistant Commissioner of Police and Head of the Community Safety and Security Branch – Jamaica Constabulary Force,
- Ms. Mona Sue Ho - Senior Manager, Social Development- Jamaica Social Investment Fund,
- Principals representing the seven beneficiary schools:
- Mrs. Casmin Chambers – Principal of the Treadlight Primary and Infant school
- Mrs. Norma Brydson – Principal of the Salt Spring Primary and Infant School,
- Mrs. Jennifer Solomon - Principal of the August Town Primary school,
- Mr. Robert Gordon – Principal of the Bickersteth Primary and Infant school,

- Ms. Kadian Gordon – Principal of the Greenwich Primary school,
- Mr. Anthony Grant – Principal of the Hope Valley Experimental Primary school, and
- Mr. Dane Julius – Principal of the Roehampton Primary School,
- Students who are representing the beneficiary schools,
- Members of my very hard-working JSIF team,
- Friends in the media, and
- Support staff.

I bring you warm greetings on behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund.

I am pleased to join you in launching a venture that aims to educate and empower students about the need to be safe while they traverse to and from school.

In 2021, the JSIF through the Government of Jamaica funded Integrated Community Development Project II (ICDP-II), commenced the Safe Passages Project, to provide safe routes for students who attend ten primary and infant schools across Jamaica, as they travel along specific

thoroughfares in the vicinity of school campuses. Since then, this project has achieved positive results in enhancing road safety in these communities.

I am confident that the Road Safety club in schools that is being launched today, will serve as a veritable tool to teach children the importance of being responsible road users in the future. This will go a long way in instilling in them a positive road safety culture and ultimately preparing them to be road safety ambassadors in their home, school and wherever they go.

The essence of the Road Safety Club in schools is to teach students the importance of safety as they traverse busy roadways. It is envisioned that the Road Safety Clubs in schools will serve as an agent of socialization and change, through the coordination and Implementation of Road Safety Awareness activities. These clubs will advocate for road safety, motivate children to respect the rule of law, promote road safety in the schools and wider community and act as points of contact for local media

for road and safety issues relating to the schools, as well as contribute to the development of a road safety plan for their schools.

We want to bring up our children to become safe road users. By participating in these clubs, students will be exposed to the rules and regulations of the road, thereby making them responsible future road users. The impact of these clubs will have a multiplier effect as knowledge, attitudes and positive behaviours on road safety can be diffused throughout the schools, family members and community members.

Seven schools will receive Road Safety Clubs, which complement the ICDP Safe Passages Project, which saw a total of J\$155 million being invested to provide safe routes for children as they travel to and from school. That project included a comprehensive public education component as well as an infrastructure component including the installation of Pedestrian crossings; electronic pedestrian crossing signs; traffic signs; guard rails; construction of sidewalks and access ramps;

painting of curb walls and murals to reinforce road safety messages and some instances, the resettlement of vendors to locations off the sidewalks. The road safety clubs will help to oversee the maintenance of the Safe Passage Routes. I therefore ask the principals who are here today, to encourage as many students as possible to get involved with the Safe Routes to School Safety club.

Let me conclude by thanking the Road Safety Unit at the Ministry of Transport & Mining and the Jamaica Constabulary Force's Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch for their many other efforts to improve road safety in Jamaica. I would also like to thank our other partners on this journey; the Ministry of Education and Youth, the various Municipal Corporations and Community Development Committees, for making this event possible. Together, we can all make Jamaica's roads safer for everyone, especially our children. I wish everyone an enjoyable day ahead. Walk and drive good.