



Date: February 15, 2023

To: **Broward County School Board**

Lori Alhadeff, Chair

Debra Hixon, Vice Chair

Dr. Allen Zeman

Daniel P. Foganholi

Torey Alston

Sarah Leonardi

Dr. Jeff Holness

Brenda Fam, Esq.

Nora Rupert

Subject: Rezoning Plans for Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School

We are writing to express our disappointment with the Broward County School Board's vote on February 7, 2023, to approve the C-4 proposal, which will affect Coral Springs families zoned for Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (MSD).

Your decision to rezone for a single school, as opposed to a strategic regional approach that best meets the needs of all students, signals your lack of support for the City of Coral Springs.

Furthermore, the expeditious manner which this plan was moved forward and voted on is a clear message that the consideration of students who reside in Coral Springs is less than those who live in the neighboring City of Parkland.

We mention expeditious, because you moved these plans for rezoning forward so rapidly yet failed to finalize or execute a fair and equitable agreement this school year with Broward County law enforcement, including Coral Springs, for School Resource Officers. In Coral Springs we provide officers at **19 traditional public schools**, protecting more than 20,000 students.

We can all agree that the safety of all schools is paramount and should be the greatest priority with regards to funding and resources.

The board failed to respond to or follow through with our written request for the installation of a playground at James S. Hunt Elementary School. Our city's first school, which educates our most underserved population, is deserving of the simplest of requests for a safe, secure playground to improve emotional, social, and physical well-being of students.

On October 28, 2022, city staff contacted the Demographics & Enrollment Planning Department to share a concept and seek guidance about our city's Cornerstone development. The goal, to rezone that area in order to prevent current residents who are zoned for MSD from having their boundary changed.



The response we received from Director Jill Young, *“Since there are no current students living in the area of the proposed Cornerstone development, moving this area alone would not provide any enrollment relief for Marjory Stoneman Douglas High. Therefore, this proposal by itself would not meet enrollment impact considerations.”* In public statements the Coral Springs Downtown development was mentioned as a contributing factor for the board’s decision, which city staff attempted to mitigate.

As a Commission we have worked to collaborate and effectively communicate with Broward County Public Schools, including the Superintendent and board members. In Coral Springs, city staff host regular Principal and Parent Education Group meetings, all with a goal to improve education, safety and aesthetics of aging schools. The recent decision by the board diminishes what we believed was a mutual effort to be good community partners for the betterment of **all** children and families.

As a result of the rezoning vote by the School Board of Broward County, we have established a communication plan for affected residents that are understandably frustrated with the members of the board who voted in favor of this decision. Our goal is to ensure they receive timely information for future BCPS meetings so they can have their voices heard.

We are formally inviting you to attend a City Commission meeting in the near future so that our constituents can hear directly from our school board representatives about the future of public schools in Coral Springs.

In the interim, we have directed city staff to develop a needs assessment of our **19 traditional public schools**, review the resources that are being provided to public schools in Parkland and complete a review of all agreements between the School Board and Coral Springs. These action items will be reviewed at an upcoming Commission Workshop.

We have asked ourselves, have the voices of our residents who participated in two community forums held at Coral Springs Middle School on October 3 and November 3, 2022, truly heard? Both meetings were well attended by Coral Springs residents who brought forward concerns and proposals, which does not appear to have impacted the board’s final decision.

In closing, our residents deserve a path forward from Broward County Public Schools that ensures equity, collaboration, long-range planning, and fiscal responsibility to meet the city’s mission to be the premier community in which to live, work and raise a family.

Sincerely,

Scott J. Brook
Mayor

Shawn M. Cerra
Vice Mayor

Joy Carter
Commissioner

Nancy Metayer Bowen
Commissioner

Joshua Simmons
Commissioner