



# Pasco County Schools

Kurt S. Browning, Superintendent of Schools

7227 Land O' Lakes Boulevard • Land O' Lakes, Florida 34638

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April 27, 2018

*Sent via email to [jjs1791@gmail.com](mailto:jjs1791@gmail.com)*

*And regular U.S. Mail to:*

James J. Stanley  
3632 Durrance Street  
Trinity, FL 34655

Re: Your e-mail correspondence sent April 19 and 20, 2018, and request for Workshop

Dear Mr. Stanley:

Thank you for the referenced correspondence to Mr. Chris Williams, Director of Planning Services for Pasco County Schools, in which you requested a workshop via e-mail on April 19, 2018, and again on April 20, 2018. This correspondence is the School District's response to those requests.

As you are likely aware, pursuant to section 1001.41, Florida Statutes, it is within the authority of the School Board, after considering recommendations of the Superintendent, to assign students to schools. As Superintendent, it is my duty to advise the School Board and to make sound recommendations to it regarding the efficient operation of District schools in consideration of the best interest of all its students.

Changes to the process, which were occasioned in part by recent litigation, have more closely aligned the District's process with other State Agencies subject to Florida Statute Chapter 120. The District also followed this revised process with the recent rezoning required by the conversion of Ridgewood High School to Wendell Krinn Technical High School. It is my understanding that you are familiar with this process because you attended the workshop for this rezoning.

The District's revised process utilizes a workshop to facilitate the public's access to District staff, and to make staff available to respond to questions from the public. The workshop also provides a more informal opportunity for the public to meet with representatives of each of the departments involved in formulating the recommendation, and to interact with representatives of each affected school to obtain information of interest regarding other opportunities available.

At the workshop, the public also had access to a form whereby those who wish can provide feedback, comments, and suggestions regarding the matter. This form was also available online at the rezoning tab of the District website. All input received is subject to public record laws, and it is provided to the School Board for consideration as part of its quasi-legislative function in the process.

Mr. Williams and staff have advised that you attended the workshop at J.W. Mitchell High School on March 12, 2018, that you e-mailed the School Board members on March 4, 2018, and proposed a Lower Cost Regulatory Alternative and requested a draw out hearing, and that you completed an electronic feedback form and corresponded with district staff on numerous occasions. At the workshop, both District and School based staff were available to receive public input and to answer questions regarding the rezoning. All substantive input received by the District, including substantive input received at the workshop, is included with the information presented to the School Board for consideration prior to the public hearing. It is also my understanding that you have discussed your concerns directly with the Board.

Your correspondence and requests both preceded and followed my announcement of my recommendation to the Board. Indeed, you specifically referenced the differences between staff's recommendation and mine in your e-mails. To be clear, my recommendation did not change anything from staff's recommendation related to your neighborhood; it simply removed the western boundary of J.W. Mitchell High School and Seven Springs Middle School (initially recommended by staff) from being recommended for rezoning.

As you know, the next part of the process was a public hearing scheduled before the School Board, at which time the School Board had another opportunity to hear additional comments, feedback, and input from the public before making its final decision on the matter. You attended the public hearing on April 10, 2018, and heard my comments regarding the rationale for my recommendation. You also made comments to the School Board regarding your concerns and objections to my recommendation.

Your latest submission indicates the numbers of students in the existing areas of Longleaf, Ellington and Sienna Woods would remain stable over the next three years. That statement may be true; however, as Mr. Williams pointed out during the public hearing, the percentages of school choice in these neighborhoods attending Seven Springs Middle and J.W. Mitchell High schools are expected to decrease over the next few years. This will result in fewer students at these two schools under my proposed plan.

Rezoning Asturia to River Ridge schools in place of Longleaf, Ellington and Sienna Woods may be similar in number but not in distance. The distance from 3632 Durrance Street to J.W. Mitchell High School is approximately 3 miles and to River Ridge High School is approximately 7 miles. This distance from the entrance of Asturia to J.W. Mitchell High School is approximately 7 miles and to River Ridge High School is approximately 12 miles.

You also state that address verification should be done. As Mr. Gadd has stated, that process is being done, however, the ultimate number of students that may be reassigned as a result is still undetermined. You also indicated that you understood Mr. Gadd to state that he turned over a file to the Property Appraiser, with approximately 3,800 addresses, that may be homestead exemption fraud. It appears that you misunderstood Mr. Gadd's statement. We did turn over approximately 3,800 addresses to the Property Appraiser however, these were the total number of records of students attending Seven Springs Middle and J.W. Mitchell High schools. There is no expectation that there will be 3,800 cases of homestead exemption fraud. As Mr. Gadd stated in the public hearing, at that time, we had narrowed the list of **potential** fraudulent addresses to approximately 120 between the two schools. This does not mean that all of these addresses will prove to be fraudulent either for attendance in our schools or for homestead exemption. This number simply represents the number of cases that may be investigated further by that office.

In addition, you questioned the District data for Asturia. When Mr. Williams and his team reviewed Asturia to compile the growth spreadsheet, they determined the following. Asturia was originally approved for 1,183 total units (440 of which were planned to be multi-family). When Asturia came in for their school concurrency reviews they came in for 668 single-family homes and 322 multi-family (Integra Junction) which is a total of 990 units. At the time the Planning Department compiled the spreadsheet, Asturia had built 146 single-family homes and the 322 apartments. This leaves a remainder of 522 single-family homes to be built. That would leave a remainder of 193 units unaccounted for. Based upon our historical experience, it is reasonably common that developers do not build a development to the full extent of their entitlements for a variety of reasons. At the time, Planning Department assumed Asturia was not going to build anything additional, but that remains to be seen. Regardless, to the extent that buildout has impact on the current proposed boundaries, it will be addressed at that time. By then, other District changes to programs may otherwise affect the impact.

The School Board's final deliberation and action are currently scheduled to occur at a subsequent public meeting on May 1, 2018, in the School Board Room, Building #3, 7205 Land O' Lakes Boulevard, Land O' Lakes, Florida 34638, in order to give the board an opportunity to assimilate and consider all relevant materials received through the workshop and public hearing process.

The School Board is the body charged by the law of the State of Florida to ultimately make the determination to assign students to schools. Pursuant to the statutes indicated, as well as applicable School Board bylaws and policies, the School Board has both the obligation and ability to consider any information presented to it as part of its quasi-legislative function in the existing adoption process.

In closing, I have reviewed your most recent request for a workshop. After considering these materials, I do not find that there has been an affirmative demonstration that the current process fails to provide adequate opportunity to protect your interests in this matter. As such, I do not find that another workshop is necessary at this time, and as such, the revision process will not be suspended. You had the opportunity to, and in fact did, participate at the public hearing on April 10, 2018.

In light of the foregoing, please accept this correspondence as an explanation why the workshop you have requested is unnecessary, and why the current process is fair and adequate to protect all involved interests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurt Browning". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping tail.

Kurt S. Browning  
Superintendent of Schools