

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-233

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COCONUT CREEK, FLORIDA, URGING THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO FULLY FUND SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS FOR EVERY SCHOOL WITHIN BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, AND TO FULLY FUND THE TOTAL COSTS FOR SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS FOR EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL WITHIN BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes, district school boards are responsible for the health, safety, and welfare of their students and "shall formulate and prescribe policies and procedures, in consultation with the appropriate public safety agencies, for emergency drills and for actual emergencies, including, but not limited to, fires, natural disasters, active assailant and hostage situations, and bomb threats, for all students and faculty at all public schools of the district comprised of grades K-12;" and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature amended Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, following the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School mass shooting incident, to state "[f]or the protection and safety of school personnel, property, students, and visitors, each district school board and school district superintendent shall partner with law enforcement agencies or security agencies to establish or assign one or more safe school officers at each school facility within the district, including charter schools;" and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1006.12(1), Florida Statutes, school districts may satisfy their requirement to establish or assign safe school officers by implementing a School Resource Officer (SRO) program through a cooperative agreement with law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, the City of Coconut Creek fully supports the continued use of cooperative agreements with local law enforcement agencies where local law enforcement officers are used as safe school officers in schools located within their local jurisdictions rather than the School Board hiring their own safe school officers; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1006.12(1)(b), Florida Statutes, "[s]chool resource officers shall abide by district school board policies and shall consult with and coordinate activities through the school principal but shall be responsible to the law enforcement agency in all matters relating to employment, subject to agreements between a district school board and a law enforcement agency. Activities conducted by the school resource officer which are part of the regular instructional program of the school shall be under the direction of the school principal;" and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1006.13(1), Florida Statutes, "[d]istrict school boards shall promote a safe and supportive learning environment in schools by protecting students and staff from conduct that poses a threat to school safety;" and

WHEREAS, Section 1011.62(13), Florida Statutes, created a safe schools allocation to provide funding to assist school districts in their compliance with Sections 1006.07 - 1006.12, with priority given to safe school officers pursuant to section 1006.12 and each school district shall receive a minimum safe schools allocation in an amount provided in the General Appropriations Act; and

WHEREAS, the School Board of Broward County (Broward County School Board) is responsible for providing safe school officers in all 334 Broward County schools, including charter schools, which is a critical component to ensuring and maintaining the safety of children and educational staff at schools; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County School Board does not have sufficient human resources to provide the necessary safe school officers as required by Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, at each school facility within the Broward County School District; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County School Board has entered into agreements with multiple law enforcement agencies throughout Broward County to establish a School Resource Officer (SRO) program and to assign one (1) or more safe school officers at each school facility within the school district, including charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the annual cost per SRO includes the salary, benefits, vehicle, and other related ancillary expenses that the police officer incurs when assigned as a SRO at a Broward County school; and

WHEREAS, through the agreements with the local municipality law enforcement agencies, the Broward County School Board is only funding a fraction of the total costs of the SROs, effectively leaving each municipality's taxpayers, including the City of Coconut Creek's residents, to fund the balance of the cost of the SROs, which amounts to double taxation to the taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, for Fiscal Year 2021/2022, the salary and benefit cost for the City of Coconut Creek School Resource Officer program was \$1,697,760, which represents the City's pro-rated cost for the 10-month period in which SROs are assigned exclusively to Broward County schools, not including costs for vehicles, computers, uniforms, and training; and

WHEREAS, for Fiscal Year 2021/2022, the Broward County School Board funded \$758,880 of the Coconut Creek School Resource Officer program cost, which when subtracted from the full program cost requires the taxpayers of the City of Coconut Creek to fund approximately 55% of the salaries and benefits for the ten (10) month period, in addition to, but not limited to, the vehicles, computers, uniforms, training and supervisor costs; and

WHEREAS, the cost of each safe school officer should be the responsibility of the Broward County School Board and the inadequate funding of the safe school officers/SRO program places an additional unfair burden on the local municipalities equating to an unfunded mandate; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, the Broward County School Board is responsible for the safe school officers program and should increase the funding per officer, including salary and benefits, utilizing the average cost amount the municipalities in Broward County; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School mass shooting, the Broward League of Cities formed a School and Community Public Safety Task Force, which discussed the disparate funding of SROs across Broward County, difficulties with schools whose students do not come from solely from one (1) municipality, the inadequacy of the safe school allocation to cover current costs, and the municipalities continuing to bear too great of a financial burden for SROs. The final report recommended that: "the School district must increase the amount it participates in the cost of SROs. Actual costs are well above the current participation amount. There must be a permanent, stable, and dedicated funding stream to ensure a uniform SRO program in all BCPS and Charter Schools;" and

WHEREAS, millions of dollars' worth of funding from a 2018 referendum approving a 0.5 mill property tax for the Broward County School Board are set to expire. This 0.5 mill property tax currently funds school security personnel among other things; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County School Board anticipates receiving an additional \$227,000,000.00 per year in revenue, now that the August 2022 ballot referendum passed increasing its funding from 0.5 mill to 1.0 mill property tax; and

WHEREAS, due to significant increases in property values in Broward County, the Broward County School Board will receive even more revenue from the proposed increase in property taxes than previously estimated; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County School Board has approved a plan to spend 75% of the referendum funds on increasing staff pay and has further committed to spending up to 17% of those funds on school safety, including hiring 500 safety personnel; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County School Board's commitment to spend up to 17% of the referendum funds on school safety and safety personnel should include a commitment to increase the funding towards the SRO program provided by the municipalities; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, the Florida Legislature passed legislation imposing additional unfunded responsibilities and burdens on local law enforcement agencies. The new law mandates emergency drills for active assailant and hostage situations, bomb threats, and natural disasters and requires all law enforcement officers, including SROs, who are responsible for responding to schools during emergencies such as school shootings to be physically present on campus and directly involved in emergency drills. The law further requires all law enforcement officers, including SROs, who are assigned to public schools to complete mental health crisis intervention training using a specified curriculum. However, funding for this additional training is not provided and thus results in an unfunded mandate for municipalities that provide SROs to the Broward County School Board; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County School Board will be reviewing its budget for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year and will be allocating its ad valorem taxes as well as the additional funding it receives via special levy and the safe school allocation provided in Florida's General Appropriations Act to fund safe school officers/SROs; and

WHEREAS, in the Broward County School Board's budget for Fiscal Year 2022- 2023, the City of Coconut Creek strongly urges that the Broward County School Board fully fund the safe school officers program/SRO program, on a per officer basis, to more accurately reflect the cost of the officers assigned to Broward County schools.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COCONUT CREEK, FLORIDA:

Section 1: That the foregoing "WHEREAS" clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this resolution.

Section 2: That the City Commission hereby urges the Broward County School Board to fully fund the safe school officers program/SRO program through the existing cooperative agreements with local law enforcement agencies utilizing police officers from the jurisdiction in which the schools are located instead of establishing their own force.

Section 3: That if any clause, section, other part or application of this resolution is held by any court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, in part or in application, it shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion or applications of this resolution.

Section 4: That this resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted this 8th day of December, 2022.

Joshua Rydell, Mayor

Attest:

Joseph J. Kavanagh, City Clerk

Rydell	<u>Aye</u>
Welch	<u>Aye</u>
Tooley	<u>Aye</u>
Railey	<u>Aye</u>
Brodie	<u>Aye</u>