



16 June 2020

Boise School District – Board of Trustees and Leadership via Email:

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Re: Harris Ranch Elementary School

Members of the Boise School District Board of Trustees,

This letter has been drafted to advise you of the growing frustration and concern on the part of the Barber Valley Neighborhood Association (BVNA) membership regarding the recently announced delay in the completion of the Harris Ranch elementary school. The 2017 bond measure enjoyed great support from the residents of Barber Valley based on the clear need to invest in neighborhood schools and communities throughout the district. We were disappointed that the Harris Ranch elementary school was not identified as a priority Boise School District project. With current classroom limitations at local schools and projections for a large influx of new residents in the next five years, we are concerned that any delays will compound the frustrating problem of classroom availability for our existing and future families.

Secondly, we are also writing to offer our help in opening a dialogue between the families directly affected by this decision and the BSD board. BVNA is a well-organized, experienced and very active neighborhood association, recognized by the City of Boise, Ada County and other local government agencies as the entity to represent Barber Valley's neighborhood interests. Our role keeps us very busy digesting development and zoning changes in our neighborhood. The BVNA is in a unique situation because of the 'Master Plan' in Harris Ranch (SP-01) that provides assurance and predictability with development. Many of our neighbors moved here due to the appeal of a professional development plan that included a new elementary school as one of the priorities of that plan. Reducing the priority of the elementary school during the aggressive residential build out of Harris Ranch negatively impacts the students in Harris Ranch and other neighborhoods in Barber Valley.

In spite of the COVID-related concerns, construction rapidly continues for new residential development in the Barber Valley. For example, in the last two weeks, the BVNA has testified in support of two preliminary plat applications that will include 446 housing units in high density apartment/condos and will be located close to the new school site. Current data shows that by the year 2024, approximately 1,200 additional residents will have moved into Barber Valley. With only 55% of Harris Ranch currently built out, and more development being approved, permitted and built, we need to move ahead with plans for this school so that when the remaining 45% is completed, there's a school for the children to attend. Current class sizes at Riverside and Adams elementary are larger than ideal and unable to accommodate our current residents' children.

Finally, the BVNA board and its membership believe that we should not delay the building of this badly needed school. The BVNA believes that the residents and families of Barber Valley are excited for the Harris Ranch elementary school to be built now more than ever. With the additional acreage recently gifted for this school site by the Harris family, the voter-approved bond dollars, and the urgent need TODAY for classroom space, and instructional stability for our children, we feel time is of the essence and strongly encourage your board to move forward with the plans to build the Harris Ranch school by fall of 2022. We thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,
Barber Valley Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

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