Shepherd Elementary School
Parent-Teacher Association
7800 14th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20012

March 21, 2000

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OFFICE OF ZONING
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Sheila Cross Reid
Chairperson
D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: BZA Application No. 16556

Dear Chairperson Reid:

I am writing on behalf of the Shepherd Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association (Shepherd PTA) to express its opposition to Application of Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1, for a special exception from the provisions of Section 206 to establish a private school for 215 students and 32 teachers and staff in the R-1-A District at 7712 16th Street, N.W. (Square 2745-D, Lot 802) and in the R-1-B District at 7701 16th Street, N.W. (Square 2739, Lot 804). Specifically, it is my understanding that the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations provide that a special exception can be granted only if "the private school shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby properties because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions." 11 DCMR 206.2 (1999). As proposed, the JPDS is objectionable because of the traffic congestion that it is likely to generate and will adversely affect the safety and welfare of students attending Shepherd Elementary School (Shepherd).

Shepherd is less that 750 feet from the proposed JPDS. Specifically, Shepherd is located on the eastern portion of the block bordered by Kalmia Road on the north, 14th Street on the east, Jonquil Street on the south and 16th Street on the west. Shepherd has an enrollment of approximately 365 students and 45 teachers and staff. Of this population, approximately 85% travel to and from Shepherd by car. Although the school day officially begins at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m., due to "before-" and "after-school" activities and the operation of a "before-" and "after-school" program at

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Shepherd, children and staff begin arriving as early as 7:30 a.m. and leave as late as 6:30 p.m. The highest volume of traffic exists from 8:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. and again from 6:00 until 6:30 p.m. (when the after-care program ends).

Shepherd presently is trying to address the problem of traffic congestion. An unacceptable number of Shepherd parents park illegally when dropping-off or picking-up students. Even without those few inconsiderate parents, traffic is frequently at a standstill or grid-locked on all three adjacent streets simply as a result of those parents that legally drop-off or pick-up their children. In addition, 14th Street serves as a major conduit for employees at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC). The combination of Shepherd school traffic, WRAMC traffic and local residential traffic during morning rush hour has already threatened public safety and welfare. The addition of JPDS traffic to the existing congestion problem will certainly erode public safety and welfare beyond reasonably tolerable levels.

Last, I ask that you find little credibility in the JPDS' assertions that its parents will not use Kalmia Road or 14th Street because these are the only thoroughfares that connect directly with Georgia or Alaska Avenues, respectively, from the proposed JPDS site. Moreover, it seems seriously doubtful that JPDS can ensure that its parents will not use the streets directly adjacent to Shepherd during the peak congestion periods especially when those parents, like all others, are often rushing to avoid being late for school, work or picking up their child. Human nature cannot be ignored. However, the current JPDS traffic plan clearly ignores human nature and that ignorance fatally undermines the credibility of JPDS' traffic plan.

Thus, I oppose the JPDS proposal because of the likely adverse impact that JPDS traffic will have on Shepherd Elementary School and the immediate community served by Shepherd.

Sincerely,

Presley R. Reed, Jr.
President

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To BZA	From Shepherd PTA
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