March 11, 2000

Ms. Sheila Cross Reid, Chair
District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, DC 20001

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF ZONING
00 MAR 13 P4:00

RE: Case No. 16559

Dear Ms. Reid,

My husband and I are writing in support of the proposal by The Field School to relocate its program to 2301 Foxhall Road, NW. We are parents of a sophomore in the school and live in Cleveland Park.

We believe that educating children is the most important activity that a community does together. Citizens of a community must support local public schools through its taxes, volunteerism and goodwill. Further, since there are not enough places by far in the public schools to educate all of our children, and since the public school system is troubled, we must extend our goodwill and neighborliness to area private schools.

I have worked for half a dozen schools over the past fifteen years, both public and private, urban and suburban, from elementary through high school. One fact stands out: there are too few schools for the rapidly expanding school-age population. If this city were to lose any one of the schools that has recently gone before the BZA to plead for a zoning exception, all the other schools would suffer and the families of this area would face a real panic.

The Field School program provides an excellent education for its 200 students in extremely challenging surroundings. During the year I worked on that "campus," I climbed to a garret office up two flights of stairs, often threading my way around students spread out over the stairway to take a test. The art studio is so constricting that the elbow of one student is a constant threat to the painting goals of an adjacent student. The drama program is greatly restricted by the size of its Carriage House location. Parents eager to see their children perform close their eyes to the hazards of squeezing into that overcrowded space to join the overflow audience. Lunch is a sprawling picnic in which students with paper plates and cups cover every square inch of public space in the main building.

We urge you to grant The Field School the exception required to relocate to the Cafritz property. I have listened to the arguments against the move by a few of the Foxhall Road residents and I am dismayed by their selfishness. Any protestor there who has been a parent has driven his children into some other neighborhood for education. My neighborhood is one of the most likely places, where Sidwell Friends, the Cathedral Schools and the Maret School are all within walking distance. As I exit my neighborhood in any direction, I compete with cars dropping off students at those schools.

We all love to live within convenient distance of the offerings of this city and we want out children to be schooled nearby. Therefore, schools are an appropriate part of the geography of our lives, whether we are in Cleveland Park or on Foxhall Road.

Thank you,

Katherine L. Stevens

Katherine L. Stevens
3500 Quebec Street, NW, Washington DC 20016

L. Nye Stevens

L. Nye Stevens

BZA
Case No. 16559
Exhibit No. 179

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16559
EXHIBIT NO.179