Testimony of R. David Hall
Before The Board of Zoning Adjustment
March 29, 2000

Good Afternoon Chairperson, and members of the Board. I am pleased to appear here today with my wife Dayle Walden Hall, and my son David Jr., an 8th grader at The Field School, to testify in support of the application of The Field School for the use of the Cafritz property as the new location for the main campus of the school.

As a former school principal, and former President of the Board of Education, in the District of Columbia, I believe that I have had an opportunity to view school related issues from the public and private perspective.

The Field School is a very unique, college preparatory school, with a philosophy of student development that radiates the positive values of its founder and educational leader, Ms. Elizabeth Ely.

The small class sizes, super staff, close integration of academic preparation, literature, art, music, and sports have all become part of an educational gem, known as The Field School.

The student body is made up of young people who are becoming the responsible adults of our community. I cannot even imagine any student at The Field School being disrespectful to parents, teachers, or members of the community.

Anyone who has been to the science fairs, parent meetings or simply watched the character of these students at work or play would be impressed with the educational community that has been created.

The school is now located on Wyoming Ave. N.W., where there are embassies, one hotel and yes even Councilwoman Carol Swartz lives in the 2000 block of Connecticut Avenue...and not even one complaint has been received by any council member concerning a student at The Field School. They have been good neighbors at this location and would continue this tradition on Foxhall Road.

This application is supported by honest and earnest attempts to eliminate the fears and apprehensions conjured up by those who oppose this application. However, the facts are clear. There are only 211 students enrolled in the Field School. 24 seventh graders, 26 eighth graders, 46 ninth graders, 33 tenth graders, 45 eleventh graders, and 37 twelfth grade seniors. You could hold the senior prom in a 20 by 30 room!

It is a human characteristic for people to be afraid of the unknown. However in this case their fears have no basis in fact. Clear evidence exist that this proposal is not a disruptive use of the property, but rather a benign use.

BZA
Case No. 16559
Exhibit No. 366
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
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Finally, I submit that our city is a mixture of cultures and traditions, it is an international place, a world capital, not a provincial village. In this the nation's capital, there is a place for this school, with its small student body and excellent staff, and it should be at the Cafriz Mansion on Foxhall Road, in Washington, D.C.!

I respectfully ask this body to consider the facts, not the fears and approve this application.