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April 3, 2002

Geoffrey Griffis, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

RE: BZA Application No. 16852
St. Patrick's School – 4925 MacArthur Blvd.

Dear Chairman Griffis and Members of the Board:

As a Grade 6 teacher at St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School, I write to offer my support of the proposed use of 4925 MacArthur Boulevard by St. Patrick's School. Over the course of my five years of teaching Grade 6 students at St. Patrick's School, I have seen first-hand the need for further educational opportunities for children in the District of Columbia grow. Many talented, bright young students I've had the pleasure to teach have reached the Grade 6 level and found themselves with limited, sometimes no, options for continuing the same type of education they received here at St. Patrick's.

Through my years of working with these students and their families, I have noticed a clear need for expanded options in education for our children. Each year at parent-teacher conferences, I've listened to countless parents lament the absence of a St. Patrick's option for their rising seventh graders. In the past I've only been able to nod my head in agreement. Last year, after all of our Grade 6 students had completed their applications elsewhere, St. Patrick's was finally able to answer the need for expansion. This year for the first time, students have gone into the process knowing that continuing at St. Patrick's is an option. This knowledge has made such a difference to St. Patrick's families and students searching for the same co-educational church school setting and excellence in education offered at St. Patrick's.

St. Patrick's is a school with a clear mission to instill in young people the values associated with caring for a community and recognizing their place as vital, contributing members of that community. In line with that mission, I am pleased to see that St. Patrick's is offering a strict set of conditions to avoid any negative impacts on the neighborhood, and that the Grades 7 and 8 program will include a strong community service component.

Ask any of my students, those who plan to stay on at St. Patrick's *and* those planning to pursue other options, and you will find one unanimous opinion—St. Patrick's Grades 7 and 8 is a very good thing for young people in the District of Columbia. Such a program should be welcome in Palisades, which has always existed as a vital, dynamic, and welcoming home to families, schools, and community-minded individuals. For my students, their families, and indeed the health of our neighborhoods and our city, I urge you to approve St. Patrick's application.

Sincerely,

Julia Smith, Grade 6 teacher

BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 101
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.101