ST. PATRICK'S EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL
CARPOOL INITIATIVE

1 May 2002 Draft

Purpose

At the core of the Carpool Initiative is an effort to change families' fundamental approach to delivering children to—and retrieving them from—St. Patrick's School, an approach that currently undervalues carpooling. That effort best begins with the afternoon carpool, where St. Patrick's can more effectively structure its first, more aggressive measures in this area and assess the results, so most of the procedural changes below are dismissal-based. However, St. Patrick's will institute additional arrival-based measures based on what it learns from the results of the dismissal-based measures, particularly if the educational and marketing efforts, as well as financial incentives for families with both Nursery School and Elementary School students, fail to achieve stated morning goals.

Goal

The immediate goal of the Carpool Initiative is to increase the average vehicle occupancy (AVO) of students dropped off at the Whitehaven Campus from the current morning AVO of 1.39 and the students picked up at the Whitehaven Campus from the current afternoon AVO of 1.34 and to an AVO of 1.60. This initial goal results from discussions with DDOT, based on the calculation which, when applied to arrival carpool, results in no net increase in vehicles with the addition of vehicles carrying Grades 7 and 8 students to the Whitehaven Campus.

[Notes regarding the Carpool Initiative's focus on dismissal measures: 1) With respect to both the length and persistence of queuing along Whitehaven Parkway, the dismissal process is by far the more problematic. Using driveway dwell time as an indicator of steady carpool flow, the Wells & Associates traffic analysis puts the average morning dwell time at 58 seconds and the average afternoon dwell time at two minutes and 35 seconds, more than two and a half times longer. 2) Afternoon dismissal provides us with an opportunity to study the effectiveness of preferential dismissal times, for which there is no appropriate corresponding morning mechanism. 3) Because student trips originate from the school, monitoring compliance with preferential dismissal times will be more direct, and the possible need to move to financial disincentives more apparent.]

Plan Elements

The Carpool Initiative will be comprised of several elements, including:

- community education,
- carpool marketing,
- preferential afternoon dismissal times for carpooling families,
- financial incentives for families with both Nursery School and Elementary School students at arrival time,
- monitoring success in meeting AVO goals,
- financial disincentives if the program fails to meet its minimum AVO goals and monitoring mechanisms for parental compliance, and
- further monitoring success in meeting AVO goals.

BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 295

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.295

Community Education

This program component, which will begin in the spring of 2002, will consist of:

- a series of letters to families (currently enrolled and enrolled for the 2002-2003 school year) and *Thursday Bulletin* articles informing them of the results of the Wells & Associates traffic analysis, particularly with respect to carpooling, and establishing carpooling as a clear priority—an expectation, in fact—of the school; and
- details of the Carpool Initiative, preferential dismissal times for carpooling families and financial incentives for families with both Nursery School and Elementary School students.

Carpool Marketing

Under the revised procedures for this Carpool Initiative, the school will mail a separate transportation packet, on or about July 1, with a letter that reminds parents that carpooling is a clear priority—indeed, an expectation—of the school, reiterates the preferential dismissal times for carpooling families and financial incentives for certain families at arrival time, and strongly encourages parents to form carpools—perhaps the same carpool—for mornings and afternoons. (Existing databases enable the school to aggregate addresses in a manner that will be helpful to parents in forming carpools.) The school will revise the Dismissal Request Form, which will be included in the July 1 transportation mailing, to begin compiling information concerning arrival carpool plans.

School personnel will follow up with families, once they have submitted the Dismissal Request Form, especially those families who have indicated they will be picking up one student at dismissal time. School personnel will encourage those families to form carpools and will suggest other families with whom they might form carpools.

[In the past, during the summer registration period, parents have been asked to submit a Dismissal Request Form, which authorizes dismissal of students to particular programs or individuals. (The school issues carpool numbers based on the Dismissal Request Form.) According to prior procedures, parents received a letter in early to mid July encouraging them to form carpools, a student zip code directory for assistance in forming those carpools, and the Dismissal Request Form, along with a variety of other school information.]

Preferential Dismissal Times for Carpooling Families

Based on the revised Dismissal Request Forms and on follow-up marketing efforts, the school will know whether or not it has met its afternoon goals before the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year, likely by September 1, 2002. If the school has met those goals, or if those goals still appear attainable given the incentive of preferential dismissal times, the school will institute the preferential dismissal times in September 2002. Regular dismissals begin Monday, September 9, 2002. Preferential dismissal times will begin on that date. If those goals do not appear attainable, based on the revised Dismissal Request Form, the school will consider a system of financial disincentives, but will institute preferential dismissal times in any case.

Currently all cars retrieving students at day's end, regardless of how many students, can arrive beginning at 2:40 p.m., with dismissal beginning at 2:50 p.m. The dismissal process generally concludes at approximately 3:15 p.m. (On Fridays, parents can begin arriving at 11:50 a.m. to pick up only Nursery students, at 12:10 p.m. to pick up Nursery and Elementary School students, and at 12:20 p.m. to pick up

only Elementary School students. The Friday dismissal process generally concludes between 12:30 and 12:40 p.m.)

The Carpool Initiative provides two preferential dismissal times, based on the number of students in a carpool. Cars retrieving three or more students may arrive beginning at 2:45 p.m., with dismissal of students beginning at 2:50 p.m. Cars retrieving at least two students may begin arriving at 3:00 p.m. Cars retrieving one student may begin arriving only after 3:15 p.m. Cars arriving earlier than their allotted times will be directed to return at the proper time. The school will adjust preferential dismissal times based on the response to this initiative in order to provide preference to those carpools retrieving the largest number of students.

On Fridays under the Carpool Initiative, parents could continue to arrive at 11:50 a.m. to pick up only Nursery students. Cars picking up Nursery *and* Elementary School students or *three or more* Elementary School students could begin arriving at 12:10 p.m. Cars picking up two or fewer Elementary School students could begin arriving at 12:20 p.m.

Achieving Morning Goals

Attainment of morning goals will be apparent only with actual observation of arrival carpool, which also begins its regular operation Monday, September 9, 2002. The school will conduct those counts for the first time in late September 2002. The following section identifies one financial incentive to help the school achieve morning goals.

Financial Incentives and Disincentives

St. Patrick's is studying the use of financial disincentives for not carpooling if the Carpool Initiative outlined above fails to enable the school to achieve its minimum AVO goals. However, any program that increases the cost of attending St. Patrick's, such as financial disincentives, will have a disproportionate impact on families with the least ability to pay, especially those families that participate in the school's Financial Aid Program.

The Carpool Initiative does involve one financial incentive that would immediately increase the vehicle occupancy for certain families and reduce the overall number of vehicle trips to St. Patrick's—eliminating the Early Arrival Program fee for Nursery School students who have older siblings in the Elementary School, Kindergarten through Grade 8. Some families may now choose to make two trips, one on either side of 8:00 a.m. for their Elementary School children and the other around 9:00 a.m. for their Nursery School children, rather than pay the $750 fee. (Some families choose not to participate in the Early Arrival Program so that their Nursery children will not have such a long day.) Of the roughly 30 families (considered a low number, compared with previous years) with children currently in the Nursery School and the Elementary School who might participate in the Early Arrival Program for their Nursery children, 17 families (57 per cent) participate in the program. Without the fee for families who have both Nursery and Elementary school children, perhaps more such families would participate. Using current figures, St. Patrick's might be able to accomplish about 25 per cent of its morning goal through the use of this particular incentive.

A disincentive under consideration is requiring parents to pay an annual fee (amount to be determined, but perhaps $750, with proceeds benefiting the Palisades Community Fund and other service initiatives) for not participating in the carpool program. If the school finds it necessary to move to financial disincentives, parents would sign a contract with the school indicating their participation in the carpool program or else pay the annual fee. Preferential dismissal times for carpooling families would continue,

even if the school moves to financial disincentives to achieve its minimum AVO goal. The school reserves the right to exercise discretion in assessing the annual fee, based on financial or geographic hardship.

Performance Monitoring

Monitoring of the effectiveness of the Carpool Initiative will be undertaken randomly by the school beginning in September, through surveys of AVO during arrival and pick-up times at the Whitehaven Campus. School personnel will conduct surveys on a regular basis. The school will ask Wells & Associates to conduct AVO surveys at randomly selected arrival and dismissal times in October and December, as well as in the late winter and spring. The results of these surveys, which will be shared with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D and DDOT, will be used to determine if program goals are being met and, if not, to determine if amendments to the carpool program are required.

Plan Review

St. Patrick's will seek further review from ANC 3D and DDOT and of the Carpool Initiative, of an substantive revisions in the Carpool Initiative, and of data from monitoring of the program.

Carpool Initiative Timeline *through fall 2002*

Spring 2002 (May 15 through June 1) Letters to families, *Thursday Bulletin* items regarding Carpool Initiative as outlined above.

July 1, 2002 Transportation packet mailed to families. Contents include a letter reiterating the school's expectation that families form carpools and further explanation of preferential dismissal times for carpooling families and financial incentives for certain families at arrival time, a student zip code directory or other aggregation of addresses to assist parents in forming carpools, and a revised Dismissal Request Form.

August 19, 2002 Due date for submission of Dismissal Request Form.

August 19 through September 9, 2002 School personnel continue carpool marketing with families who have indicated they will be picking up one student at dismissal time.

September 9, 2002 Preferential dismissal times begin.

Late September 2002 School personnel conduct first AVO survey.

October and December 2002 (and winter and spring 2003) Wells & Associates conducts AVO surveys.

November 2002 Evaluate need for financial disincentives based on October dismissal AVO survey and implement as needed. Evaluate need for further arrival-based measures based on October arrival AVO survey and implement as needed.