4240 Nebraska Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20016

July 8, 2003

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

Re: CASE #: 17022 Edmund Burke School Expansion Application

Dear Chairman Griffis:

I am writing to ask your support of the Edmund Burke School's application to expand its facilities that is to be heard by the BZA on July 15, 2003.

Since Burke's prior application was rejected by the BZA last year, Burke has made many changes over the past year to be responsive to the concerns of the DDOT, the ANC and the school's neighbors.

The school has instituted a multi-faceted transportation management plan that has significantly reduced neighborhood traffic and congestion for over a year now. This plan includes carpool-only drop-offs, designated drop-off areas, incentives for public transportation use, a shuttle bus service, and off-duty Metropolitan police who help to ensure smooth traffic flow. Moreover, Burke's proposed new building will alleviate traffic even more, due to two levels of onsite underground parking and dedicated drop-off lanes entirely on the school's property.

Burke is requesting a modest increase in enrollment to 320 students. This number would be attained only if Burke met stringent traffic requirements, monitored by a committee of neighbors and Burke representatives. Burke has also responded to concerns for greater accountability and compliance by instituting a series of steep fines and penalties if the school does not meet its obligations. This enforcement plan is unprecedented among schools, and even prompted the *Northwest Current* in a recent editorial to voice support for Burke's application this time.

Burke has worked hard to foster better communications and more productive relationships with its neighbors. It convened a neighborhood advisory group that has met at least monthly for over a year now and has provided valuable input to Burke's plans.

Next week you will hear from Burke's presenters about the ways Burke has sought to demonstrate its responsiveness to its neighborhood. You will also hear from several of Burke's neighbors who do not feel that ANC-3F reflects their views. Indeed, I am disappointed that the ANC-3F did not vote to support Burke. The ANC evidently was

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unable or unwilling to move beyond its deep-seated animosity toward the school to recognize the progress and good-faith efforts the school has made. I hope the BZA will recognize the soundness of Burke's proposal and approve the school's application without delay.

Burke has been a valuable city institution for over 30 years. With thousands of families relying on private education and demand for these schools increasing, urban private schools like Burke need to be able to renovate and modernize in order to sustain quality educational services. We need schools like Burke to keep our neighborhoods vital and to continue to attract and retain District residents who will contribute to our city.

Burke's expansion plans are modest, reasonable and responsive to the neighborhood. Please approve Edmund Burke School's application #17022 without delay.

Sincerely,

Melinda Halpert

Melinda J. Halpert