July 11, 2003

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

Re: Case No. 17022

Dear Chairman Griffis:

I am writing to urge you to support the application filed by the Edmund Burke School to expand its facilities near the corner of Connecticut Avenue and Upton Street. I understand that the application is scheduled to be heard by the Board of Zoning Adjustment on July 15, 2003.

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 that resulted in the rejection of Burke's application last year by the BZA. For over a year, the school has instituted a traffic management plan that has dramatically decreased traffic volume and congestion on Upton Street. The plan provides incentives for public transportation use, a morning shuttle bus service (which I personally use by dropping two Burke students at the shuttle bus each morning), carpool-only drop-offs in front of the building, specified drop-off points for non-carpoolers that are monitored by school staff and parents, and the continued presence of off-duty police in the morning and afternoon. The plan is working, and as a Burke parent, I will continue to follow the necessary traffic requirements incumbent on an urban school.

Burke's new building and traffic plans will further reduce traffic congestion in the neighborhood. Cars will only be able to enter the school from Connecticut Avenue, not Upton Street -- and loop around the school -- entirely on the school's own property. This triples the space available now for drop-off & pick-up and creates a lane that does not encroach on the public alley. Rather than the current five spaces in front of the school on Upton St, we will have room for up to 15 cars at drop off/pick-up -- again, all on Burke's property. In addition, with the new building plan, Burke's on-site parking will increase from the current 24 to approximately 70, thanks to a two-level underground parking garage.

BZA
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Exhibit No. 82

Board of Zoning Adjustment
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EXHIBIT NO. 82

Over the past year, Burke has instituted monthly meetings with an advisory board of neighbors. The school has worked hard to forge constructive dialogue with its neighbors to arrive at the most positive solutions possible to our common concerns. This has led to new compliance and accountability measures that are reflected in the school's new submission to the BZA.

Burke also has made itself available to its neighbors in new ways, Including free library usage, free invitations to Burke performances, weekly litter pick-up, snow-plowing the alley and more -- all to become a more useful and vibrant resource for its neighbors.

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. Burke's expansion plans are modest, reasonable and responsive to the neighborhood.

This new building will prove an asset to our children and to our community.

Please support Edmund Burke School's application (#17022) before the BZA. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lerner
Telephone: (202) 842-2600