July 12, 2003

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

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.

I am a 24-year District resident, who spent 5 years living directly across from the Edmund Burke School on Van Ness Street, NW, in the Consulate Apartments on the 8th floor. My son now happily attends the Edmund Burke School.

I feel outraged by the Forest Hills ANC opposition to Burke's school expansion. It is beyond my comprehension how some neighborhood folks can dictate such opposition to an expansion plan of a school that is willing to work with the surrounding neighborhood community.

Burke has shown a willingness to work with its neighbors by allowing free library usage; free invitations to Burke's performances, weekly litter pick up and snow plowing the Alley. If Burke did not plow this alley it would remain impassable after storms. (These residents enjoy ample off street parking in alleys on both sides of Upton Street.) Burke instituted a wonderful traffic plan this year to cut down on the Upton Street traffic, which DCDOT said in its professional opinion works. Burke's newest plan allows for a monetary compensation for traffic infractions. Burke is a wonderful city institution, which shows a devoted willingness to work with its surrounding neighborhood community. I think it is time for the Opponents that live in the Forest Hills neighborhood to change their attitude and work with the Burke community for the good of not just the neighborhood but for the District of Columbia as a whole.

A recent quotation in the Northwest Current should prove my point. Commissioner Finney, the Palisades ANC Chair made reference to the ST. Patrick's Middle school expansion. His quote, "It seems to me that the time has come not to fight but to try to find ways to live together" should be the motto that the opponents in Forest Hills neighborhood community learn to live by in the future.

Burke has been a valuable city institution for over 30 years, predating most of the opposition. With DC tax paying families like mine, who rely on private education and with 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 and make sense for the City we all live in.

Please support Edmund Burke School's application #17022.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Starrels

BZA
Case No. 17022
Exhibit No. 97

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17022
EXHIBIT NO. 97