July 22, 2005

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

RE: Case #17342 [Application of Aidan Montessori School}

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment:

I am writing in support of Aidan Montessori's application to limit its maximum enrollment to 180 students. Setting that cap will finally put the school in compliance, seven years late, with the June 16, 1995 agreement it signed with the Woodley Park Community Association and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC3C). Lowering the cap from the 240 set for the St. Thomas school in the same location years ago was one of the specific terms to which Aidan agreed. It agreed to the 180 student limit as a reasonable balance between its need for adequate enrollment and neighbors' need to protect against adverse impacts. Aidan should be required to honor the promises it made when seeking to gain community acceptance of the sale of the building to them. (Since the St. Thomas school had been underused as a recreation center for a number of years prior to the sale to Aidan, there were no traffic issues during that time.)

I am a 20 year resident of Woodley Park, living just up the street and on the same block as the school. I support having a private elementary school in the neighborhood. However, there are many negative impacts on the street because of Aidan's presence, exacerbated by their increasing the enrollment this past year (by what I and many neighbors view as underhanded methods).

Traffic is the most serious problem. The school has attempted--but failed miserably, even with a parking control officer--to limit or control it on our very narrow street. The WPCA Committee charged with observing, assessing, and deciding on whether to approve the continuation of the expanded enrollment voted unanimously to deny Aidan's request because they thought the situation was so bad after extensive well documented observations. Even toward the end of the school year, SUVs parked illegally at the stop sign at Woodley Road, carpool lines doubled parked halfway up the street, and Aidan drivers did not follow the designated carpool route.

I urge you to adopt the 180 figure and require the school to honor its agreement with the neighborhood and our elected ANC.

Sincerely,

Jana Belsky

Jana Belsky
2824 27th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

BZA
Case No. 17342
Exhibit No. 32

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17342
EXHIBIT NO. 32