

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment,

We are writing regarding the application that will be voted on December 20th, 2017 regarding the zoning variance to allow for a larger student population requested by Latino American Montessori Bilingual PCS at the Kingsbury school located at 5000 14th Street NW.

This Wednesday, December 13th, ANC4C will vote on whether to support or oppose LAMB's application. While we hope the ANC will ultimately vote in favor, it is our understanding that a small but vocal group of residents has voiced opposition and favors turning this large and historic school building into condos or a Scientologist church.

This variance is necessary for LAMB to secure financing and not receiving it will mean LAMB cannot relocate and will continue to have to operate from three separate campuses, hardly an ideal situation.

There is a clear need and demand for more bilingual opportunities in DC schools. That need is especially high in Ward 4, making LAMB's ability to serve a large Latino student population and operate out of one campus (where students would finally, for example, have access to a gym) an issue of educational and language access for immigrant families.

Twenty-five percent of young children in Ward 4 speak Spanish at home, and 23% of Ward 4 residents are foreign born. Of that, 61% are of Latin American origin.¹ These are the highest numbers in DC with the exception of Ward 1, where the numbers are only marginally higher. Census data show that Ward 4's Hispanic/Latino population has increased dramatically, from only 4.2% in 1990 to 19% in 2010,² while data from DC's Office of Latino Affairs shows that the Latino population increased more in Ward 4 than in Ward 1 from 2000-2010.³ Yet, while Ward 1 has 4 DCPS elementary schools with a bilingual program, Ward 4 has only 1.

In the event that ANC4C does not vote to support the application to the BZA, we are asking you to consider with great weight not only the ANC's opinion, but also the hundreds of Latino families and children who send their children to LAMB and for whom the success of the school is vital to our families.

As Ward 4 residents, Latino immigrants, and parents of a bilingual pre-k student at LAMB, we are deeply committed to LAMB's success in our neighborhood and

¹ <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/61000US11004-ward-4-dc/>

² https://www.neighborhoodinfodc.org/wards/Nbr_prof_wrd4.html

³

https://ola.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ola/publication/attachments/fy11_12_agencyperformance_officeoflatinoaffairs_responses_indices2011.pdf

strongly believe that the best possible use of an educational facility as large as Kingsbury, is to be fully utilized to educate DC's Latino and immigrant families.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Rodrigo Alvarez
Cassandra Ogren
65 Underwood Pl NW
Washington, DC 20012