



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A

“Serving the Foggy Bottom and West End communities of Washington, D.C.”

June 11, 2019

Mr. Lewis Ferebee
Chancellor
DC Public Schools
1200 First Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
Lewis.Ferebee@k12.dc.gov

**RE: Renovations in Response to Overcrowding at School Without Walls
Francis Stevens**

Dear Chancellor Ferebee,

At its meeting on May 15, 2019, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A (“ANC 2A” or “Commission”) considered the above-referenced matter. With eight of eight commissioners present, a quorum at a duly-noticed public meeting, the Commission voted unanimously (8-0-0), after a motion made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Kennedy, to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens (SWWFS) is a citywide educational resource serving students from all eight wards, with the majority of attendees living outside of Ward 2,

WHEREAS, over the past several years, SWWFS has demonstrated one of the strongest year-over-year track records of academic improvement of any public elementary school in the city and currently has a waiting list of 700 students requesting enrollment,

WHEREAS, beginning in October 2018 school administrators and community members called DCPS’s attention to the pending issue of over-enrollment at the school.

WHEREAS, a lack of response from DCPS regarding overcrowding at SWWFS led the LSAT, HSA and ANC 2A to arrange the services of a pro bono design team to provide options to constructively address the overcrowding issue and subsequently that design team completed a set of concept drawings addressing the issue in a comprehensive expandable manner, the so-called “community plan”.

WHEREAS, at the February ANC 2A meeting, the ANC passed a resolution endorsing the community plan and DCPS formally acknowledged the issue of over-enrollment at SWWFS and the pledged to work with community members to evaluate the community plan and implement a solution prior to the 2020 academic year.



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WHEREAS, since that February ANC meeting the project liaison provided the ANC and community has changed three times, no contracting timeline was provided until May and no official explanation regarding the design choice and rationale has been provided as of this date.

WHEREAS, reports of mismanagement of previous renovations, including a reported payment of \$600,000 for a single door, the purchase and installation of unnecessary mechanical equipment and the misalignment of a locker room, thereby curtailing needed expansion of the school gym, among others, have left many in the community with a lingering distrust of the renovation management process at DCPS.

WHEREAS, unofficially, the ANC and community members have been informed that DCPS has selected an inferior design for the current renovation, one that has faced repeated and significant merit-based objections from the community, objections that have not been officially addressed by DCPS.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED ANC 2A reiterates its February 2018 call for DCPS to utilize such funds as are available for renovations at SWWFS to eliminate two small offices and repurpose unused balcony space between them and the small gym so as to create two new 1200 square foot classrooms, thereby implementing the so-called “community plan”.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if DCPS elects, as now seems to be the case, to re-purpose the current library instead of implementing the community plan, the ANC requests written notification of the decision and its rationale as well as any relevant process documents pertaining to the bid process and cost elements that informed the decision.

Commissioners William Kennedy Smith (2A04@anc.dc.gov) and Patrick Kennedy (2A01@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission’s representatives in this matter.

For your information, I am also attaching a copy of a letter I have sent, as ANC Chair, to Tousant Webster, who was recently designated as the community point of contact for this project by DCPS.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,

William Kennedy Smith, MD



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Chairperson

CC: Chairman Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Councilmember Jack Evans, Ward 2
Councilmember David Grosso, At-Large
Patrick Davis, Deputy Chief of Facilities, DCPS
Janice Szymanski, Director of Facility Planning & Design, DCPS
Teresa Biagioni, Director of School Planning, DCPS
Katie Mustian, Community Action Team Coordinator for Wards 2 & 3, DCPS
Tousaint Webster, Specialist, Facility Planning and Design, DCPS
Richard Trogisch, Principal, School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens
Shanna Young, Associate Principal, School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens
Cedric Hendricks, Co-Chair, School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens LSAT
Erin Martin, Member, School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens LSAT
Julian Wright, Member, School Without Walls at Francis-Stevens LSAT
Sherri Kimbel, Director of Constituent Services, Councilmember Jack Evans
Sarina Loy, Committee Assistant, Councilmember Jack Evans
Nicole Goines, Mayor’s Office of Community Relations and Services
Commissioner Daniel Warwick, Chair, ANC 2B
Commissioner Kari Cunningham, ANC 2B07
Commissioner David Bender, Chair, ANC 2D
Commissioner Mike Silverstein, ANC 2B06