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3G02- Bruce Sherman, Treasurer
3G03- Carol Grunewald, Secretary
3G04- Laura Phinizy, Chair
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3G07- Elizabeth Nagy, Vice-Chair



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Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G
Chevy Chase, Barnaby Woods, Hawthorne

A Resolution Urging the District of Columbia Public Schools to Explore Acquisition or Lease of the Episcopal Center for Children Property to Preserve Educational Use and Expand Early Childhood Capacity Serving Lafayette Elementary School

WHEREAS, Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3/4G represents residents of the Chevy Chase neighborhood of Washington, DC, including families served by Lafayette Elementary School (Lafayette);

WHEREAS, ANC 3/4G has 1,101 children aged 5 and under¹, with distribution across Single Member Districts (SMD)s in a relatively tight range (120–175), indicating broad-based, ongoing demand for early childhood education;

WHEREAS, Lafayette currently enrolls approximately 923 students in grades pre-K4 through 5th grade, making it the largest elementary school in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) system, and its strong reputation and central role in the community contribute significantly to the stability and vitality of the Chevy Chase neighborhood;

WHEREAS, following its 2015-2016 modernization, capacity at Lafayette increased to 805 students, and in 2020 further increased to 873 students after three windowless basement classrooms were added;

WHEREAS, in the 2022–2023 school year, DCPS subsequently reported the school’s capacity as 978 students despite no documented further expansion of the building’s physical footprint;

¹ 2024 US Census data from the [American Community Survey](#), provided by the DC Office of Planning for ANC 3/4G.

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WHEREAS, currently the 4th grade at Lafayette is housed in the basement, with two classrooms having no windows for natural light or egress, as would have been required per the [Education Specifications](#) in force at the time were those rooms to be used as classrooms;

WHEREAS, pre-K4 entry at Lafayette is considered very hard, borne out by 2025-2026 school year numbers which show three times as many pre-K4 students on the waitlist (176) as available lottery seats (58), with an in-bounds applicant who does not have a sibling already attending the school having virtually zero chance of admission (only 3% of students admitted to pre-K in 2025-2026 had no sibling preference). (Appendix A);

WHEREAS, enrollment data for the 2024–2025 school year demonstrate significant disparities among RCW elementary schools, with Lafayette enrolling 923 students — nearly double the average enrollment of 475 students across comparable schools—and serving 111 out-of-boundary (OOB) students, which is over 30 more than the RCW average of 79, even under relatively low OOB participation rates (Appendix B);

WHEREAS, unlike other wards, no schools in Rock Creek West, including Lafayette, offer pre-K3;

WHEREAS, the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) operated a therapeutic day school, including early childhood education, for many decades before closing that program at the end of the 2018–2019 school year;

WHEREAS, ECC has returned its campus to the market after [announcing](#) Maret School had declined its option to purchase the site, and ECC leadership has indicated willingness to consider interest from DCPS;

WHEREAS, the ECC property features significant outdoor recreational space on the east side within its “Apostle Trees” area which would provide for ample play space in a natural setting (Appendix C);

WHEREAS, the above factors make the ECC site particularly well-suited for early childhood education, creating a rare opportunity to expand educational capacity at an existing neighborhood educational facility; and

WHEREAS, the window of opportunity is narrow given ECC is actively exploring options for sale or lease, necessitating immediate action by the ANC and District authorities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3/4G calls upon DC Public Schools and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education to promptly engage with the Episcopal Center for Children and its representatives or broker to explore potential purchase, lease, or partnership options for the property;

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- ANC 3/4G urges DCPS to evaluate the ECC property as an early childhood annex to Lafayette Elementary School to allow the main school campus to come into compliance with Education Specifications, including natural light and emergency egress in all classrooms, and to return currently repurposed space to its original intended use – with any shift in classrooms to the ECC site not taken as the rationale for expanding capacity in grades K-5 at Lafayette ;
- ANC 3/4G asks DCPS to consider pre-K3 offerings across Rock Creek West with priority for lower and middle-income in-boundary students;
- ANC 3/4G requests DCPS and the DME conduct and publicly share a preliminary feasibility assessment of the ECC property within 90 days; and
- ANC 3/4G further requests that DCPS or the DME brief ANC 3/4G within 90 days regarding the District’s evaluation of the ECC property and any steps taken to explore potential acquisition, lease, or partnership opportunities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chair of ANC 3/4G and the Commissioner representing Single Member District 3/4G02 are designated as the Commission’s representatives for communications with District agencies and stakeholders regarding this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Chancellor of DC Public Schools, the Deputy Mayor for Education, the Ward 3 and 4 Councilmembers, members of the State Board of Education, and the Chair of the DC Council Committee on Education.

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Appendix A: Comparative Pre-K4 Admissions Data – Rock Creek West

School	PreK 4 Seats	InBounds wSib	InBounds no sib	InBounds EqPref	% IB w sib	% IB w/o sib
Lafayette	58	56	1	1	97%	3%
Stoddert	39	22	13	4	56%	44%
Janney	78	40	38	0	51%	49%
Hearst	39	17	21	1	44%	56%
Murch	58	25	33	0	43%	57%
Eaton	39	13	24	2	33%	67%
Mann	39	12	27	0	31%	69%
Key- placed Out of Bounds 21%	58	21	25	0	36%	43%

Source- MySchoolDC MSDC Seats and Waitlist Offer Data

Appendix B: Comparative Enrollment and OOB Analysis Across Rock Creek West Schools

School	Enroll-ment	In Bounds	Out of Bounds
Lafayette	923	812	111
Stoddert	425	323	60
Janney	717	631	86
Hearst	356	249	107
Murch	658	579	69
Eaton	436	331	80
Mann	397	331	83
Key	337	302	66
Average w/o			
Lafayette	475	392	79
Difference	448	420	32

Source: <https://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/> (2024-2025 data)

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Appendix C: Aerial Shot of the Episcopal Center for Children Campus with the Adjacent "Apostle Tree" Circular Green Area

