

**Foggy Bottom and West End**  
**Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC -2A)**  
c/o West End Branch Library 725 24<sup>th</sup> Street, NW Washington, DC 20037  
(202) 386-6207

December 14, 2007

Michelle Rhee, Chancellor  
825 N. Capitol Street, N.E.  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Victor Reinoso, Deputy Mayor  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

**RE: Proposed Closure of Stevens Elementary School**

Dear Chancellor Rhee and Deputy Mayor Reinoso:

At a properly called Special Meeting on December 13, 2007, the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC 2A) considered the matter of the proposed closure of Stevens Elementary School. With five of the six Commissioners present, a quorum at a duly called public meeting, the following resolution was approved by a unanimous vote by ANC 2A:

“ANC 2A protests the proposed closure of Stevens Elementary School on the basis that Stevens is an important asset to the Foggy Bottom-West End Community. It is the only elementary school in our neighborhood, and our neighborhood needs such a school to provide services to families and other members of the community. ANC 2A welcomes the attendance of children from other Wards of the City and realizes that Stevens fosters growth, understanding, and diversity between different residents of the District of Columbia. ANC 2A is committed to support Stevens Elementary School in various community partnerships in the present and the future. ANC 2A notes that any issues of underutilization can easily be addressed immediately as there is an enrollment waiting list for Stevens because parents recognize its outstanding programs and teachers and want their children to attend school in the safety of the Foggy Bottom-West End neighborhood with a proximity to the downtown area, their employment, and proximity to numerous public transportation options and George Washington University.”

At the ANC 2A Special Meeting on December 13, 2007, Commissioners heard from numerous community members and Stevens parents about the proposed closure of Stevens Elementary. Parents, students, and community members cherish the safety that the Foggy Bottom – West End neighborhood provides students and parents. The Foggy Bottom – West End neighborhood, through its proximity to George Washington University (“GWU”) and Downtown employers, currently provides resources and programs to Stevens, and the community is committed to pursue additional support, partnerships, and resources in the future. Community members and parents believe that Stevens Elementary is in a unique location to leverage resources from GWU and

downtown businesses, such as the current GWU tutoring program at Stevens and the playground improvements made by the Clifford Chance law firm. Community members also support the neighborhood convenience of Stevens to parent employment, so that parents can be easily contacted in the event of a student emergency or concern.

The test scores of Stevens Elementary students exceed the majority of those of other elementary school students in the District of similar income levels. And the community and parents are committed to pursuing additional resources in the future to a comparable level of those resources provided by the community in Northwest where elementary schools have even higher test scores. Any under-enrollment issue can be easily addressed because there is a waiting list to attend Stevens Elementary.

Moreover, Stevens provides our community with diversity and an opportunity for citizens of different backgrounds to learn and grow from community partnerships that support the School. Stevens' alumni testified about the benefits of their attendance at an elementary school in the Foggy Bottom – West End Neighborhood, and parents told numerous stories of the cultural diversity opportunities afforded by Stevens' location.

Community members also agree with parents that moving Stevens' programs to Francis Junior High School is not an option as Francis is not located in our neighborhood that has the proximity to public transportation, GWU, and Downtown businesses that support Stevens. Francis should also not be an option given the well documented adverse effects of combining junior high children with elementary students. Few parents of elementary students want their children to attend a school with adolescents, whose behavior requires a metal detector at the entrance of the school, such as is present at Francis. Also, studies show that the Foggy Bottom – West End neighborhood is scheduled to get an influx of residents in the next 10 years. The absence of an elementary school in our neighborhood will adversely affect this development. Finally, community members expressed concern that the decision to close Stevens Elementary is being driven by the value of the real estate, which is highly sought by developers.

As noted in the above text of the ANC 2A resolution, as this project is located in Commissioner Harmon's Single Member District, the ANC 2A has appointed her as its representative in this matter. Feel free to contact her at 202-390-4438 on this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION.

Sincerely,



Asher Corson, Chairperson

cc: Jack Evans