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**ANC 3/4G Resolution Regarding the
Proposed Relocation of Lafayette Elementary Pre-K4
January 11, 2021**

Background for the Proposal to Relocate Lafayette Pre-K4

1. In late November 2020, ANC 3/4G learned of a proposal to relocate the Lafayette Elementary School (Lafayette) pre-K4 from its campus on Broad Branch Road to 1375 Missouri Avenue, NW (Missouri Avenue building), 2.5 miles away and out of the school's boundaries. The proposal was to use the former Latin American Montessori Bilingual (LAMB) Public Charter School building¹ for all of Lafayette's pre-K4 students to alleviate overcrowding at Lafayette and to continue or expand the existing number of its pre-K4 classes.

¹ This building was originally known as the Military Road School, which opened in 1864 in response to the needs of freedmen and women who settled in the area to be near Fort Stevens, a source of protection and employment during the Civil War. Students from this and other upper Northwest neighborhoods attended, as did students from nearby Montgomery County, Maryland, because the school was one of the first to open after Congress authorized public education for Washington's African Americans in 1862. See Cultural Tourism DC, Military Road School, African American Heritage Trail, available at <https://bit.ly/35bluSZ>.

2. According to District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS's) data, the enrollment at Lafayette in school year 2014-2015 was 697.² The Lafayette building was modernized and expanded for school year 2016-2017, with a planned capacity of 805 students.³ In 2017 and 2018, to accommodate growing enrollment, Lafayette added four classrooms by walling in some common space.⁴ By school year 2019-2020, however, enrollment had increased to 940.⁵ Before school year 2020-2021, DCPS renovated roughly 6,200 square feet of unfinished interior space to create 5000 gross square feet of space for three classrooms and two small group/resource rooms.⁶ The total enrollment for school year 2020-2021 is reportedly 956 students.⁷ The DCPS projected enrollment for school year 2021-2022 is 1000.⁸
3. For school year 2020-2021, Lafayette had 78 lottery seats available for pre-K4 students and a waitlist of 229, 21 of whom received waitlist offers by October.⁹ The lottery gives preference to applicants in the following order: (1) in-boundary with siblings at Lafayette; (2) in-boundary without siblings; and (3) out-of-

² "Lafayette Enrollment and Future PK4," Community Engagement Meeting, December 9, 2020 ("December 9th Meeting Materials"), page 4, available at <https://bit.ly/3gRO7kU>.

³ "Lafayette Elementary School Project," District Department of General Services, available at <https://bit.ly/34kim6T>.

⁴ December 9th Meeting Materials, page 15.

⁵ December 9th Meeting Materials, page 4.

⁶ "Request for Proposals, Design-Build Services for Lafayette Elementary School Renovation," DC Department of General Services, November 5, 2019 (Renovation RFP), pages 3-4, available at <https://bit.ly/34mYnoe>.

⁷ DC School Report Card, Lafayette Elementary School, available at <https://bit.ly/2KbHJRt>. This number now appears to be lower. Lafayette has indicated that current enrollment is now closer to 900. "Lafayette Enrollment and Future PK4," Community Engagement Meeting, December 2, 2020, page 4, available at <https://bit.ly/3qMFNzg>.

⁸ December 9th Meeting Materials, page 4.

⁹ "My School DC Lottery Seats and Waitlist Offer Data" for SY 20-21 (Lottery Data), available at <https://tabsoft.co/3gAapzn>.

boundary.¹⁰ Lafayette's principal advised the Commission at its December 14, 2020 meeting that the school has filled its available lottery seats primarily from in-boundary siblings with no out-of-boundary seats made available, and it does not intend to accept out-of-boundary students for pre-K4, regardless of its location.¹¹

4. In 2003, the District sold the Missouri Avenue building to LAMB for \$1 million. LAMB subsequently made renovations and additions to the building. By at least as early as February 2020, DCPS had begun the process to reacquire this facility by reprogramming \$8.376 million in the capital budget. The District said that the purchase was justified to "help to alleviate current and projected overcrowding in upper Ward 4 schools such as Lafayette ES, Brightwood ES, and Shepherd ES." The property has "8 large classrooms, office and pull out space, a full cooking kitchen, a playground, and parking."¹² In July 2020, the Mayor asked the Council to approve reprograming those funds "to help solve for the Ward 4 overcrowding problem at nearby schools or expand early childhood offerings,"¹³ and the Council approved the reprogramming.

¹⁰ "My School DC Application and Lottery Key Terms," available at <https://bit.ly/3p3SUdT>.

¹¹ At a Lafayette Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) meeting on January 8, 2021, however, Claudia Lujan, DCPS's Deputy Chief, Strategic School Planning and Enrollment, said that if Lafayette's pre-K4 were relocated to Missouri Avenue and if the enrollment is not fully subscribed by in-boundary students, DCPS would be under pressure to fill any remaining vacancies with out-of-boundary students who would then have rights to go to Lafayette for kindergarten.

¹² DCPS has indicated that two of the eight classrooms are in the basement and would not be suitable for Pre-K classrooms, thus leaving only six usable classrooms that could accommodate approximately 120 students.

¹³ Memorandum from Andrea Swiatocha, Deputy Chief, Facilities, DCPS to Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs, EOM, re FY20 Request to Reprogram Capital Budget in the Amount of \$8,376,301.00 for DCPS (Owner AGY)/DGS (Implementing AGY), April 29, 2020.

DCPS's Lafayette Community Engagement on the Proposal

5. The Lafayette LSAT learned of the purchase and the availability of this building at its November 18, 2020 meeting.¹⁴ DCPS and the Lafayette principal held two virtual community meetings on December 2, 2020, and December 9, 2020, and made presentations about the need to have additional classrooms for pre-K4 and the proposal for using the building on Missouri Avenue.¹⁵ Those meetings were attended by about 125 people at each.
6. On December 11, 2020, the Commission sent DCPS a list of questions/topics on the proposed relocation of the Lafayette Pre-K4 that was subsequently discussed at the Commission's December 14, 2020 meeting.¹⁶ At that meeting, DCPS advised the Commission that it would defer making a decision about the location of Lafayette's Pre-K from the original deadline in mid-December to late January or early February and that the final decision will be made by the Mayor and the DCPS Chancellor, Lewis Ferebee.
7. On December 20, 2020, the Commission sent DCPS a follow-up list of questions based on questions submitted by the community at the Commission's December 14, 2020 meeting and from emails to the Commission.¹⁷ DCPS responded to those questions on January 7, 2021.¹⁸
8. At the January 8, 2021 LSAT meeting, DCPS clarified two aspects of the proposal for Lafayette's Pre-K4 to relocate to the Missouri Avenue building: (1) this relocation would be "permanent," not temporary; and (2) if Lafayette does not fill all of the available slots for six classes of Pre-K4 at the Missouri Avenue building with its in-boundary students, DCPS would seek to fill the remaining slots with out-of-boundary students who would have rights to attend Lafayette for

¹⁴ The minutes of this LSAT meeting are available at <https://bit.ly/3mfHPVc>.

¹⁵ The December 2nd presentation is available at <https://bit.ly/3qMFNzg>, and the December 9th presentation is available at <https://bit.ly/3gRQ7kU>.

¹⁶ Video of this discussion at the December 14, 2020 meeting is available at https://youtu.be/L3c5gR_C3Ec beginning at 00:28:41.

¹⁷ The follow up questions the Commission sent to DCPS for their response are available at <https://bit.ly/3914cZR>.

¹⁸ The DCPS responses are available at <https://bit.ly/38vmfZ5>.

kindergarten, which could, unfortunately, exacerbate overcrowding in the Wilson feeder pattern.

DCPS's Basis for Proposing to Relocate Lafayette's Pre-K4

9. In response to the Commission's question about the projected enrollment data that DCPS used to determine that Lafayette would have to either move its pre-K4 to the Missouri Avenue building or reduce the number of pre-K4 classes by half, DCPS responded that it relied on the five-year and ten-year projections in the Master Facilities Plan, which is based on historical enrollment patterns and population growth forecasts provided by the DC Office of Planning. It said that,

“In recent years, Lafayette has added larger cohorts in lower elementary grades that are rising into upper elementary, requiring the use of additional classroom spaces for K-5. While DCPS has been able to accommodate this growth so far through repurposing spaces within the building, we do not have additional space on site to expand further and will therefore need to recoup PK space, either through the move to Military Road school or by decreasing PK sections.”¹⁹

10. At a meeting with the Brightwood community on January 9, 2020, DCPS indicated that it proposed to use the Missouri Avenue building for Lafayette's pre-K4 instead of using it for other pre-K programs because the overcrowding at Lafayette was “more acute” than at Brightwood Elementary School or Shepherd Elementary School (the other two schools that were cited as the basis for purchasing the Missouri Avenue building).²⁰
11. For school year 2020-2021, Brightwood Elementary had 44 lottery seats for Pre-K3, and 27 students on its waitlist, with two receiving offers by October 2020. For its Pre-K4, it had 15 lottery seats and 57 students on its waitlist, seven of

¹⁹ DCPS Responses to question 2. The impact of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency could significantly alter Lafayette's enrollment projections and space needs.

²⁰ See DCPS Responses to question 10.

whom received offers by October 2020.²¹ Brightwood also has eight trailers on its campus that are owned by DCPS and have been in place for about eight years.²²

Brightwood Community Views on the Proposal to Relocate Lafayette's Pre-K4

12. Brightwood Elementary School at 1300 Nicholson Street, NW is located just across the street from the Missouri Avenue building. The Commission was concerned that DCPS had not engaged with the Brightwood community about its possible use of that building. In response to the Commission's questions, DCPS indicated that the Department of General Services (DGS) had contacted some elected officials in Brightwood at the time it acquired the Missouri Avenue building and in December 2020, but its engagement with the Brightwood community consisted of a meeting on January 6, 2021, with a Brightwood parent leader and a plan to meet with community groups after January 7, 2021.²³
13. On January 6, 2021, DCPS met virtually with Maurice Kennard, Brightwood Elementary School Principal, and Vanessa Rubio, Brightwood Elementary School PTA President and Commissioner for ANC 4C01, to discuss possible uses for the Missouri Avenue building. DCPS indicated that its first option is for Lafayette to use the building exclusively for its pre-K4 program. They also described three possible Brightwood options that had been suggested by the Lafayette community but with the caveat that these alternatives had not been vetted by DCPS leadership:

Option 1 — the Missouri Avenue building becomes a standalone, city-wide early education center with no preferences for any students from any neighborhood and no rights to go to any other school after pre-K

Option 2 — use the Missouri Avenue building for an early education center with a preference for Lafayette and Brightwood in-boundary students but with no rights to go to any other school after pre-K

²¹ Lottery Data, available at <https://tabsoft.co/3gAapzn>.

²² There are no canopies or shelters for children going between the trailers and other buildings, and the Brightwood community reports that the trailers are not well maintained.

²³ DCPS Responses to question 8.

Option 3 — move Brightwood's Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 to the Missouri Avenue building so that Brightwood could reduce the need for trailers on its campus.

14. Commissioner Rubio reported that she and Principal Kennard expressed a preference for Option 1. They were concerned that Option 3 would split their campus and require multiple drop offs and pickups for families with more than one child in the school. Rather than use the Missouri Avenue building as a separate campus for their Pre-K, they preferred to accelerate modernization and expansion of the Brightwood campus. Nevertheless, they preferred Option 3 over Option 2, which they did not consider to be desirable for Brightwood. Finally, Commissioner Rubio reported that she did not believe the Brightwood community would support Lafayette's exclusive use of the Missouri Avenue building.

Alternatives for Lafayette Pre-K4 Within Its Boundaries

15. A number of alternatives have been suggested by the Lafayette community and the Commission that might at least provide a short-term solution for keeping Lafayette's Pre-K within its boundaries and, therefore, without relocating to the Missouri Avenue building. Among the alternatives suggested were the following:
 - a lease of space at the Episcopal Center for Children at 5901 Utah Avenue, NW;
 - the new Lafayette-Pointer Recreation Center at 5900 33rd Street, NW;
 - the Chevy Chase Community Center or the Chevy Chase Public Library in the 5600 block of Connecticut Avenue, NW;
 - splitting the pre-K4 into two cohorts, each located within the Lafayette boundary;
 - moving to two half-day sessions to accommodate all Pre-K4 students within the Lafayette building;
 - building additional classrooms in the Lafayette basement; or
 - the use of trailers at Lafayette or a location within Lafayette's boundaries to accommodate Pre-K4 classes.
16. DCPS has rejected each of those alternatives for the reasons set out below.

- With regard to the Episcopal Children’s Center, even though the Center has said that it is amenable to leasing its space, DCPS has not pursued that possibility because “currently due to operating budget impacts, DCPS is not able to consider a lease option.”²⁴ DCPS reiterated that it “has not historically leased buildings for student spaces.”²⁵ In contrast to a purchase — like the Missouri Avenue building — it says that it is “more challenging when considering a lease option such as [the Episcopal Children’s Center] as that needs to come from the operating budget.”²⁶
- With respect to the Lafayette-Pointer Recreation Center, DCPS says it “is unable to accommodate any Pre-K spaces,”²⁷ even though the new multipurpose room in the Recreation Center will have 1336 square feet (including flex space).²⁸
- For both the Chevy Chase Community Center and Library, DCPS said that, based on “preliminary conversations with DCPL and DPR regarding both spaces,” “at this time, there is currently no space to accommodate PreK classes without negatively impacting programmed space for DCPL and DPR.”²⁹
- DCPS did not respond to the Commission’s question about splitting the Pre-K4 into two cohorts, and it rejected moving to half-day Pre-K4 because it “offers the youngest learners a comprehensive educational program for a full school day,” and even though this alternative “could allow for more students to be served, DCPS knows that a half-day schedule can be operationally challenging for parents.”³⁰

²⁴ DCPS Responses to question 5a.

²⁵ DCPS Responses to question 7a.

²⁶ DCPS Responses to question 7c.

²⁷ DCPS Responses to question 5b.

²⁸ See Lafayette Recreation Center Community Meeting #8, July 10, 2019, slide 9, available at <https://bit.ly/32FibAq>.

²⁹ DCPS Responses to question 5c.

³⁰ DCPS Responses to question 5d. For parents response to these operational challenges, see the responses to the Commission’s survey discussed in paragraph __ below.

- DCPS says that “there is not additional space available within the building at this point for further modifications,”³¹ even though modifications in 2020 that added three classrooms and two small rooms only used approximately 5000 gross square feet of the 6200 feet of unused interior space.³²
 - Finally, DCPS said that trailers would need to be leased, and it “is not currently exploring options to lease land in other sites within the Lafayette boundary given the impact on the district’s [sic] operating budget.”³³
17. At an LSAT meeting on January 8, 2021, DCPS reiterated its position that the choice for Lafayette is binary — either it moves to the Missouri Avenue building or it reduces by half the number of Pre-K4 slots available.

Commission Survey of Prospective Lafayette In-Boundary Pre-K4 Parents

18. Between January 4 and 9, 2021, the Commission conducted a targeted survey of parents who live within the Lafayette boundaries and will have at least one child eligible for Pre-K4 within the next four years, and 146 parents completed the survey. Full survey results are available at <https://bit.ly/35teRM2>.³⁴
19. Almost half of the respondents (65) indicated that they already have children at Lafayette, and almost all of these parents (137) responded that they would apply for a lottery slot if the Pre-K4 remains located at the Lafayette campus. Almost all parents would seek or continue with other Pre-K schools or existing childcare arrangements if their child were not offered a lottery slot at Lafayette.

³¹ DCPS Responses to question 5d.

³² Renovation RFP, pages 2-3.

³³ DCPS Responses to question 5d.

³⁴ In addition, the community circulated the following petition: “We believe families should have a Pre-K option in our neighborhood. We ask DCPS to call off this rushed process, return to the drawing board, and work with Lafayette families and community leaders to identify a solution to Lafayette’s over-crowding that keeps Lafayette Pre- K at our neighborhood school.” The petition was signed by 263 “current, former, and future Lafayette parents and interested community members who want to keep Lafayette Pre-K in our neighborhood.” The full petition is available at <https://bit.ly/35vqDWc>.

20. About 64% of parents said that if all Lafayette Pre-K classes are relocated to the Missouri Avenue building, they would *not* accept a lottery slot to Lafayette; about 36% indicated that they would accept a Pre-K lottery slot to Lafayette if the Pre-K is moved to the Missouri Avenue building. This is almost identical to the results of Lafayette’s own survey.³⁵ The most important reasons for not accepting a lottery slot for Pre-K at the Missouri Avenue building were logistical challenges and the lack of an “equitable solution.”
21. When asked whether it was more important to have a guaranteed Lafayette Pre-K slot regardless of its location or to have a chance at a Lafayette Pre-K slot so long as it is guaranteed to be within walking distance of Lafayette’s Broad Branch Road campus, almost three-quarters of parents indicated that a Pre-K within walking distance was more important.
22. If the Lafayette Pre-K were relocated to the Missouri Avenue building, the responding parents were almost evenly split between preferring that the building be exclusively for Lafayette students in order to maximize the number of in-boundary Lafayette students that get a Pre-K slot and those parents who preferred that the building serve both the Lafayette and Brightwood communities, even if it means that one or both schools might continue to have in-boundary students on their waitlists.³⁶
23. Because DCPS has concluded that there are only two available options — either reduce the Lafayette Pre-K4 by half or relocate all of its Pre-K to Missouri Avenue — the survey asked parents to choose which one they support. Of the responding parents, about 60% (83) supported reducing the available slots by half and maintaining a full-day Pre-K4 program at Lafayette’s campus rather than moving Pre-K to the Missouri Avenue building. About 40% (56) of the responding parents supported relocating the Lafayette Pre-K to the Missouri Avenue building if those were the only choices.

³⁵ The Commission has requested the results of this Lafayette survey, but has not received them. The results were discussed, however, at the January 8, 2021 LSAT meeting, including the number of parents who would accept a Pre-K lottery slot if it were moved to the Missouri Avenue building. The LSAT agreed that the entire survey results would be an attachment to the LSAT minutes when they become available on the LSAT’s website, <http://lafayettelsat.blogspot.com>.

³⁶ The survey did not include a question about the use of the Missouri Avenue building as a standalone early education center with no preferences in the lottery.

Letters from Ward 3 and Ward 4 Elected Officials

24. On January 9, 2021, Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh and Ward 4 Councilmember Janeese Lewis-George wrote DCPS Chancellor Lewis Ferebee expressing their “concerns about DCPS’s current proposal, which would permanently relocate Lafayette’s preschool program to the recently acquired Military Road campus.”³⁷ They noted that “the new Military Road school is located on the same block as Brightwood Education Campus, which has a long waitlist for its own preschool program; it would seem fairer and make more sense for DCPS to use this newly acquired facility to address needs there before offering the space to a school over two miles away.” They reviewed the various alternatives to relocation that have been proposed and asked “that you postpone making any decision on relocation of Lafayette’s preschool program until you and the staff at DCPS — in coordination and communication with the school principal, LSAT, ANC, and affected families — have fully assessed each of these proposals.”
25. Also, on January 9, 2021, Ruth Wattenberg, the Ward 3 State Board of Education Representative, and Frazier O’Leary, the Ward 4 State Board of Education Representative, wrote Mayor Muriel Bower and Chancellor Ferebee to convey “on behalf of our communities our enormous frustration that this proposal was made on an emergency basis — without the benefit of community feedback or the presentation of options — and was presented to the Lafayette community as a binary decision: Move Lafayette school’s PK program to the Military Road school starting in September 2021 — or, likely, see your PK program diminished starting next fall, and, eventually, lose it. Further, the binary decision was initially presented as a permanent one.”³⁸ After reviewing other alternatives, they concluded that “many of these options seem very feasible for both the shorter- and longer-term. We are left with the strong view that there is no need to make a permanent decision in the next month; in fact, such a decision would be unfair and irresponsible. A decision such as this, with a major impact on school communities, requires a serious exploration of the options, as well as input and engagement with the affected communities.” They suggested that there was no need for an urgent permanent decision given the uncertainties about school year 2021-2022 enrollment, and “perhaps DCPS could temporarily establish a free-

³⁷ Letter from Councilmembers Mary Cheh and Janeese Lewis-George to Dr. Lewis Ferebee, January 9, 2021, available at <https://bit.ly/2XtRTA0>.

³⁸ Letter from Ruth Wattenberg and Frazier O’Leary to Mayor Bowser and Chancellor Ferebee, January 9, 2021 (State School Board Letter), available at <https://bit.ly/35rFvg9>.

standing early childhood center [at the Missouri Avenue building], admitting overflow students from both the Brightwood and Lafayette (and other Ward 4) catchments, with students then continuing on to their respective in-boundary elementary schools.”

Commission Recommendations to the Mayor and DCPS for Lafayette Pre-K4

26. This Commission has long recognized the acute need for better planning for public school infrastructure that will support projected growth.³⁹ The patchwork acquisition of facilities based on their fortuitous availability is not planning. In this instance, the Council approved the purchase of the Missouri Avenue building with only the vaguest notion of how it would be used and without engagement with either affected community. We strongly urge DCPS to work with the school communities and elected representatives to develop a comprehensive plan that will meet future needs based on expected population growth in Wards 3 and 4. Rather than waiting for a serendipitous opportunity to acquire space, DCPS should target potential sites — e.g., the vacant Episcopal Children’s Center — and take steps to make it available for essential school buildings.
27. Prior to making any decision to relocate Lafayette’s Pre-K4 outside the school’s boundaries, it is imperative that DCPS first exhaust all possible in-boundary alternatives to relocating Lafayette’s Pre-K4 out of the school’s boundaries. It is abundantly clear that parents want and deserve a neighborhood public school Pre-K4 program that is within Lafayette’s boundaries, with a strong preference for a location that is walkable from the current Lafayette campus. DCPS has not looked creatively for ways to address this priority need. For instance, DCPS,

³⁹ For example, the Commission’s comments on proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments highlighted the absence of public school planning. It advised the Office of Planning that the Rock Creek West Element of the Comprehensive Plan “must include a policy to create a specific plan for where, when, and how the District will locate, build, and fund public schools for the children in the Wilson High School Feeder Pattern so that new development and population growth will not exacerbate current school overcrowding. Rock Creek West is already confronting a crisis in school facility shortage, but the proposed Plan amendments do not specifically address where school capacity can be located or how it will be funded. It would be imprudent to proceed with the Plan’s growth scenario while neglecting to address the hard questions about public schools and other necessary infrastructure.” ANC 3/4G Resolution Requesting Changes to the Office of Planning’s Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, February 10, 2020, available at <https://bit.ly/2Ir1Gzb>.

DCPL, and DPR should consider what will be the highest and best use of all their available properties, and pre-K4 education should rank very high in that assessment. Although DCPS is not accustomed to leasing school facilities, this situation requires that it be given more serious attention, particularly given the possible availability of the Episcopal Children's Center, which is currently available for lease. It is not a satisfactory answer merely to cite the need to pay for a lease from operating funds as a reason to discard in-boundary options.⁴⁰ DCPS should work with the Mayor and the Council to reprogram funds to meet this critical need until a more permanent solution can be developed. While no solution at this late date will be perfect and without challenges, the community insists that DCPS take innovative steps to find a nearby site for Pre-K for school year 2021-2022.

28. DCPS must make equity a priority in deciding about the use of the Missouri Avenue building. This Commission may not and does not presume to speak for the Brightwood community, but it is clear that DCPS has only belatedly and superficially reached out to those parents. DCPS must conduct a rigorous bilingual survey of parents in the Brightwood community with prospective Pre-K students to learn what their preferences are for the use of the building that is only one block from their neighborhood elementary school. The decision should be based on what those parents want and need, not exclusively on what the school administration prefers. That engagement has, at best, only begun, and DCPS cannot make an equitable decision without seeking the views and opinions of Brightwood parents and the ANC Commissioners who represent that community.
29. Now that DCPS has purchased the Missouri Avenue building for more than eight times what it sold the property for in 2003, it certainly must be used. DCPS has identified four possible options for using this building in school year 2021-2022:

Option 1 — the Missouri Avenue building becomes a standalone, city-wide early education center with no preferences for any students from any neighborhood and no rights to go to any other school after pre-K;

⁴⁰ The Ward 3 and Ward 4 State School Board Representatives noted that "Establishing a way for DCPS to lease buildings was a key proposal made by the Community Working Group. This is a perfect example of why this ability is needed." State School Board Letter, page 4.

Option 2 — use the Missouri Avenue building for an early education center with a preference for Lafayette and Brightwood in-boundary students but with no rights to go to any other school after pre-K;

Option 3 — move Brightwood's Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 to the Missouri Avenue building so that Brightwood could reduce the need for trailers on its campus; and

Option 4 — move the entire Lafayette Pre-K4 program to the Missouri Avenue building.

As to Option 1, the Brightwood Principal and head of the Brightwood PTA appear to favor it, but neither the greater Brightwood community nor the Lafayette community has been adequately surveyed. Obtaining this data could impact the recommendation below. Therefore, the Commission requests that DCPS obtain this input before it makes a final decision.

As to Options 2 and 4, the Commission's survey indicates that the Lafayette community is split as to its preference.

As to Option 3, while the Commission's survey did not ask about this option specifically, the survey indicates that the Lafayette community favored a solution that was equitable for the Brightwood community.

30. It is clear that DCPS needs to further explore all Lafayette in-boundary options before the start of the 2021-2022 school year and before making a long-term decision. Particular focus should be concentrated on leasing or purchasing the Episcopal Center and adding more classroom space at Lafayette. Pending a permanent in-boundary solution, as a *temporary* measure for Lafayette for no more than the 2021-2022 school year (unless the Lafayette community agrees otherwise), the most equitable use of the Missouri Avenue building, based on the four options DCPS has identified, would appear to be Option 1 — establishing a standalone, city-wide early education center that is separately administered and available and that does not affect students' in-boundary rights to attend. This option also would allow Lafayette and Brightwood to continue to have their own Pre-K programs in their respective school buildings consistent with their available space and resources. DCPS, however, must immediately engage with the Brightwood community to determine its preferred option. DCPS must also ascertain whether the Lafayette and Brightwood communities would prefer an open lottery for the city-wide education center without preferences for any

schools or whether it favors a preference for Lafayette and Brightwood students. DCPS should make no decision until these data points are acquired and analyzed.

31. Such a standalone early education center would have a number of significant advantages.
- The addition of a standalone early education center on Missouri Avenue while maintaining the existing Pre-K programs at Lafayette and Brightwood will increase the total number of students city-wide who will get a free public school Pre-K education. The proposal to relocate all of Lafayette's Pre-K4 students to the Missouri Avenue building will not take full advantage of the space for 40 to 60 Pre-K4 students at the Broad Branch campus that could otherwise be used for that purpose.
 - If Lafayette continues its Pre-K4 program with about 40 slots — though it is possible that there may be room for more than two Pre-K4 classes in Lafayette's building⁴¹ — it will be able to select most of the students who have siblings already enrolled at Lafayette. This will minimize the burden on families who would have to drop off and pickup at two locations.
 - Preserving each student's in-boundary rights will avoid increasing the overcrowding in the Wilson feeder pattern and protect Brightwood's enrollment of its in-boundary students for kindergarten.
 - Prospective Lafayette Pre-K4 students would still be able to seek a lottery slot at the Missouri Avenue early education center. Most of those students that were not offered a seat at Lafayette will be students without a sibling at Lafayette, reducing the logistics challenges for parents by requiring only one drop off and pickup.
 - Lafayette's Pre-K4 will not be permanently relocated to Missouri Avenue. That will provide needed time to assess the impact on enrollment of this tumultuous pandemic year and will permit DCPS, in conjunction with the community, to

⁴¹ Lafayette Principal Dr. Carrie Broquard indicated at the November 18, 2020 LSAT meeting that without the relocation to Missouri Avenue, it would be necessary to "Reduce PK-4 again from 4 down to 3 or down to 2 classes," indicating that they may be able to accommodate 60 students at the Broad Branch Road campus. Lafayette Elementary School LSAT Meeting Minutes, November 18, 2020, available at <http://lafayettelsat.blogspot.com>.

look intensively for alternative solutions for Pre-K4 within the Lafayette boundaries.

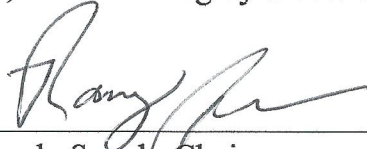
- Creation of a standalone early childhood center respects the apparent preference of Brightwood's principal and PTA president/ANC Commissioner who expressed their support for this option because it would not detract from their efforts to modernize the Brightwood campus.
- A substantial majority of Lafayette's prospective Pre-K parents indicated that they would not accept a lottery slot if the Pre-K program were relocated to the Missouri Avenue building, creating the likelihood that out-of-boundary students would be accepted, thereby exacerbating the overcrowding at Lafayette in the Wilson feeder pattern.

32. The Commission agrees with the Ward Councilmembers and State School Board Representatives that DCPS should not make a permanent decision to relocate Lafayette's Pre-K4 program to Missouri Avenue on its current accelerated schedule. At a minimum, DCPS should defer any permanent decision until it has fully explored in-boundary alternatives for Lafayette and fully engaged with the Brightwood Elementary School community.
33. If DCPS adopts the Commission's recommendation for a standalone early education center at the Missouri Avenue building, we urge it to take three additional steps. First, it should do whatever is possible to ensure that Lafayette's current Pre-K4 teachers have the first opportunity to fill teaching positions at the new Missouri Avenue school. Second, we advise DCPS to evaluate the possibility of creating a lottery preference in the new school for those with the most economic need. On a pilot basis, DCPS reserved a portion of available Pre-K positions at the standalone Stevens Early Learning Center for "at-risk" students.⁴² We suggest that it consider a similar preference for a Missouri Avenue early education center. Third, DCPS should establish a task force to "think, engage, and research about medium- and long-term options" to address overcrowding issues at Lafayette, Brightwood, and other Ward 3 and Ward 4 schools.⁴³

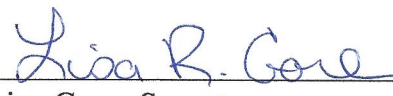
⁴² DCPS Responses to question 11.

⁴³ See State School Board Letter, pages 3-4.

Approved by ANC 3/4G after a discussion at its regularly scheduled and noticed January 11, 2021 meeting by a vote of 6 to 0 (a quorum being 4).



Randy Speck, Chair



Lisa Gore, Secretary

cc: Mayor Muriel Bowser
Chancellor Lewis Ferebee
Councilmember Mary Cheh
Councilmember Janeese Lewis-George
State School Board Representative Ruth Wattenberg
State School Board Representative Frazier O'Leary
ANC 4A06 Commissioner Candace Tiana Nelson
ANC 4C01 Commissioner Vanessa Rubio