

THE URBAN SCHOOL OF SAN FRANCISCO



NORTH CAMPUS EXPANSION PROJECT

Letters of Support and Other Documentation
for the San Francisco Planning Commissioners

Case No.: 2013.0862CE

Project Address: 1631–1639 Oak Street and 1520-1530 Page Street
and 1025 Masonic Avenue

Submitted January 28, 2014



1563 Page St., San Francisco, CA 94117 | ph 415 626 2919 | fax 415 626 1125 | www.urbanschool.org | info@urbanschool.org

January 27, 2015

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for this opportunity to present our community's support for Urban's North Campus Expansion. Also included is some supporting information and renderings for your review prior to our February 5th Planning Commission hearing.

Since Urban's founding in 1966, the school has grown to become a nationally recognized Bay Area college preparatory independent school with 377 students, more than 80 faculty and staff, and 2,000 alumni. The school has always been an educational leader, pioneering innovations such as block scheduling, a renowned service learning program, and the first 1:1 laptop program in a California independent high school, launched 15 years ago. Nearly 30% of our families benefit from financial aid, ensuring that students from a wide range of backgrounds can receive an Urban education.

The North Campus expansion is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to grow and complete our campus and addresses our most critical needs in athletics, academics and performing arts. While our proposed expansion allows the school to grow enrollment modestly from 380 to 420 students, the most enduring benefit is a dramatically improved environment for teaching, learning and community building for future generations of Bay Area students.

Under a long-term lease with our partner and neighbor St. Agnes Parish, the new facility represents an innovative urban design, in-filling two existing blacktop parking lots on Oak Street. The long-standing relationship between Urban and St. Agnes also ensures the sustainability of two important nonprofits in the historic Haight Ashbury neighborhood.

Our North Campus Expansion will strengthen the very fabric of Urban and enable the school to fulfill our mission-driven aspirations in educating the whole student with much-needed space for academics, arts and athletics, which along with community service – are the anchors of our educational program.

We respectfully request your favorable consideration of The Urban School's campus expansion. Please take a moment to review the following renderings of the proposed building, as well as the sincere and heartfelt letters of those in our community, including the Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council, our community service partners, neighbors, parents, alumni and trustees. We look forward to seeing you at the Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2015.

Sincerely,

Mark Salkind ('70)
Head of School













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(ex-officio)

21 January 2015

Re: Case 2013.0862CE , Urban School

Dear Planning Commission:

At it's January, 2015 meeting the Board of the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Council voted to support the Conditional Use request for the Urban School at 1631-39 Oak and 1520-30 Page Street.

The proposal to use the current parking lot behind St. Agnes Church, the undergrounding of the parking lot, the rehabilitation of the current St. Agnes gym into a performance space (Phase II) and the increasing of the schools enrollment by 40 students to 420 students is consistent with discussions had with the Urban School since late 2013.

We welcome the inclusion into the plan of several suggestions made by HANC members. We commend the Urban School for its willingness to involve the wider community in helping shape and define its expansion in our neighborhood.

We urge you to approve the application.

For the Board of HANC,

Calvin Welch
Housing and Landuse Board Member

**ANNE THORSON AND PETER J. ROSS
1919 BAKER STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115**

January 6, 2014

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Urban School of San Francisco – Oak Street Project - Conditional Use Permit Approval

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

On behalf of my wife, I express our enthusiastic support for Urban School's Oak Street Project, which is scheduled to come before you on January 22, 2015.

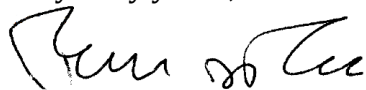
Our daughter, Katie, graduated from Urban in June 2012. My wife and I remain in awe of the way in which Urban inspired Katie's passion for lifelong learning, system of values, commitment to the community service and the environment and her kindness to others. Now a junior in college, she is pursuing a dual major in Applied Math and Psychology – and this from a student who, in 9th Grade, believed the sole reason for attending High School was to be with her friends.

I have been privileged to stay connected with Urban as the current Chair of its Board of Trustees. I am one of 11 Board members who no longer have a child at the school. We serve for two reasons: (1) our desire to give back to a school that has had such powerful impact on our children and (2) our desire to see Urban's Oak Street Project come to fruition.

The Oak Street Project is a once in a lifetime opportunity for Urban to add much needed classroom, student life and faculty/administrative office space, an appropriately sized gymnasium and a true performing arts facility. In addition to addressing Urban's critical programmatic needs, the Project will benefit the overall neighborhood as well. It will convert two blacktop parking lots into an aesthetically captivating structure and upgrade a 1950's style middle school gym into a dazzling performing arts center – all without compromising the Haight's unique feel.

I urge your support of this Project on January 22nd.

Very truly yours,



Peter J. Ross
Parent, Katie Ross, Class of 2012
Chair, Urban Board of Trustees

TARA GENE WILSON

January 8, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

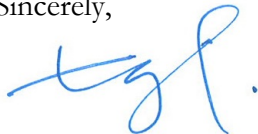
As a current trustee and the president of the Alumni Association, I am writing in support of The Urban School of San Francisco's Academic and Athletic Center project.

The Urban School has played a special role in my life since I was a student in the mid-1990s. Growing up in Visitacion Valley, The Urban School introduced me to the history and vibrancy of the Haight, and helped me to realize that *my* city extended far beyond the borders of the Southeast corridor. As a student, The Urban School was integral to my personal growth as it guided me to define my own sense of community, demonstrated the importance of service to one's community, and exhibited the value of multiculturalism as a necessary dynamic to an equitable society. I regard this encouragement to explore both physical and intellectual boundaries as the impetus to my nearly 25-year career working in the public sector.

As an adult, I enact these principles of community, service and equity in my role as a grantmaker, working to ensure that underserved Bay Area children, youth and their families have access to the resources they need to lead successful lives. I remain committed to The Urban School community to ensure that youth from low-income backgrounds and students of color have access to the same unique, high-quality education that was and continues to be so influential to me.

While additional space for academic and athletic activities is much needed, the most essential classroom has always been the unparalleled tapestry of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood and the rich diversity of the broader San Francisco community. I urge you to support this project. We need young leaders, engaged in their local communities, unafraid to traverse boundaries and inspired to affect positive change in the name of a better world.

Sincerely,



Tara Genea Wilson, Class of 1995
President, Alumni Association
Member, Board of Trustees

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My name is Yvonne Keene and I am the co-president of the Urban Parent Association. I have been involved with Urban for many years as I have two sons who attend the school (a senior and a freshman).

I am thrilled about The North Campus Expansion project. Urban makes the best of the space and resources it has available but the school desperately needs additional classrooms and a proper gymnasium and theater. My kids are active with many Urban activities from sports (fencing) to art to music (jazz band and choir). It is always a struggle to find the space to conduct practice, rehearsals and performances. When there is a performance at the school, only a limited number of students, parents, and friends can attend due to space issues. These types of facilities are commonplace in most other public and private high schools. I remember with fondness the facilities I enjoyed during my high school years in public school and wish the same for not only my kids but others as well.

I am very grateful for the influence Urban has had and will have on my children's lives. My older son is heading to college next year and is well prepared because of his experiences at Urban. My younger son, as a freshman, will benefit from the expansion project. High school is becoming extremely competitive with more students than spots available. Urban is a wonderful school and would like to offer that great education to many more students. This would be possible with the expansion project.

In summary, I hope you consider the immense benefits the Northern Campus Expansion project will bring to San Francisco and to the neighborhood. Thank you for your time on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Keene

January 8, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street
Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

The Urban School of San Francisco contributes to the fabric of our community as a nationally recognized innovator in high school education, an engaged member of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood as an employer and customer, and an educator of a diverse socioeconomic group of children, including my son, Alex. As Urban embarks on a program of building a North Campus – adding students, classrooms, athletic facilities and performance space – I urge you to support their project by voting to approve the requested Conditional Use Permit.

Urban desperately needs to expand its facility to accommodate a gymnasium and more performing arts space. We considered public schools and several private schools for Alex. Although the school's approach to education – collaborative learning, block scheduling and deep, original source based research – were a strong fit for his learning style, his passion for sports (baseball, basketball and soccer) as well as music (five years with the San Francisco Choral Society) gave him serious reservations, given Urban's constraints in those areas. We chose Urban irrespective of these concerns. The expansion will add a much needed high school-sized gymnasium and a larger theater as well as additional classrooms and meeting spaces for other student activities. Without this new facility, many families and many children who could benefit greatly from the Urban experience might not be willing to make that trade-off. Losing the diversity and vitality that those potential students offer would be a great loss to Urban and a great loss to the community.

Urban is urban. We believe that the school is educating great future citizens and any opportunity to expand their reach should be supported. Our son is in his second year of their service-learning program. We have been so impressed with the school's ability to draw upon its diverse student body, develop an individual's sense of cultural identity, and create opportunities in the broader San Francisco community to engage and serve in a community. Our family has always been very involved with food justice issues and Alex has been able to deepen his own understanding through school projects with food banks in San Francisco. Genuine and deep engagement in public service at an early age engenders lifelong commitment and will benefit the communities to which these students will belong.

Rich in San Francisco history, diverse socioeconomically, and vibrant as a neighborhood, the Haight location offers the students a unique community of which to be a part. My son leaves the campus at lunch and after school and buys something to eat at Street Taco, Haight Street Market, Amals Deli and the Cedar Deli & Market or gets a latte at People's Café with friends – at least those are the names I see on his debit card. He brings his friends from other parts of the city to the neighborhood and enjoys showing them why he loves it here.

We consider ourselves lucky that our son is able to attend such a fine school. I hope that you will support the proposed expansion and enable more families to have that same opportunity.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Hoskins

Lynne Frame

Maureen Carew
325 Carl Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
415.516.9430
maureencarew@sbcglobal.net

January 20, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

As a parent of an Urban 10th grader and a neighbor of Urban School, I am writing to you to encourage you to approve of the North Campus Expansion project at Urban. As evidenced by their existence in the neighborhood since 1977, Urban is a good neighbor and their expansion plan is a creative use of space above two parking lots.

My daughter was born in San Francisco and went to public schools until she was accepted, with generous financial aid, to Urban. Urban believes in having a diverse student population and my family is a fortunate beneficiary of that. Urban provides a unique experience for its students and families and they are dedicated to community service. I don't mean talking about it, I mean actually supporting students to find a cause and give back to their community. I truly believe they are growing tomorrow's leaders. As a nonprofit leader and educator, this was important to me as I considered high schools for my daughter.

Urban uses San Francisco as their classroom – again, another selling point for the school. Despite the teachers' ability to create unique learning environments in our neighborhood and beyond, Urban needs more classroom space. It is increasingly difficult to accommodate student needs in the current space and in addition, there are not adequate teacher work spaces. Why do teachers need work spaces? Unlike most other schools, teachers do not have their own classroom, they share classrooms. Therefore they need shared work space in order to plan lessons, collaborate with teachers, meet with parents, and for many other teaching related duties that are expected of them outside of classroom teaching.

Urban teachers, staff, students and families are patrons of the neighborhood. Having my daughter at Urban has helped me rediscover the Haight. After years of avoiding the tourists and "haighters" our family has newfound favorite places and we regularly patronize the stores and restaurants. The number of pizzas purchased for Urban events each year from Haight Street pizzerias alone is a boon to the local economy. Urban takes being a good neighbor very seriously ~ let's do the neighborly thing and support the expansion.

Sincerely,


Maureen Carew

Maureen Carew
Urban Parent and 24 year resident of 94117



Oak Street Project

Jan 6, 2015 9:25 PM

From:  Barry Klawans <barry@klawans.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Letter for the planning commission

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

Our daughter, Zoe Klawans, has been a student at the Urban School of San Francisco for the last 3 1/2 years, and we have gotten to know a number of the teachers, members of the administration, students, and their parents, during that time. We think Urban is a wonderful place for students — providing an excellent education, mandating involvement in community service, and being openly supportive of LGBTQ people. Urban also takes advantage of its location in the Haight to live up to its name and help its students understand life in a city, including the complex issues around the homeless and the disadvantaged.

This background really hit home to us when our daughter told us a story of an event that occurred at the camp where she spent last summer working as a counselor-in-training. There was a transgender camper in one of the sessions, and several of the kids in the cabin our daughter was leading felt very uncomfortable with this person, and didn't understand the situation. My daughter led a discussion with her group, answered their questions about transgender people, and helped them understand this person was an individual and should be treated equally. Urban deserves some of the credit for giving her the understanding that allowed her to address this issue at her camp.

One of the downsides to Urban today is the lack of a reasonably sized theater that can be used for meetings, plays, and concerts. Our daughter plays in the Urban Jazz Band, and their performances have been in a number of locations scattered across the city because they don't have a place large enough to perform in on campus. The existing theater is so small that a recent college information meeting for the parents of the senior class actually overflowed the seating capacity. For all these reasons, Urban's expansion will help Urban as well as the surrounding community. Therefore, please look favorably on Urban's plans for its North Campus expansion.

Sincerely,
Barry and Becky Klawans

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

January 5, 2015

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I'm writing in support of the expansion of the Urban School of San Francisco.

Both of my sons attended Urban. My older son graduated in 2012, my younger son is a junior.

I love the Urban School. If there were a word stronger than love I would use it. My children have thrived and become caring members of their community. My older son questions authority, challenges the thought process of his Jesuit teachers (he attends Fordham in NYC) and they love him for it. He has become a leader in his school.

My younger son has shown a love of music. He makes movies, works hard in school and has begun playing professionally as a drummer. He's disciplined, well spoken and respectful. (At home does not count!).

The Urban School has embraced us, welcomed us and challenged us. I include my wife and myself because we were very fearful of having our sons attend a private high school. My sons attended New Traditions Elementary School, West Portal Elementary School, Roosevelt and Hoover.

My son was offered a scholarship. My wife and I were afraid of how we would feel being around children of privilege. I have found Urban to be a place that prides itself on extending it's collective hand to those of us that can't afford the tuition. It's overwhelming to witness how excited families are to give to the school and it's scholarship fund.

Urban needs to expand. High schoolers need a place to play basketball, volleyball and other indoor sports. They need a place for their friends to cheer them on from the bleachers. They need a place to perform their plays, their concerts and to have pep rallies. These are the things that create good kids, good members of society, good memories. Team spirit is so important to a schools identity.

This is coming from a guy that doesn't care at all about sports. But I recognize it's incredible importance. I'm swept up not in the game itself but in school pride.

Urban needs to expand to offer opportunity to families like ours.

Urban is a good neighbor. I highly support the building of the new gym, theatre, classrooms and offices.

Thank you,

David Magidson
Diane Myrick
1359 8th Ave
San Francisco, Ca 94122
415 370-1595

January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

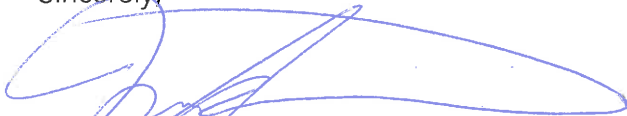
My name is Jennifer Mao and I am the Associate Director of Community Engagement at Reading Partners in San Francisco. I am writing you today to voice my support for the planned expansion project at The Urban School of San Francisco.

Reading Partners has been a community service partner with Urban for 3 years. Urban's students serve our organization by providing one-on-one tutoring for elementary school students with our program, who are reading below grade level.

We are proud to be partnered with a high school that includes integrated and required community service as part of its curriculum and which takes seriously its mission to create a passion for learning in its students. Urban students work with more than 100 agencies and non-profits throughout the City and Bay Area each year, including ours, contributing thousands of hours of service. The school has deep roots in the Haight Ashbury community and in the City. Our organization recognizes that high quality college preparatory education is a critical priority for San Francisco families. An added benefit to this project is that it will allow Urban to serve more families, who in turn will assist our constituents at Reading Partners.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you our support of The Urban School and for its proposed expansion project.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Mao
Associate Director of Community Engagement
Reading Partners
510-612-5261
jennifer.mao@readingpartners.org

January 14, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My name is Sasha Mungal and I am the Director of Volunteer Programs and Community Partnerships at Breakthrough San Francisco. We are an education non-profit that launches motivated middle school students with limited educational opportunities on the road to college and encourages young people to pursue careers in education. I am writing you today to voice my support for the planned expansion project at The Urban School of San Francisco.

Breakthrough San Francisco has been a community service partner with Urban for a number of years now. Urban's students serve our organization by volunteering as after-school tutors as part of their service-learning commitment at the school. We also work with volunteers who go beyond this commitment to stay involved with the program. Urban hosts us each year at their annual community service fair.

We are proud to be partnered with a high school that includes integrated and required community service as part of its curriculum and which takes seriously its mission to create a passion for learning in its students. Urban students work with more than 100 agencies and non-profits throughout the City and Bay Area each year, including ours, contributing thousands of hours of service. The school has deep roots in the Haight Ashbury community and in the City. Our organization recognizes that high quality college preparatory education is a critical priority for San Francisco families. An added benefit to this project is that it will allow Urban to serve more families, who in turn will assist our constituents at (name of organization).

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you our support of The Urban School and for its proposed expansion project.

Sincerely,

Sasha Mungal
Director of Volunteer Programs and Community Partnerships
Breakthrough San Francisco
350 Masonic Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94118
415-568-3667
sasha@breakthroughsf.org



Oak Street Project

Jan 9, 2015 2:42 PM

From: Lucy de Anda <deandacollegeaps@gmail.com>

To: Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: North Campus Expansion Letter of Support

Attachments: Attach0.html / Uploaded File (5K)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing as a parent of two children at the Urban School of San Francisco in support of the North Campus Expansion Plan.

This plan will significantly enhance the school and the neighborhood in which it planted itself 50 years ago as a place for world-class education, community gathering and community service. The school board has worked diligently with the Church and neighborhood to come to an agreement that is win-win-win: the school, the Church community, and the neighborhood will benefit from this improvement.

We chose the Urban School in part because of its mission to serve the community in which it was founded. Our daughter, now a senior, has had the opportunity to work at the Chinese Immersion School, at the Acrosports Gymnastics Center, and Lowe Down Productions. Each year the Urban student body learns directly and individually about how their unique talents can serve San Francisco's many diverse community organizations. This experience has been transformational for Charlotte, and our younger daughter will soon embark on her own journey of understanding social justice firsthand through this curriculum.

On a side note, the school's recent response to the Ferguson and Staten Island cases was dynamic and thoughtful. Within days of the grand jury verdict in New York and the resultant upset, Urban faculty, staff and students put together a week of lunchtime seminars, in addition to an all school meeting. As Mark Salkind wrote to parents, "As a school committed to extending learning beyond the classroom, we believe it is critical to create opportunities that encourage students to grapple honestly with difficult and charged events and issues. We want our students to know how to talk mindfully about race and to understand its history in America as part of the identity of each citizen ...". The forums included an information session on what grand juries do and what had transpired in Missouri and New York; Dealing with Systems of Power - a session for those interested in learning more about activism and how to engage meaningfully and thoughtfully to invite change; and a session inviting students to come for meditation to have a chance to decompress. Mark underscored how the 4-year service learning curriculum provides students with background knowledge and language to talk constructively on charged issues of race and discrimination. The benefits of this curriculum and dedication to young people ripple throughout the City.

There are many new high schools coming on line in the next few years. The change is exciting. The Urban School, however, remains incredibly unique not only in its commitment to serving the surrounding community, but also in that 30% of our students receive financial aid -- the school is committed to a diverse student body. We must build a gymnasium and performance space to continue to draw students from across the city. The new space will enhance our school, but also the neighborhood and the Church community with improved buildings, landscaping, parking

and community spaces.

Thank you so much for your time and careful consideration on this matter.

Respectfully yours,
Lucy de Anda
901 Hillsborough Boulevard
Hillsborough, CA
94010

January 6, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

We are writing in support of the Urban School's North Campus Expansion project. We are the parents of a junior at the Urban School, as well as neighbors, living a dozen blocks east in the Lower Haight.

The Urban School is a city treasure, offering a progressive and distinctive education to its students, making them optimal San Francisco citizens. They are taught to think deeply, act with conviction, and make a difference in their world. Our daughter has grown more committed to San Francisco's well being in her time at Urban.

The school's current facility is small, and lacks multiple common spaces that nurture community. Such togetherness is vital for the conversations and meetings that lead to community action around shared causes. The parents, faculty and students will have a stronger bond with the expansion.

Urban's commitment to diversity is exceptional, and the expansion will increase their ability to serve more students. Urban provides generous financial aid to nearly 30% of their students, drawing a student body from many different socioeconomic backgrounds, culture, races, religion and sexual orientations. Expanding the class means more opportunity for students of all backgrounds.

We thank you for considering Urban's North Campus Expansion and ask you to approve the plan, thereby strengthening one of our neighborhood's, and city's, most valuable institutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meg & Doug Hart', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Meg & Doug Hart
579 Waller St.
San Francisco, CA 94117

65 Buena Vista Terrace
San Francisco, CA 94117

andresparza@yahoo.com

January 8, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am Andres Esparza, a 28-year resident of the Buena Vista Park neighborhood, as well as a parishioner at St. Agnes Church. My stepdaughter Jill Bransford just graduated from Urban in May 2014, and we would like to express our support for the North Campus Expansion for the Urban School of San Francisco.

The Urban School is a wonderful asset for the entire Haight Ashbury neighborhood, providing a high-quality private school experience that benefits not only the families that attend the school, but also the neighborhood shops and merchants, schools like the Chinese Immersion School at De Avila who benefit from Urban's Community Service programs, and the St. Agnes community. The new Academic and Athletics Center is a great fit for the neighborhood that will provide additional classroom space, a badly needed modern gymnasium, and parking and conference rooms that will be shared with St. Agnes and other local community groups as well as the Urban community.

My only regret about the North Campus Expansion stems from the fact that Jill has graduated and will not benefit directly from the new facilities. Our family, in addition to all the Urban community, has worked for several years to bring this project to fruition, and we look forward to quickly making the new facilities available to Urban students, faculty and supporters as well as the rest of the local community.

Regards,

Andres Esparza
65 Buena Vista Terrace
San Francisco, CA 94117

January 11, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: The Urban School of San Francisco's North Campus Expansion

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

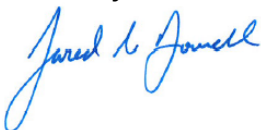
My name is Jared Dowell and I am writing in support of the Urban School of San Francisco's application for a Conditional Use Permit for its North Campus Expansion project.

I am an alumnus of the Urban School and a member of its Alumni Council. I volunteer my time to Urban because of how much I value Urban as an institution. I attended 3 high schools between 1995 and 1999 as a consequence of my family relocating twice. The Urban School accepted me as a junior in the fall of 1997 and I graduated from Urban in the spring of 1999. My experience as a student at Urban was incredibly impactful. I was surrounded by wonderful teachers and students, many of whom remain close friends to this day. Urban is an incredible place for teenagers to learn and grow as people. The teachers and administration go out of their way to ensure that every student is challenged with a wide array of academic, social, artistic, athletic, and community service opportunities.

Urban has succeeded despite significant space constraints. When I attended Urban, the school was comprised of two former residential buildings and the classrooms were very cramped. While Urban has since added an additional building, the facility is meaningfully under-sized relative to its peer institutions. Moreover, Urban does not have a high-school sized gym or adequate space for the performing arts. The North Campus Expansion project would provide the school with much needed space and additional resources and enable Urban to provide its students and the surrounding community with a truly remarkable place of learning.

I urge you to approve Urban's application for a Conditional Use Permit.

Sincerely,



Jared I. Dowell
Urban Class of 1999 and Alumni Council Member

**Terry Gamble Boyer
1 Belmont Avenue
San Francisco, California 94117
415.519.5799**

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

January 5, 2015

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing as a former parent and current trustee of the Urban School of San Francisco in support of the school's building project on Oak Street at Masonic. In my nine years as a trustee, I have seen the board, administration, and faculty of the school steward this project from its earliest conception. How exciting it is to have secured a site directly across from the Urban School, one that currently serves only parking intermittently but that, once realized as a building, will be home to athletics, scholarship, community and more.

Urban is dear to our hearts. My husband, Peter Boyer, and I watched in amazement as our two children, Chapin and Anna, grew in maturity, academic engagement, and in their sense of community during their four years at Urban. Because we live close by, our kids were able to walk, ride bikes or the bus to school. They learned independence and responsibility with Haight Street as part of their wider campus. And they thrived in facilities that, while terrific, bulged at the seams and suffered for the lack of options such as a dance program, more classroom flexibility, more places to gather indoors and out. Both of our children, now young adults and one living back in San Francisco post-college, would say that Urban's reach and potential would be better served by better facilities, especially for athletics and performance.

Our family holds education as one of our highest priorities – not only the education of our own children, but of our community of children, many of which come from different backgrounds, learning styles, interests and goals. Urban's ability to embrace and nurture so many different kids for nearly half a century has garnered our enthusiastic support, resulting in our family's commitment of time, treasure, and talent not only to this building project, but to the broader mission of the school. From learning about California's water systems through "Cal Studies" program to parsing Faulkner or Moby Dick, from drilling down on pandemics through "Infectious Diseases" to understanding food justice by working at farmer's markets, from writing one's own play for the "One Acts" to performing in a jazz band at the Herbst Theater, our children have had unique and life-changing experiences at Urban. Over winter break, we listened as Chapin and Anna discussed their Shakespeare class at Urban, arguing whether the comedies or the histories were more compelling, agreeing that "Othello" was ridiculous, but "Hamlet" was awesome.

It is our family's hope that Urban continues to thrive and serve many more students in such a tangible and transformative way and feel strongly that an enhanced campus serves this goal.

Thank you for your consideration.

With best regards,

Terry Gamble Boyer

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

January 12, 2015

RE: The Urban School's North Campus Expansion Proposal

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I write this letter in support of Urban's North Campus Expansion proposal. As an Urban alum, it is from my personal experience as a student and graduate that I can endorse Urban's expansion.

Urban instilled in me the importance of making a difference in the world through volunteering and work. As an Urban student I spent countless hours volunteering in the Haight/Ashbury community, serving the Haight Ashbury Clinic and Soup Kitchen. In my senior year, volunteering took up the bulk of my studies for one quarter (12 weeks), allowing me to immerse myself in serving those in need. As a result of my experiences serving others, I based my career on giving back as a lawyer and health insurance advisor. My desire to use my abilities to help people came in large part from Urban – an experience without which I would not have the awareness, gratitude and consequent satisfaction that I do today.

Urban is responsible for creating open, creative and compassionate minds in students who strive to make positive change. The North Campus Expansion will enable more students to access such learning and in turn better our community, city and world.

It is based on the aforementioned reasons that I support Urban's North Campus Expansion proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Whitney Larson', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Whitney Larson, Esq.
Urban Class of 2004
142 Sansome St., Ste 500
San Francisco, CA 94104

1926 Ortega Street
San Francisco,
Ca. 94122
Jan 7 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

I have lived in San Francisco for over 20 years and my oldest child is a freshman at The Urban School. She is a smart athletic kid who went to public school in the city for all 9 years, before winning a place at Urban. I am now a single mom and I am so grateful that my daughter receives a substantial scholarship from Urban and is able to attend this amazing school. 30 % of kids at Urban receive financial aid and it is such an amazing gift to low-income families. My other 2 children qualify for free lunch and medical and it is important to me that the planning commission know how much The Urban school reaches out and gives back to the community on a daily basis.

Although I live in the Sunset, I spend a lot of time in the neighborhood and frequent places like the Harvey Milk Photography Center, local merchants and the Pan Handle. During the summer my children get to attend the AIM High program for struggling public middle school kids. Urban shares its facilities and reaches out to at risk families in the city. Local kids get a chance at reaching their potential. There is a real emphasis on community service throughout Urban's service learning curriculum.

The new north campus expansion project at Urban will truly benefit my daughter and the wider community. Her true love is soccer and right now they are training by running up and down the stairs between classrooms. They have to do conditioning inside cramped academic classrooms. A high school needs adequate sports facilities and it's terrible that they have to keep renting space just to train.

Urban has a great theater program with no real space to perform. At a recent performance there was standing room only space due to cramped facilities. The new buildings would provide such a space as well as many more classrooms and offices.

The neighborhood has everything to gain from this new academic, athletic and performance space. Urban is one of the only independent schools that truly gives' back to the community. The school has been there since 1977 representing the core values of diversity by drawing students and faculty from

many walks of life. Urban is the second largest employer in the neighborhood and supports local merchants. The students go on to amazing colleges and return to San Francisco with the education necessary to keep our city the vibrant diverse place it is today.

As a parent, local teacher and longtime resident of San Francisco I am begging you to please approve the new north campus expansion plans. The school needs this addition to survive and my children and thousands more will benefit from having a safe place to train, study and perform.

Thank you so much for considering these plans for approval. My family is very grateful.

Yours,

Ciara Bedingfield

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to you as a parent at the Urban School. I very much hope that you will grant approval for the school's North Campus Expansion project. I live in the neighborhood on Clayton and Frederick Street, and I am a registered nurse at UCSF working at the Parnassus campus. I feel strongly that the building would benefit the neighborhood. Urban is a substantial supporter of local businesses and also one of the largest employers in the neighborhood. Their presence is key to keeping the Upper Haight a vital neighborhood and helping to minimize the impact of the transient population. The proposed site sits on an under used black top/parking lot which would be transformed into an incredible multi-use facility adding space the school desperately needs.

Urban is an amazing school offering San Francisco children an incredible college preparatory education. As well, every class is taught from a perspective that looks deep at inequality in our society. The school's core values stipulate that an Urban education be available to a diverse group of students considering both race and socioeconomic status. They have a strong financial aid program with 30% of kids receiving full or reduced tuition. As well, there are many middle class families like myself who are lucky to be able to work and afford this great education for their kids. The slight increase in the student body will only benefit more San Francisco kids. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jenny Van Horn

January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the Urban School's North Campus Expansion. As a parent of a sophomore and a homeowner in the neighborhood, I can attest to the dedication that Urban has both to its students and to the community in which it resides.

The Urban education strives to be truly meaningful. That is, the learning is not purely a study of facts and figures, but ventures into meaty areas such as the self, the community, racism, politics, and the "why and the how" our world is the way it is. In the past year and a half I have witnessed the maturation of my son and other students as they begin to take ownership of their lives and become participants in their communities. I view Urban's plan to expand its campus and increase the student body as a way to affect more students in this way.

In addition, Urban takes great pride in being a good neighbor and in its neighborhood. On a micro-level, I see Urban being very attentive and conscientious to its neighbors about parking and traffic issues. I appreciate that their highest goal is to be a good neighbor and they do not appease the parents by bending traffic and parking rules on Page Street. More broadly, I have come to understand that the Haight is just as much a part of Urban as Urban is a part of the Haight. The Haight's vibrancy facilitates the self-growth of the students and its central location allows for tremendous autonomy. The student body reflects the diversity and eclecticism of the neighborhood.

I see nothing but more good things coming from Urban's expansion and I hope your commission will choose to support its growth.

Sincerely,

Lela S. Means

Date: January 7, 2015

To: San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

From: Julia Rowe

Re: Urban School North Campus Expansion

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to urge you to approve the Urban School's plans to build new facilities adjacent to their Page Street campus in the Haight.

As a design-educator, I have had my eye on Urban since 1979 when I came out to California from the East Coast... well before the arrival of my daughter who is currently a sophomore at the school. Urban had a reputation as a place where kids became intellectually engaged, hardy, can-do, and civic-minded. Later, as a professor and administrator at the California College of the Arts I saw that this was true. Urban kids had a mix of confidence, empathy, and experience that made them stand out.

Now my daughter is part way through her high school years at the school and I can see first-hand what kind of education is crafted at 1563 Page. Urban is indeed a place where young people deepen their thinking; Urban graduates may remember the values and challenges posed by their high school experience even more than those that follow in college and beyond. Our city has a reputation for creating new leaders with innovative vision: we should support this institution in its effort to develop thoughtful and motivated San Franciscan citizens. In my family's case, Urban has turned a smart kid who was bored by Middle School science into a passionate biology fan, one who is thinking of ways to address underserved populations in the US and beyond.

Recently in a conversation with Urban's head, Mark Salkind, I realized that Urban spent its first decades investing in faculty and staff. In retrospect, this was why we chose to send our child to the school: the quality of the teaching promised to be beyond stellar and so it has been. At the same time, we recognized that other high schools had more reasonable and spacious quarters, something that is important for young people as well. I hope that the Commission will allow the school to eliminate this compromising scenario.

With the new buildings proposed by the school, Urban will be able to ameliorate its cramped conditions, that is obvious and obviously a necessary step. If I put my professorial hat back on (I taught architects, designers and artists) I would argue that the new buildings will also give back to the urban fabric of the Haight, making efficient and beautiful use of what is now two blacktop parking lots. The building plans are elegant and they will anchor the Oak/Masonic corner. Good architecture can uplift and educate all of us--parents, teachers, students, neighbors and passers by. This one will also prove that, in an unusual partnership between a house of worship and a progressive educational institution, two non-profits can create a win/win urban solution that all of us can enjoy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julia Rowe

Urban Parent

Former Director of the Core Division California College of the Arts

Former Associate Dean of Students, California College of the Arts

Walter Van Riel and Maria Osmena
1259 15th Av
San Francisco, CA 94122
January 7, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:


My daughter, Julia Van Riel, is a freshman student at the Urban School of San Francisco. We would like to express our support for her school's North Campus Expansion project.

We have another daughter at the Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts and we are very well aware of the differences between public and private high schools in San Francisco.

Public schools, like SOTA and Lowell, have athletic and performing art facilities that independent schools can only dream off. The students at Urban deserve equally sized on campus athletic and performing arts facilities and we hope you will support the school in that effort.

We believe Urban to be academically the best independent school in the city and a role model of other public and private school nationwide. This school is a gem in our city and we feel fortunate to have access to such an amazing institution. We hope you will support the school in its initiative to have a school-sized gymnasium, large theater, and additional office space across the street of the current academic building.

Sincerely,

The block contains two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is for Walter Van Riel, and the second is for Maria Osmena. Both signatures are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Walter Van Riel and Maria Osmena
Parent of Julia Van Riel, Class 2018

KARIE BROWN
KLBKLB@MAC.COM

9 January 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am very happy to send this letter in support of the new Academic and Athletic Center that the Urban School is hoping to develop. I have been on the Board of Trustees for five years. I believe in Urban and deeply appreciate what it does for its students, the Haight Ashbury neighborhood and the broader Bay Area community. It is truly an innovative educational institution. All three of my children attended Urban; my son is now a junior at University of Chicago and my twin daughters are freshmen at Tufts and Johns Hopkins. The Urban School provided them with an unparalleled education and they all benefited from the rich co-curricular activities offered. They also learned so much about urban life and how to be good citizens, because of Urban's location and its integrated service learning program.

While the academic and co-curricular programs provided by Urban are exemplary, the facilities need to be expanded and modernized. The Urban School badly needs additional classroom space and suffers from the lack of a high school-sized gymnasium and a larger theater, both of which are commonplace in public and private schools in the city. The school is forced to rent gyms and athletic facilities, often at some distance from the school, as well as large performance spaces throughout the city. Beyond arts and athletics, every space is used everyday for classes, clubs and meetings. Urban lacks sufficient office space for teachers, College Counseling, Learning Services and other student services. I feel that the new Academic and Athletics Center is a great addition for the School and that the design fits well into the neighborhood.

Urban has a strong set of core values that inform all of our work and programming. One of our core values is that we believe that a school community made up of students, teachers and families drawn from many different backgrounds is the best way to prepare students for their 21st century lives. Nearly 30% of our students receive financial aid; many come from a range of religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds; and all students volunteer throughout the city and Bay Area, contributing thousands of hours of service. This community service experience had a profound impact on each of my kids. Partially due to these intense and compelling volunteer opportunities, they have each chosen educational and career paths that enable them to contribute to a more socially, environmentally and economically healthy society. One is studying social entrepreneurship; one is studying environmental sciences; and one plans to be a neurologist.

Urban attracts a diverse student body with a high level of academic excellence, but at our current size we turn away many interested and highly qualified students. The North Campus Expansion, with its seven additional classrooms, will enable Urban to serve more San Francisco students and thus benefit families seeking additional high school choices. This will have a ripple effect on the local community, bringing further vitality to the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Karie Brown

January 15, 2014

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My name is Sonia Caltvedt and I am the Marketing Director at Community Music Center in San Francisco. I am writing you today to voice my support for the planned expansion project at The Urban School of San Francisco.

Community Music Center has been a community service partner with Urban for six years. Urban's students serve our organization in so many ways. Projects have ranged from video editing, to demonstrating instruments in our quarterly instrument petting zoos, to posting fliers about our programs in neighboring businesses. We've immensely appreciated the skill and the willingness of Urban students to step in and help wherever it is needed.

We are proud to be partnered with a high school that includes integrated and required community service as part of its curriculum and which takes seriously its mission to create a passion for learning in its students. Urban students work with more than 100 agencies and non-profits throughout the City and Bay Area each year, including ours, contributing thousands of hours of service. The school has deep roots in the Haight Ashbury community and in the City. Our organization recognizes that high quality college preparatory education is a critical priority for San Francisco families. An added benefit to this project is that it will allow Urban to serve more families, who in turn will assist our constituents at Community Music Center.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you our support of The Urban School and for its proposed expansion project.

Sincerely,

Sonia Caltvedt
Marketing Director
Community Music Center
(415) 647-6015 x75

January 21, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Urban High School—North Campus Expansion

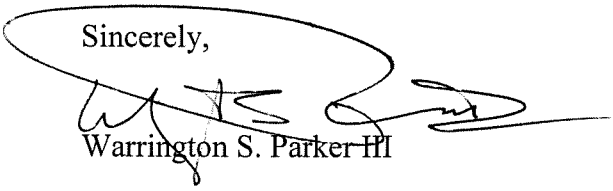
Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I write to express my whole hearted support for the Urban High School Campus Expansion project. As a father of two children who have attended Urban High School and as a Trustee of Urban High School, I have seen my children and others benefit from the education program and the values taught and lived by Urban High School.

More than that, I have seen how Urban High School seeks to benefit the entire community. From offering bridge programs for the less privileged to service learning projects where the students are required to spend a significant amount of their time on community activities, Urban High School seeks and does benefit more than just those that attend it.

This North Campus Expansion will allow Urban High School to continue and expand its provision of academic and community services to its students and well as the community at large.

Sincerely,



Warrington S. Parker III

San Francisco Planning Commission

1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am a parent of two teenagers who attend the Urban School of San Francisco and I ask that you approve the expansion project of the Urban campus. Urban is a unique school that creates inquisitive learners and values a diverse student body. I serve on the Urban board of trustees as a co-chair of the Diversity and Inclusion committee and am consistently impressed with the thoughtful nature of the administration and faculty. The Urban community is comprised of a wide range of students and families and the school takes equity in education very seriously. The programming and services that Urban supports is vast and the school simply needs more room to grow.

I moved to San Francisco in 1990 fresh out of college and moved into a Victorian flat on Cole at Page. I remember meeting many Urban students. I lived in the Haight and loved how Urban helped create the feel of a real neighborhood. I only imagined what it would be like to grow up in San Francisco & attend such a progressive high school.

Fast forward and now I have two teenagers attending Urban and have an insider's view of teenage life in SF. Raising a family in SF is not easy and we make many sacrifices to stay in the city. Many families feel pushed out but we were determined to stay and are grateful for having landed at Urban. We love SF and want our children to continue to love learning & gain appreciation for this special school. Urban has been an outstanding partner in parenting and creating community for my family. The Urban community is bursting at the seams in the current campus property. Events are hosted across the city and our students are shuttling to many different locations to participate in school events. We need a larger campus and this expansion project is so exciting and I urge you to support this effort.

I am proud to be a member of the Urban community and want to see the school grow. Urban is a cherished and valued institution within our city. Urban should be permitted to expand the campus and continue its' work to educate students as independent life long learners who care about the environment and the societies in which they belong.

Serina A. Lopez
Parent & Urban Board Trustee

Robert M. Rosner
3717 21st Street
San Francisco, California 94114

8th January 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
Suite 400, 1650 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

This letter is in support of The Urban School of San Francisco's Conditional Use Permit application for its proposed Academic and Athletic Center. My wife and I are longstanding residents of San Francisco. Our youngest son attended The Urban School of which I am a trustee. We believe that Urban's "North Campus project" is important both for the neighborhood and for the city.

My wife and I love San Francisco for its diversity, economic vibrancy, and strong sense of community. We actively support education in San Francisco—public schools, private schools and charter schools—as we believe that a broad selection of educational opportunities are critical for maintaining healthy communities.

The Urban School is a unique institution, The school's core values mirror that of what makes San Francisco a vibrant city: Community service, economic diversity and inclusiveness and education excellence. Urban provides a college preparatory education to a diverse socio-economic demographic. With a financial aid serving over 30% of its students, by increasing the student population the school will be able to provide more financial aid to those who desire access its outstanding curriculum and teachers that otherwise would not have the financial ability to do so.

The proposed gymnasium and theatre are critical components of Urban's future. To ensure success in the school's mission to serve a diverse community it is imperative that it augments its strong academic curricula with strong arts and athletic programs. From the admissions visits, we have first hand experience that this proposed project is broadening the school's appeal.

The Urban School is an economic engine for the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. Its almost 400 students, on an open campus frequent the neighborhood merchants. A new theatre and gymnasium will increase the patronage of these neighborhood stores.

Thank you in advance for your support of the important project for The Urban School of San Francisco, the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood and the City of San Francisco.

Sincerely Yours,

Robert Rosner

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103
Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Urban School of San Francisco's North Campus Expansion project and your consideration of the CUP approval. I recognize this is a critical step in the future of Urban and its ability to continue to serve a diverse community of students in San Francisco.

I am a parent of a graduate of Urban and a Trustee of the school. My family lives eight blocks from the school on Lone Mountain and we are active participants in the Pan Handle and Haight Street communities. This is our home and has been for 14 years. We are thrilled by the prospects of an expanded Urban campus which will be welcomed by future generations of San Franciscans. The campus will eliminate unsightly parking on blacktop parking areas and create a symbiotic footprint with St. Agnes church, which is a bedrock structure in the neighborhood. This will be a significant investment in a neighborhood that deserves a more progressive future.

We have another child who hopes to go to Urban in the future. However, it is a competitive environment for attracting future students who have alternative choices of schools with much more expansive campuses and which are modernizing their ability to serve students academically and athletically. Urban needs to solidify its future in the Haight thru completion of its own modernization and to allow Urban to compete for this diverse and talented community of students. Urban's location in the Haight since 1977, is one of its signatures. My daughter spent a significant amount of time in the neighborhood while a student at Urban, which was a positive experience. Urban students have a positive financial and social impact on the neighborhood, offsetting somewhat the negative influences of outsiders in the Haight.

Please consider my family's strong support of the Urban School of San Francisco and the Haight Ashbury neighborhood in your decision.

Brian L May

Past Parent and Trustee

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

I have been a teacher at The Urban School of San Francisco for almost ten years; I'm currently the English department chair and a faculty trustee; and I've been a resident of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood (Clayton and Page, for several years). I'm writing to show my support for the North Campus project (building a new Academic and Athletic center, and then a Performing Arts facility), which will add enormously to our school's ability to serve the students and larger community of the Urban School.

It's the nature and spirit of this community that moves me to write in support of this project. I've watched our students work with the pre-schoolers at the Whitney Young Center next door, and with the Chinese Immersion kindergartners up the street; as a faculty advisor, I've weeded and mulched parts of the Panhandle and Golden Gate Park with our Urban students; as an Urban teacher, I've tutored public school students through the Haight's Huckleberry Youth program. Without necessarily flaunting its involvement, the Urban community extends outward from our little building into the larger urban landscape and populace. Every November I've watched neighborhood voters stream into the polls on the first floor of our building; outside musical groups use our facilities; and our student groups perform at local retirement homes. We've held untold plays, performances, athletic events, and other gatherings, all within the confines of rather tight quarters. Expanding our campus across the street would allow our community to thrive even more (and to extend itself even further!).

I believe deeply in the educational philosophy of the Urban School, in our commitment to progressive education, critical thinking, and social justice. I've watched untold students grow enormously while at Urban, graduate, and then commit themselves to valuable, socially aware work. The North Campus project would help us continue to offer this unique Urban education to students, and might even allow us to reach more students than we can now. I support this project fully, and hope you will do the same.

Best,
Courtney D. Rein
English Dept. Chair, The Urban School of San Francisco

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Urban School of San Francisco – Oak Street Project - Conditional Use Permit
Approval

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We sincerely believe that as you review the Urban School of San Francisco's plans for a new academic and athletic building on Oak Street you will discover a project that is a positive addition to our community. As you know, any project must be evaluated on its contributions to both the smaller community it primarily serves, the larger community it is part of, and the benefits it provides from a city planning and urban design standpoint. We are very proud to be part of a project that we believe positively delivers on all three.

As parents of two young men who were both educated at the Urban School, we are proud that they not only graduated with strong academic skills, but also with a broader understanding of the roles that they play in the community. This active participation and involvement beyond the borders of the campus was guided by the schools ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion, and is clearly evident in the way the students and the school interact with and are part of the Haight Community.

From a design standpoint, we believe the project also excels—taking an unsightly series of parking lots and transforming them into an active, elegant and appropriately contextual building. By adding the energy and activity of the school to the streetscape of Oak Street, the building will help to insure a vibrant and safe streetscape.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this important project. It is critical for the school to ensure that there are appropriate facilities for our students, and we believe, highly beneficial to the community as well. With your support, we can envision the continued enhancement and evolution of the Haight Neighborhood as an inclusive, quality environment for students, residents and visitors alike.

Kind regards,

Scott Drummond
Urban School Trustee and Parent

Julie Drummond
Urban School Parent

Steven Dinkelspiel
741 3rd Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94118

January 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed expansion project of the Urban School.

I have been associated with Urban for many decades – as student, parent, board member and community volunteer – and know the school to be an exemplary institution, neighbor and participant in the fabric of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood.

The current proposed project has a great deal to recommend it.

It was developed in **collaboration with another important neighborhood institution, the diocese of St. Agnes**. The long, mutually supportive relationship between the school and the church is a wonderful example of institutional cooperation and co-existence that is too rarely seen in our City.

The proposed development **will actually result in a decrease in the impact of cars in the neighborhood** and will offer much needed parking spaces for the church on Sundays and for the school during the rest of the week. The net result for the neighborhood should be **less congestion and more parking available for other residents**.

There will be no reduction of housing units. By developing the project on an existing parking lot and by paying to relocate an existing home, the school has been careful to maintain the neighborhood housing stock.

The school has **consulted with a wide variety of neighborhood residents and organizations** throughout the project planning process.

The Urban School has long proven to be an exemplary part for of the fabric of the Haight. It students and staff are active participants in community activities; they are respectful neighbors; and they spend their money locally. There are few local institutions that have maintained such an excellent relationship with the surrounding community for the many decades that Urban has.

The proposed project is appropriately scaled and is an necessary addition for a school that is recognized locally and nationally as a leader in educational innovation and the teaching of the values of social justice and community involvement.

With all this in mind, I strongly encourage the Commission to approve the proposed project as submitted by the Urban School.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Dinkelspiel '74

Laura and John Fisher
3757 Washington Street
San Francisco, California 94118

January 1, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are parents of an Urban graduate and a current Urban student. I have been on the board of the school for almost 8 years and have immensely enjoyed this experience. Our two other children chose to attend other private high schools; thus we have been able to compare the differences. I believe that Urban has the best faculty, commitment to innovative education and support of and for the community an approach to education that at its core supports students.

I can attest to this as our Urban graduate earned a degree in engineering after her teachers ignited in her a love of science, sense of curiosity and confidence. Our current Urban student entered high school with a belief that he disliked and was not good at writing. He has excelled in this subject matter and is even considering this as a co-degree in college. I have witnessed the power of Urban which instills in its students the confidence to explore their curiosities and a lifelong passion for learning.

Currently, Urban has wanted to offer diverse course offerings, but has been hampered by its plant's physical constraints. The building project would allow the school to increase its academic course diversity and access. It would also allow for more seats which would continue the school's commitment to serving students of all social, cultural and economic backgrounds. In addition, the new sports facility would enable Urban to host tournaments, increase its school spirit and serve more students through sport, dance and movement classes.

Although my children will not be directly served by this new campus, I feel very strongly that the Bay Area families need this and am extremely proud and fortunate to be part of this potential project.

Sincerely,

Laura and John Fisher

*San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103*

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to lend my full support for the The Urban School of San Francisco's North Campus Expansion project. As part of this project, Urban is asking for a modest increase (40 students) in their maximum enrollment.

As the Head of another private school in the city, I have always admired Urban's mission and its values. Each year we send a diverse group of students to Urban, and we do so with great confidence because we know they will be in good hands. More specifically, Urban's commitment to students, teachers and families from many different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions and sexual orientations matches the values of many of our families. Nearly 30% of their students receive financial aid – one of the most generous allotments of FA dollars of any private school in the city.

Lastly, Urban has been a part of the Haight since 1977 – they have deep roots and strong ties to the neighborhood. They have a track record of being a good neighbor and, in fact, adding to the overall quality of the neighborhood through regular community service activities and through their support of local merchants.

I ask that you please strongly consider supporting Urban's request for a new CUP – I know that if granted this approval, Urban will continue to make a big difference in the lives of students across San Francisco and for the Haight Asbury community for years to come!

Truly,

*Steve Morris
Head, The San Francisco School*

Deann Wright and Luke Evnin
768 El Camino del Mar
San Francisco, CA 94121

January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are writing to express our support for The Urban School's North Campus Expansion and specifically the proposed Academic and Athletic facility as well as the future Performing Arts facility.

The Urban School has played an important role in our family. Our older daughter graduated from the school in 2014 and our younger daughter is now a freshman at Urban. Both of us are active in the school community and we firmly believe in the school's vision of providing a high quality college preparatory education in a small, individually focused setting while bringing together Bay Area families and teachers from many socioeconomic, racial and cultural backgrounds.

While our girls have benefitted greatly from the education and environment that Urban provides, the school needs additional classrooms, a full size gymnasium and spaces for the performing arts. In order to offer the full range of academic, athletic, and creative educational opportunities routinely offered by other public and private schools, Urban is forced to rent gyms, athletic facilities and performance spaces around the city, many of which are far from the school. This creates difficulties with scheduling for the school and families, transportation and timing of athletic practices and games

(because our teams do not have priority for facilities). The dispersed nature of our school events also makes it more difficult to participate in these activities as spectators and supporters and thereby diminishes the feeling of community on campus as well as the ability of our students and families to have a full high school experience. The new gymnasium and the future performing arts spaces would alleviate these issues and would enhance the experience of all members of The Urban School community.

Urban also badly needs additional space for classrooms as well as counseling, learning services and faculty offices. Currently, private meetings between students, counselors and teachers are difficult to achieve and are often interrupted because of space sharing issues. Additionally, Urban lacks the flexible classroom space needed to offer classes comprised of different types and sizes of learning groups. The additional classrooms and offices in the proposed Academic and Athletic facility would mitigate these issues and provide a huge benefit to the Urban School.

We view The Urban School as an anchor of the Haight Ashbury neighborhood and members of the Urban community strive to be good neighbors and to participate in the surrounding community. Urban students have contributed thousands of hours to community service projects in the Haight Ashbury, in Buena Vista and Golden Gate parks, and in the greater Bay Area. Further, our students, families, and faculty patronize many local businesses and are an important part of daily life in the Haight. Our family regularly shops at the Haight Street Market, Whole Foods, Fresh Organics and we enjoy many small shops and cafes on Haight Street and in Cole Valley. The North Campus Expansion will help to ensure the future viability of Urban, its place in the neighborhood and in the San Francisco educational community by enabling the school to offer the highest quality academic program and a more vibrant campus environment.

We are very excited about this opportunity for Urban to expand its facilities and the impact the project will have on the quality of student life and the breadth of opportunities that our school can offer. We urge you to support the future of The Urban School by approving this project.

Respectfully yours,

Deann Wright, JD
Trustee of the Urban School

Luke Evnin, PhD

1/7/2015

**San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103**

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My wife Janice and I are San Francisco residents, currently living in the Richmond District. As a new couple, we moved to the City as a spot where we wished to make our life together. Over the course of the next 26 years we have lived and worked here and raised three terrific daughters, each of whom has or is currently attending the Urban School. Each of our daughters had the fortune to have a choice of high schools. All of them chose Urban due to the high quality of its teaching and particularly because of its long-standing commitment to community service and diversity. Their experience at Urban has validated the reasons for their choice and then some. Each has matured into young adulthood with strong senses of social justice and an eagerness to interact with people from all different walks of life. The benefits of the school have been so important to them that both Janice and I have made Urban a focus of our precious volunteer time. Janice has played a critical role in the fundraising effort for the new expansion project and I sit on the Urban Board of Trustees.

Urban has been successful at doing much with little. It's physical premises compared to its student body is materially smaller than that of other private and public high schools. Urban has been particularly lacking in athletic and performance facilities. We are strong believers in the benefits of athletics and arts to a child's growth and education, and all three of our children have actively participated in each at Urban. As a result, we have seen first hand how desperately Urban needs to expand its facilities in these critical areas. We have watched many a volleyball and basketball game in the tiny existing St. Agnes gym, often forced to stand along the wall and almost inside the court boundaries since there is so little space for seating. Just this fall we found ourselves unable to get tickets to an important student-written performance because the small black-box Gumpston theater's capacity is so limited. It is a real shame when parents, siblings and other students cannot easily come and watch and support the players or performers doing what they do.

Similarly, as a Trustee, I am well aware that Urban must improve the ability of its premises to support its critical mission of education in order for the school to remain financially-sustainable and healthy into the future. The Trustees all agree that a key pillar of a healthy Urban is the school's ability to dedicate a very large percentage of its total revenues to scholarships. This allows families who would not otherwise be able to access the great things Urban has to do so. At the same time, the dedication to financial assistance creates an overall environment of diversity and equity that benefits all of the students, whether on financial assistance or not.

Janice and I have each seen what an important stakeholder Urban is in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. It has a long, positive and symbiotic partnership with the St. Agnes parish across the

street as well as with many local merchants and neighborhood organizations. Urban's student actively participate in the life of the neighborhood and many of its charitable and service organizations. A healthy Urban will allow these benefits to continue as well.

We eagerly recommend you vote in favor of the proposed Academic/Athletic Center and future Performing Arts Facility.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Geoffrey B. Sears". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial "G" and a distinct "S" at the end.

Geoffrey B. Sears


901 Lake Street

San Francisco, CA 94118




Oak Street Project

Jan 9, 2015 11:41 AM


From:  Sejal Desai <sejaldesai@icloud.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: North Campus Expansion

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (4K)

San Francisco Planning Commission,
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Committee,

My name is Sejal Desai and I'm a parent and a Trustee of The Urban School of San Francisco.

I'm writing to lend my support for the North Campus Expansion project. My son has thrived at The urban School, the innovative inclusive curriculum coupled with the passionate faculty have allowed him to pursue his interest and also open his horizon to interests that he otherwise wouldn't have looked at. We feel he has greatly benefited from being surrounded by peers, faculty and families from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. We have been lucky that Urban believes in the same values and has afforded the financial opportunity for our son to attend the school. The Ethnic Studies program in particular has helped him to explore and develop his Indian heritage. It's a school where he feels most supported and welcome.

Community service is at the core of Urban's program and it's something, that we, as a family feel is very important for our son to study and take part in. My son has been volunteering with a underserved preschool for 5 years, the kids have brought so much joy and playfulness in his life. He's become very passionate about providing an equitable and sustainable education for everyone.

Urban's core values that a school is made up students, teachers and families from different socio-economic backgrounds, cultures and race. These values are in direct alignment of our family values and feel that our son has been supported and welcome. The unique curriculum and the historical location has allowed him to use San Francisco as his classroom and is deeply connected to issues facing disenfranchised sectors of the community.

Thank you,

Sejal and Sachin Desai

January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commission Members:

I am a member of the Urban School of San Francisco (Urban) Board of Trustees and write to you today to express my absolute support of the school's proposed North Campus Construction project. This project will provide critically needed facilities to better enable the school to fulfill its mission to ignite a passion for lifelong learning in all of its students. This project is tremendously important to the school, and due to its close connections with the surrounding community, its benefits will positively impact the neighborhood and the City beyond.

My daughter graduated from Urban in June 2013 and I cannot say enough about the positive impact of the school on her academic and personal development. The school is doing a fantastic job of educating young San Franciscans from all over the City and from a wide variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. As such my daughter's education went way beyond the classroom, connecting with the Haight through the service learning projects. One of these projects involved working with Dr. Marcus Conant to provide Urban Students information and opportunities to be tested for their HIV status. This was one of the first student-led programs of this kind.

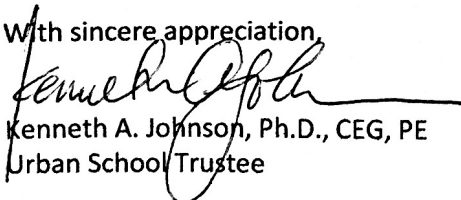
Regardless of the tremendous commitment displayed by all Urbanites to growth and education, the school badly needs additional classroom space as well as a regulation gym. Classes are presently held in every room on campus - not just classrooms, but also lobbies, cafeterias, and rooms in adjacent St. Agnes facilities. The current crowded lifestyle adversely impacts the college counseling process, Special Education and Learning Services, and makes it very challenging for teachers to work on collaboration and program reviews. Additional classrooms are a critical need.

The school does not currently have a regulation gym, and therefore have to procure alternative space to host "home" games, typically the Kezar Pavillon. The Pavillon is about one-half mile from the school and the need to bus or drive teams and students is clearly not good for the community or environment. The gym will also provide a place where the entire school community can assemble, something that cannot happen presently on campus.

Since moving to the Haight in 1977 the school has developed deep roots and strong ties in the community. One of the school's core practices is drawing a diverse San Francisco population from many different neighborhoods, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions, and sexual orientations. The board of trustees strongly supports this core value in devoting sufficient budget to provide nearly 30% of students with financial assistance to increase accessibility to broader San Francisco.

I ask you to favorably consider this important project that that will enable Urban to better serve more San Francisco students and will thus benefit families seeking additional high school choices.

With sincere appreciation,




Kenneth A. Johnson, Ph.D., CEG, PE
Urban School Trustee




Oak Street Project

Jan 9, 2015 8:13 PM


From:  Charles Wu <charleswusf@gmail.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Planning Commission – Oak Street Project

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (3K)

To the SF Planning Commission:

Thank you for taking the time to read this email/support for the Urban School North Campus Expansion. My wife and I have been San Francisco residents since 1987 and purchased our house in 1989. We've lived in Noe Valley for the past 25 years.

We've brought up 2 children in the city, one who currently attends Stanford and one who attends Bowdoin. Both went to the Urban School in San Francisco. We are big believers in what San Francisco has to offer the city and resisted the urban flight that occurred among other families. Our jobs have actually been outside of the city since 1991.

My kids had friends at the Urban School from the Sunset to SOMA and from North Beach to Bernal Heights. It was truly a SF neighborhood school (if you consider all of SF as a neighborhood).

The Urban School has been very overcrowded space wise and the expansions affords the opportunity to establish an opportunity to better use the existing private church parking lot.

We believe that the Urban School expansion will add to the overall SF community - allowing SF to retain families in the city.


Best,

Charles and Ann Wu
4218 26th St.
San Francisco CA94131




Oak Street Project

Jan 5, 2015 2:26 PM


From:  Claire Solot <cmsolot@gmail.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Oak Street Project

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (8K)

January 5, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are writing to you in support the Urban School's Oak Street project.

We have been part of the Urban community since 2004. Two of our children have attended Urban and Claire is currently a member of the Board of Trustees. We support the school's expansion plan for the following reasons:

Converting the current parking lot into a multipurpose use building is a "win" for everyone involved:

- For the school it gives us the opportunity to finally have a dedicated full-size gym, a theater that will seat 3x the number of patrons that our current theater can accommodate and much needed classroom and common space.
- For the Church it provided the income needed to keep its doors open and access to 2x the number of parking spaces.
- For the neighborhood it means fewer cars using street parking, use of the new gym of weekends and evenings and the continuation of benefits associated with having hundreds of Urban students, faculty, administrators and families use the shops and restaurants in the area.
- For the city of San Francisco it means replacing an ugly single use surface parking lot with a new beautiful building that will have double the amount of parking underground and usable rooms above ground level.

In addition, the increase in the student body from 380-420 means that:

- 40 additional students will be able to attend the Urban school. At present Urban must turn away hundreds of qualified applicants due to size and space restrictions.
- A dozen additional students who need financial assistance will be able to join our school community, as nearly 30% of our students receive financial aid.

- The community will benefit from 50 additional Urban students participating in community service activities.
- More than a hundred additional people (students, faculty, staff, families) will frequent the neighborhood shops and stores.

Urban has been a part of the Haight since 1977. As part of the community we have given our time, our money and our dedication. We hope to continue these efforts and activities for many years to come.


Sincerely,

Claire Solot & Sinjin Bain



Oak Street Project


Dec 18, 2014 10:15 PM

From:  "Blumenthal, Betsy" <bblument@Kroll.com> 

To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: letter

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (8K)

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are current parents of a student at The Urban School and love being part of the Urban community. Urban School badly needs additional classroom space and suffers from the lack of a high school-sized gymnasium and a larger theater, both of which are commonplace in public and private schools in the city. The school is forced to rent gyms and athletic facilities, often at some distance from the school, as well as large performance spaces throughout the city. Beyond arts and athletics, every space is used every day for classes, clubs and meetings. Urban lacks sufficient office space for teachers, College Counseling, Learning Services and other student services. If Urban were to have the Oak Street gym it would be one less school to find practice space for as well as cutting down on the ever growing congestion on the San Francisco streets.

Urban has been a part of the Haight since 1977; we have deep roots and strong ties to the neighborhood. The school plays an active role in the neighborhood's economic vitality and daily life. Urban supports many Haight merchants and our students volunteer with many local service agencies. Our son spends 90% of his allowance on Haight Street, mostly at the Haight Street Market and knows by first name some of the people who work there. A high-school gymnasium will mean that families both Urban and the teams we play will support the local merchants.


We hope that you will grant CUP approval of the Academic and Athletics Center and allow The Urban School to increase its enrollment from 380 to 420 students.

Thank you,
Betsy Blumenthal and Dr. Jonathan Root
Current Urban Parents



Oak Street Project

Dec 19, 2014 3:02 PM


From:  Dan Springer <ddspringer@yahoo.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: urban note to planning commission

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (5K)

- San Francisco Planning Commission 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
- San Francisco, CA 94103
- Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:
- My name is Dan Springer and I am a parent of a Freshman and a Junior at Urban. I am also a Trustee of the school because I believe it is helping SF raise our children to be great citizens.
- The new facilities and the extra 10% enrollment will not have a huge impact on our neighborhood, but I believe that together they will allow Urban to deliver a substantial and positive value to San Francisco. As a Trustee I get numerous calls each year from declined or wait-listed parents that would love to have their children participate in the classes and service projects that my children have been so lucky to experience. I wish we could admit more of them as I am thrilled to see my sons receive not only great academic instruction, but also to be challenged to find their place in helping others. My older son would not be working with YearUP, committed and helping to solve the Bay Area's opportunity divide without the spark created by Urban.
- Urban is providing a fantastic education on all fronts today, but the additional facilities are badly needed. My family has invested considerable amounts of our time and treasure in this effort because we see how many children can receive a fuller overall education without negatively impacting others. This infill project will improve the appearance of the neighborhood and allow Urban to complement its world-class faculty with the standard gymnasium and classroom space that are in most public and private schools. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this needed and valuable project.
- Sincerely,
- Dan Springer



Oak Street Project

Jan 7, 2015 8:51 AM

From: Scott Sklar <scottsklar1@comcast.net>



To: Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Letter in Support

Attachments: Attach0.html / Uploaded File (2K)
 San Francisco Planning Commission Letter.docx / Uploaded File (74K)
 Attach1.html / Uploaded File (7K)

San Francisco Planning Commission 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

I am writing this letter in support of the Urban School's north campus expansion project. My daughter Emily is a junior at Urban, and we believe the school is a real asset to San Francisco. One truism about Urban is that "it is called the URBAN school for a reason." The school is very much part of the city and the Haight. Students, who volunteer, eat lunch, shop, and experience the vibrant mix of the Haight neighborhood, are part of the community during their time in high school. The community benefits from their presence, and they from being part of it. One of the main reasons we sent our daughter to Urban was that it was very much integrated with the Haight neighborhood.

The school has only one weakness. Its facilities are simply too small. It badly needs more classrooms, a new full size gym, and more common space.

Please support the school and approve its north campus expansion project and CUP modification.

Thanks so much,
Scott Sklar
Urban Parent and Trustee

Anthony Armstrong
611 Marina Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94123

January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am a Member of the Board of Trustees at The Urban School, currently serving on the finance and strategic planning committees'. I am writing to you in support of Urban's proposed campus expansion. What attracted me to Urban and why I send my two high school children to Urban, is Urban's belief that a school made up of students, teachers and families drawn from many different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions and sexual orientations is the best way to prepare students for their 21st century lives. Urban strives to represent and educate the full spectrum of San Francisco society. In order to achieve this objective, Urban provides nearly 30% of its students with financial aid.

One of our largest challenges in providing an outstanding high school experience to our community is Urban's severely constrained facility. The Urban School badly needs additional classroom space and suffers from the lack of a high school-sized gymnasium and a larger theater, both of which are commonplace in public and private schools in the city. The school is forced to rent gyms and athletic facilities, often at some distance from the school, as well as large performance spaces throughout the city. Beyond arts and athletics, every space is used every day for classes, clubs and meetings. Urban lacks sufficient office space for teachers, college counseling, learning services and other student services. By approving the expansion it will allow Urban to not only better serve the existing students, but also allow us to expand the number of students by approximately 10% (thereby offering a high quality college preparatory education to a broader number of students in the community).

Urban has been an important part of the Haight community since 1977. The school plays a strong part in the economic viability of the community. The expansion will allow Urban to continue to add to the existing symbiotic, healthy, and respectful relationship between school and community that has existed for decades.

Thank you for consideration.

Sincerely,



Anthony Armstrong

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are parents at the Urban School of San Francisco, which our son and daughter both attend. We are also residents of the neighborhood; we own a home on Cole Street, just a few blocks away from the school.

We are writing to support Urban's proposed North Campus Expansion which anticipates transforming two awkwardly configured blacktop parking lots on Oak Street into an Academic and Athletics center while actually increasing the amount of parking available to both the school and our good neighbors at Saint Agnes. This project is good for the school, good for the parish and good for the neighborhood as it is a great example of urban infill, reduces the need for busing students around the city, and allows for a modest expansion of this excellent program. As neighborhood residents, we wholeheartedly support the fact that the proposed expansion will make an Urban education available to more students while actually reducing the parking and traffic impacts both the neighborhood, and in other parts of the city, as the need to rent performance and athletic spaces elsewhere will be reduced or eliminated.

A pioneer in promoting community service in high school, Urban has deep roots in the Haight Ashbury community. Our students volunteer with several local social service agencies, patronize Haight neighborhood businesses, and are very much a positive part of the fabric of the neighborhood. Urban serves as a polling place, makes meeting space available to neighborhood groups, and is a major neighborhood employer. The new project will provide much needed programmatic space for Urban, and the neighborhood will benefit as well.

We really could go on and on, but imagine that this is just one of many letters of support you will receive, and we want to be respectful of your time. Urban is a force for good in the neighborhood, the city and the world. Thank you for your consideration, and we hope you will approve this plan to make a great school even better.

Sincerely,

Ann Fischer Hecht
Urban Trustee

Shawn F. Hecht
Principal, Swander Pace Capital

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

January 4, 2015

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I, Tamara Hicks, am writing a letter of support for the North Campus Expansion at The Urban School of SF. I am a current parent of a sophomore as well as a member of the Board of Directors.

Urban has been a part of the Haight since 1977 and has deep roots and strong ties to the neighborhood. The school plays an active role in the neighborhood's economic vitality and daily life. Just go to the Haight Street Market at lunch or break time to see direct evidence of this! My daughter is one of the many students who volunteers in the neighborhood (local public mandarin school). As the second largest employer in the neighborhood after Whole Foods Urban supports many Haight merchants and our students volunteer with many local service agencies.

My husband and I strongly believe that this expansion will be greatly beneficial to the diverse body of students as well as Urban teachers. Increased classroom, theatre and gym space is badly needed. Our daughter is on the Varsity Soccer team at Urban and currently gets bused to Bayview to practice. Hopefully, many of these practices and work out can stay on campus.

Having taken part in other building campaigns at other schools I have been impressed with how thoughtful the administrations at Urban has gone about the process of expanding. They deeply think about the community in every move and conversation.



We hope you will whole heartedly support this Urban in their expansion.

Tamara Hicks and David Jablons
1243 19th St.
San Francisco, CA 94107




Oak Street Project

Jan 1, 2015 11:30 AM


From:  charles siler <charlesjsiler@yahoo.com>
 charles siler <charlesjsiler@yahoo.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Letter of support for campus expansion

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (9K)

Jan. 1, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

The approach of the Urban School to learning couldn't be more typical of San Francisco. Like the city it calls home, Urban is always looking for better ways to do its job. Just as San Francisco isn't afraid of taking a bold stance on issues like marriage equality, bicycle lanes or food waste disposal, Urban isn't afraid of trying innovative education strategies to help young people from all walks of life realize their potential.

Our two sons both attended Urban. One has graduated, and one is still there. We've seen how good the school has been for our sons, and for the city. That's why we're writing in support of the school's application to expand its campus.

Urban has been part of the Haight since 1977, and this expansion project will allow the school to continue its mission of being a center for high-quality learning in the middle of San Francisco. This is an extraordinary institution that should be cherished and supported by the city.

Urban understands that future leaders will come from diverse backgrounds. Almost 30% of Urban's students receive financial aid. Every year, the students contribute thousands of hours of community service.

As the No. 2 employer in its neighborhood, Urban is a key part of the economic life of the city. We live in Marin County, and in the six years that we have been Urban parents, we've made countless trips into San Francisco because of our involvement in the school, shopping and dining in the city.

Urban's respect for the city is clear from the way it planned its growth. The Oak Street building will meet Cal Green building requirements and will be rated LEED Gold. That's pretty much what you'd expect from a school that was the first in the country to achieve the prestigious LEED EBOM Platinum rating for its Page Street building.

A great city needs great schools. Give Urban room to flourish, and it will make you proud.

Sincerely,
Charlie and Julie Siler

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

December 29, 2014

Re: Urban School Academic & Athletics Center CUP

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My daughter is a senior at The Urban School of San Francisco. As she will be graduating this summer, my daughter won't personally benefit from the extra classroom space, athletics facility, or theater that the new "North Campus" project will provide to the Urban community. But, because of my deep gratitude to the school, and my belief in Urban's mission to "ignite a passion for learning", I am moved to write this letter supporting the new Urban Academic & Athletics Center.

Like most Urban students, my daughter's high school experience has consisted of many enriching activities, in addition to challenging academics. She has enjoyed being a member of the fencing team, acting in the fall musical, and participating in clubs ranging from baking, to improv, to badminton, and a multi-ethnic identity club. As rewarding as these experiences have been, they can be even better:

- Currently, the Urban fencing team practices in rented space in a church on Waller Street. Given the equipment needs of the sport, the coach and students spend a lot of time shuttling gear, even for home matches! The new facility will let the fencing team spend more time fencing, and less time transporting.
- Urban's theater department does an amazing job of squeezing audiences in, but on a number of occasions I have been a bit too slow to reserve tickets, and thus missed out on seeing the productions, and supporting the kids. A larger theater will allow more community members to enjoy the shows.
- As a freshman, my daughter founded the Sketching Club at Urban. Since then she has had inspirations for other clubs, but hasn't followed through with creating them because she thought it would be too difficult to get a space to meet. With the extra rooms provided by the new facility, more students will be able to form clubs.

Finally, I think this project makes a lot of sense from a neighborhood planning perspective, as it will convert two oddly-spaced blacktop parking lots into a modern facility, in scale with existing neighboring buildings.

Sincerely,
Susan Detwiler
68 Douglass Street
San Francisco, CA 94114

Juana Schurman & Tony Ligamari
2442 Jackson Street
San Francisco, CA 94115

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We hope you will look favorably on the application by the Urban School for a Conditional Use Permit for its proposed Academic and Athletics Center. Our daughter graduated from Urban in 2013 and our son is a current student, so we have been members of the school community since 2009. In our experience, the school makes every effort to be a good neighbor and to consider and appropriately integrate with the local community. We have no doubt that the school has carefully tried to take into account the Haight's character and sensibilities in developing its hoped for facility and expansion plans.

Urban is currently a very crowded school! Parents and students are often turned away from theatre productions and meetings for want of space. I've personally spent time on tiptoe in the doorway of the student center trying to hear the announcements at the front of the room and waiting in the standby line in hopes someone won't turn up for a theatre production. The proposed addition would remedy this. Additionally, when Urban first started, athletics were arguably a less important consideration in education. Now that the mind body connection and the importance of exercise is better understood, Urban needs to catch up to other schools, both public and private, by improving its athletic facilities.

From seeing frequent charges at Haight Street Market and the People's Café and having spent quite a bit of time myself at the Blue Front Café, I know Urban contributes to the local economy at a micro level. But Urban has a strong connection to the entire city. It actively and successfully promotes a diverse environment and provides a lot of financial aid to deserving students from all parts of town. Additionally, both my children have volunteered through Urban in numerous community service projects including at the city's public elementary schools and at Golden Gate Park. Because of all this, Urban is truly an asset to the community at large.

San Francisco has the lowest percentage of children in its population as compared to any other metropolis in the country. How sad! To remain a complete, robust, interesting city, San Francisco needs to embrace the improvement of educational facilities so that families and teenagers have an incentive to remain part of the urban mix. Thank you for your consideration of Urban's application.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Juana Schurman and Tony Ligamari in cursive script.

Juana Schurman & Tony Ligamari

John W. Baker
1083 Pacheco Street
San Francisco, CA 94116

December 27, 2014

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

I am writing in support of The Urban School of San Francisco North Campus Expansion Project. Early in 2014 when my only son was accepted to attend The Urban School in the fall, I moved my family home from Marin County to the Inner Sunset neighborhood of San Francisco to fully integrate into the environment that would be the center of his academic and social life. The experience we have had to date with San Francisco and The Urban School has fulfilled our dreams and expectations. We are fortunate to have the remaining four years in front of us.

The North Campus Expansion project will be the crowning glory of my son's enjoyment at Urban. He has experienced a cultural shift in the transition from Marin's land-of-plenty to "Urban" life in the city in a manner that has matured him. He prides himself in navigating the #6 Muni to the Haight in the morning, saying hello to the merchants who embrace Urban students, and developing an appreciation for those who struggle to make ends meet each day with a smile. He believes it is symbolic of Urban creativity how the students cram into whatever open spaces exist to read between classes or find a nook to have a study group. Make no mistake that when he sees the schematic for the expanded building and academic spaces, he eagerly looks forward to being creative in his learning rather than just creative in hunting for a place to learn.

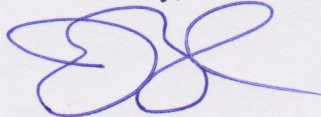
The Expansion Project will also expand the opportunities for a few more students to attend the school. We have been so impressed in the demonstrated diversity of student composition at Urban yet all have a unifying commitment to getting the best possible high school college preparatory education. The expansion will touch each sub-group proportionately and gives my son that much more exposure to those who will be part of his mutual support team...and friends for life.

When I tell my friends and colleagues about Urban in the Haight, it's amazing how many say they've never noticed a school was there. That's a tribute to how the existing architecture blends into the neighborhood. The architects have done a masterful job utilizing the inefficient parking lots to propose filling in with buildings of equal grace and symmetry to the surrounding buildings with this project.

I hope you will be as enthusiastic about the benefits of this project as I am. My son is aware I'm writing this letter and fully appreciates the learning experience in civics that this represents. He asks your support as well.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and your service to our city.

Sincerely,


A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a trailing line.

John Baker




Oak Street Project

Jan 4, 2015 12:02 AM

From:  Marian Heath <marianheath@gmail.com>



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: letter in support of campus expansion

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

Our son Colin is currently a sophomore at the Urban School. Even though he may not even benefit from the proposed campus expansion (because of the length of the process for approvals/fundraising/construction), we are still extremely supportive of the school's plans. Although we don't live directly in the Haight-Ashbury area, our neighborhood is not far away, just up Masonic Avenue. In fact we live less than 2 blocks from University High School, which has faced many of the same space constraints and challenges that Urban is facing. UHS ended up acquiring a building on Sacramento Street a few blocks from their main campus. While this solution provided much-needed space, it looks to us like it can be quite inconvenient for the students who have to regularly walk between the main campus and the satellite building. UHS has numerous crossing guards to ensure the kids' safety, but even so, it takes time from their tight schedules and on rainy days I imagine it to be quite unpleasant. The Urban project, because it is directly adjacent to the current buildings, would be far more convenient. These city schools really need more classroom space, regulation-sized gymnasiums and larger theaters in order to fully deliver on their educational missions. Turning out college-ready kids who are also learning and going to school right in our city neighborhoods is such a great thing for our city - and with more space, more qualified students could be enrolled.

We urge you to approve the school's plans and grant approval for their Conditional Use Permit. Thank you,

Marian and Robert Heath
3332 Washington Street
San Francisco, CA 94118

Minouche Kandel
1430 Sixth Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94122
(415) 242-0598 (home)
(415) 572-6482 (cell)
minouchek@gmail.com

January 6, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

RE: Urban School Conditional Use Permit

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to strongly support The Urban School's application for a Conditional Use Permit for its proposed Academic and Athletics Center.

My son is a sophomore at Urban, and we have been so impressed by the quality of the education, in all its forms, at the school. The Academics are top rate, the athletic program is excellent, and the service-learning component is meaningful. This year my son volunteered during recess at El Dorado Elementary School. He also plays varsity basketball for Urban.

The only aspect of Urban that is not first-rate is its gym. While the athletic program is wonderful, and there is strong school spirit, the gym is small and has no space for fans. "Home" games have to be played in other gyms around town. Constructing the new Academic and Athletics Center will make it easier for students to support their classmates by attending games on campus.

I urge you to approve Urban's Academic and Athletics Center.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Minouche Kandel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Minouche" written in a more stylized, connected script, and the last name "Kandel" written in a more standard cursive.


Minouche Kandel



Oak Street Project


Jan 7, 2015 8:48 AM

From:  "Quigley, Sandra A." <SQuigley@FDIC.gov> 

To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Urban Expansion Project

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (8K)

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

My two daughters attend The Urban School of San Francisco, which is located close to our home on States Street. The education they have received at Urban, thanks to a very talented and dedicated faculty, has been phenomenal. The school has fostered a strong sense of ethics and commitment to service in the community. We feel extremely lucky to be part of such a special place, and believe it brings a very positive “vibe” to its neighborhood.

While we are grateful for everything the school provides to our daughters, it does lack certain basic facilities, such as an appropriately-sized gymnasium and theater. School-wide gatherings of parents and students are nearly impossible on the existing campus. It is often difficult to get tickets to student performances because the space is so limited. Most “home” athletic events are actually several blocks from the campus. The addition of a gymnasium and theater would provide the sense of community for athletic and performing arts events that is taken for granted at so many high schools.

In addition, the proposed expansion would allow for more classrooms. The year my younger daughter was admitted, the school was significantly over-enrolled, causing additional crowding in classrooms because there was literally no more space for just seven or eight additional students. Adding more classrooms would allow the school to provide an exceptional education to more students. It should be noted that the students to whom these doors would be open are not just those from wealthy families; the school is extremely committed to drawing students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, providing tuition assistance to approximately 30% of its students.

I genuinely believe that the school has done as much as possible to make this project fit into its lot and the neighborhood, and that it will benefit the community as well as the parishioners of St. Agnes and the students at Urban itself. I hope you will give the project favorable consideration.



Sincerely,


Sandra Quigley



Oak Street Project


Jan 7, 2015 2:47 PM


From:  Martin Sharpe <sharpe.martin@gmail.com> 

To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Letter of support North Campus expansion

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (3K)

 Sharpe letter San Francisco Planning Commission.docx / Uploaded File (15K)

San Francisco Planning Commission

1650 Mission Street, Suite 400

San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I ask that you approve the North Campus Expansion of the Urban School.

I am a parent of two teenagers who attend the Urban School of San Francisco, we are a family residing and working in San Francisco. Quality schools like Urban keep families in San Francisco.

I previously have lived in the Upper Haight neighborhood and have seen that the Urban School is an integral part of the neighborhood.

The expansion of the Urban School of San Francisco will add needed classroom space and a gymnasium and larger theater which is commonplace in most public and private schools within the city. There have been times when one or more members of my family have not been able to attend presentation, event, or athletic game, due to limited size or remote location of the event.

Urban should be permitted to expand the campus and continue its work to educate students as independent lifelong learners who care about the environment and the societies in which they belong.

Sincerely,

Martin Sharpe

21 Peters Avenue

San Francisco CA 94110



Oak Street Project

Jan 7, 2015 7:59 PM

From: Carol Lieberman <carol@lieberman.com>

To: Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Oak Street Project

Attachments: Attach0.html / Uploaded File (3K)

Dear Honorable San Francisco Planning Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the Urban School North Campus expansion. My second child will graduate from Urban this year and as the school is planning to embark in this bold and fabulous expansion I can only reflect on how much better my son and daughters experience at Urban, would have been had they been able to enjoy the use of a full sized gymnasium, instead of shuttling all over the city to practice and play basketball and a theatre larger than a black box.

Urban is a fabulous school that has been part of the Haight for many years – since 1977. The school is a significant employer and the students support the neighborhood merchants daily. The school and students support various neighborhood organization each year with many hours of community service as part of the school's service learning curriculum requirement. Now private funding has been raised to transform what is today a parking lot into a state of the art athletic and performance center that will benefit the neighborhood and the school. In addition the building will provide badly needed additional classroom and office space for teachers and counselors.

The newly expanded Urban School will be a new jewel nestling in the Haight. It will reflect well on your commission for having the foresight to approve it and be an amazing resource for it's future students and the community for many years to come.

Regards,

Carol Lieberman
63 7th Ave
San Francisco, CA 94118



Oak Street Project

Jan 7, 2015 10:15 PM

From: Sara Witt <sara@pcounter.com>

To: Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: SF Planning Commission Letter in Support of The Urban School Campus Expansion

To: San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are grateful that our daughter is a new Freshman at The Urban School this 2014-2015 school year -- grateful that she can go to a school whose mission includes growing values and growing hearts while growing their minds.

Urban has a history in San Francisco... a history in the Haight. It's a high school that has grown up in the Haight -- raising kids to grow up there as well.

Urban reflects the community with its dedication to to bringing together kids and their families from various socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions, and sexual orientations.



When our daughter visited Urban, she was drawn in by the relationships between teachers and students and the openness and comfort the kids had in communicating with their teachers. As parents, we were moved by the efforts and great intentions of the school, including a 4-year path of service-learning imbedded in their curriculum. San Francisco is a melting pot grounded in activism for human rights and equal rights -- while advocating and looking out for the those in need. Urban, in their mission, their offerings, their efforts, their mini-melting pot -- is a wonderful community member in the Haight. It really does take a village to raise our young people into caring, community members. At Urban, generations of kids have, and will, be raised to go out into the world wearing their San Francisco heart (and activist roots) on their sleeves. There seems like such gratitude among the administration, faculty, staff, parents and students for being rooted in the Haight -- and, if you approve the well-thought out expansion plan for Urban, you will help generations of future high school students benefit from its value-inspired learning and great academics and athletics and arts programs. And you will certainly hear the gratitude of the entire Urban community -- past, current... and future!

Thanks so much for considering. Sara Witt & Andy Charmatz



Oak Street Project


Jan 8, 2015 2:07 AM

From:  Carlin DeCato <carlin.decato@gmail.com> 

To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: letter to the Planning Commission

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (6K)

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

Since 1990 (24yrs), I have called San Francisco home. I've lived here as a commuting professional (Si. Valley), an at-home parent, a parklands and school volunteer, a telecommuting tech consultant, and soon to be retiree. Currently I have a high school sophomore in attendance at The Urban School and this is the reason for my letter today.

I'm in full support of The Urban School's planned expansion in the Haight area I've come to know and depend on the last several years. This isn't the first campus renovation I've observed and I'm happy to report, from my experience, these type of upgrades always result in a positive impact for neighbors, nearby businesses, and the city at large. I'm certain this is an outcome of the incredibly mindful and respectful process that surrounds such expansions, from the dream at day zero to well past the ribbon cut. I've never seen anything like it (compared w/ other non-school projects I've participated in, both residential and commercial). The planners, designers, parents, students, faculty, builders, and so on are all exceptionally engaged and bring so much oversight and expertise to the table, that these projects roll out better than ever imagined at the onset.

Most all San Francisco high schools need more space and modern facilities – Urban included. Given the ambitions and diverse interests of their students—and mission of the school—it's a wonder Urban has been able to manage thus far without a regular theatre, full-size gym, and dedicated space for several essential programs (presently, there is a lot of office sharing, inefficient space rotations, and off-campus leasing). Square footage is a most coveted asset in this city, especially for students and our all important educators. Adequate space means an expanded mind and extended education...for hundreds of students each year.

For the city, schools are like libraries. They need to be landmarks with a presence that stands for the future and city pride. In earlier decades, San Francisco was full of beautifully architected schools, a reality I'm very happy to see returning with the revived trend of everyone heading back into the urban hubs. The Urban School serves students from all over the city, neighboring counties too, and from all types of families. An expanded, upgraded campus ensures this draw will continue, which in turn serves to enhance the longer term brain trust of our city.

The Page and Oak street neighbors will be thrilled. San Francisco County will benefit. But it will be the students and teachers that gain the most. I can hardly wait for this project to complete and witness the new creativity that springs forth because of it. The Haight neighborhood is fortunate to have The Urban School as a forward-thinking institution willing to make such an investment at this time... which will obviously contribute to the local economy and act as stimulus towards further growth in the area.

Cheers to urban renewal,

Ms Carlin DeCato
50 Ina Court
San Francisco
94112-2144

January 8, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, California 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I write to let you know about the importance to San Francisco that The Urban School be permitted to build the new Academics and Athletics Center adjacent to its current campus in the Haight.

The compelling reason to approve is that Urban is one of San Francisco's best high schools, and attendance (and curriculum) are limited due to a shortage of space.

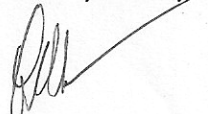
As of now... classrooms are in short supply, the gym is not full-size, the performing arts center feels like a makeshift garage, and enrollment is limited.

We've had two kids (now age 22, 18) go through Urban, and both were actively involved in gym sports (volleyball and basketball) and performing arts (music, theater). We know first hand how inadequate the current spaces are, how the gym at the church across the street is too small, how the theater is tiny, and how Urban's amazing teachers are forced to operate in substandard conditions compared to other schools.

What other school in San Francisco reflects the values and diversity of San Francisco better than Urban? You know about its core values – economic diversity in its students/families, a genuine commitment to community service, and an approach to learning and critical thinking that makes kids smart, responsible and empathetic citizens.

We are lucky and privileged to have had two kids at Urban. We just want more students and families to have the experience as well – and in facilities that can support the amazing teachers and staff that Urban (and San Francisco) have been able to attract.

Thank you for your support and consideration.



Lenny Lieberman



Oak Street Project

Jan 8, 2015 8:18 PM

From: Rupert McConnell <rupetr79@yahoo.com>

To: Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Planning Commission Letter

Attachments: Attach0.html / Uploaded File (3K)

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are a family with a son in 11th grade at The Urban School of San Francisco. We have been residents of San Francisco since 1993 and have been working and raising our family in the city.

The Urban School has been a wonderful experience for our son. It has not only been a fabulous college preparatory education but the culture of the school with its commitment to diversity and community service has helped him to grow as a person and a student. We are asking that you approve the Conditional Use Permit the school has requested to enlarge its space and provide for arts, athletics, classroom space, teacher space and a small increase in the number of students. The Urban School has a long history of commitment to the city and the neighborhood and the additional planned space would enhance the school and the community it is part of. As parents of a second child currently applying to high school we have seen the increased interest in the school. The new facility would enhance the student and teacher experience as well as improve the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Leah Tessler M.D.
Rupert McConnell



Carol Berluti
99 Fernwood Dr.
San Francisco, CA 94127

January 5, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to urge you to support the North Campus Expansion Project of the Urban School of San Francisco. As a proud alumna and now parent at the school, I recognize this as a necessary step in the school's growth. During my matriculation at Urban, the school moved from Pacific Heights into the former Gumption Theater space on Page St. in 1977. It was a match made in Heaven. Once established in the Haight, Urban began to thrive and develop strong ties to the neighborhood. The school now plays an active part in the economic vitality of the Haight as it has become the second largest employer in the neighborhood after Whole Foods. With its strong commitment to service learning, many urban students volunteer at local service agencies. Students, faculty, staff, and parents patronize businesses in the area.

I have watched the school grow and change over the years, becoming one of the finest private schools in the Bay Area. High quality college preparatory education is a critical priority for families living in San Francisco, and as the city's population grows, the demand is going to increase dramatically. As it is, Urban has to turn away many qualified applicants each year. As part of the North Campus Expansion plan, the school seeks to modestly increase the number of families it serves over the course of several years from 380 to 420. The expansion would allow the school to build 7 more classrooms. This would allow Urban to continue to offer the small class sizes that are a big part of the quality of the education offered.

As it is now, the school is bursting at the seams. Because the school lacks sufficient office space for student services, students can often be seen meeting one on one with teachers or with other students in the hallways. This can especially be a problem when privacy would be optimal. My daughter has had to meet with tutors in the hallway, and it can be very distracting when other students are constantly passing by. Innovative programming ideas are sometimes tabled because of the lack of sufficient space. For a school that emphasizes the concept of community, it is crucial to have space for the entire student body to come together, often with faculty and staff, and sometimes with parents as well. Urban suffers from the lack of a high school sized gymnasium and a larger performing arts space. The school often has to rent performance halls for its music concerts, something that is unusual for public and private schools in the city.

I hope that you will join me in supporting the North campus Expansion Project so that Urban can continue to be the innovative, outstanding independent school that it is today.

Sincerely,

Carol Berluti
Alumna and Parent of The Urban School of San Francisco



Oak Street Project

Jan 11, 2015 11:32 PM

From: Chris Keene <chris@ckeene.com>

To: Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Email in support of Urban High School Campus Expansion

Attachments: Attach0.html / Uploaded File (3K)

San Francisco Planning Commission

1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners -

I am writing in support of the proposed Urban High School Campus Expansion.

We have two sons attending Urban (Austen is 18 and a Senior, Alexander is 16 and a Freshman) and have seen first hand the great value this school offers San Francisco families.

We have also seen how challenged Urban is in its current space to support its students' need for classroom space, performance and athletic space. After school logistics for both of our boys are difficult as they have to take public transit to get to sports and music practices.

This is a project that will benefit not just students but enrich the broader neighborhood and community as well.


Sincerely,

Christopher Keene



Oak Street Project

Jan 10, 2015 4:17 PM


From:  dougpeckler@gmail.com



To:  Oak Street Project

Cc:

Subject: Letter of Support

Attachments:  Attach0.html / Uploaded File (5K)

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

This is a statement of support of for Urban School's Oak Street expansion plan.

As the parent of an Urban student, I've been struck by how thoughtful and thorough the administration assesses the needs of its various publics—and how equally well the leaders establish effective processes to meet those needs. From my understanding of the expansion project, this is no exception. The school wants to work with the community and build a useful facility that will solve space problems for the school while adding resources for the community.

Our son, and many like him, benefit enormously from the school. He looks forward to a studio art career, and learned a lot by volunteering in the art classroom at nearby Creative Arts Charter School—the kind of mutually beneficial experience with which Urban and the community thrive.

He has participated in some of Urban's theatre productions, which often have to turn away potential audience for lack of space.

A strong interest of my son's is building a diverse and multicultural society, an interest well promulgated by the school. The school's location in the Haight furthers this goal.

He is fortunate to benefit from generous financial aid during his education at Urban. In the spirit of building a smart, proactive, and socially-just citizenry, the school has gone out of its way to offer its unique quality education to all.

Please look favorably on this great project!

Sincerely,
Doug Peckler
Parent

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

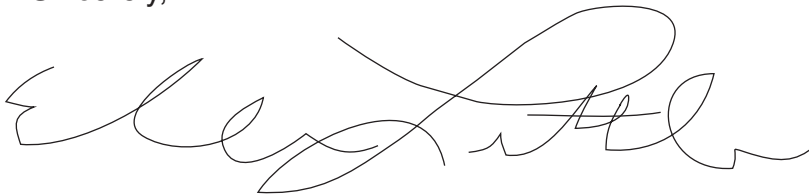
Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am a long time San Francisco resident and the parent of two children who were born and raised here. They have attended public schools (Alvarado Elementary and Aptos middle school) as well as private schools (Waldorf, Sacred Heart and Urban). I have been involved on Site councils, PTAs and in other volunteer positions at all of these schools and I am a big fan of raising children in San Francisco.

The Urban School has given my son an amazing education. It is one of the most creative, academically challenging, diverse and inspiring schools in the city.

My son is both an athlete and a musician so we have felt firsthand the challenges of not having a full size gym and theatre. This year my son is a captain of the lacrosse team and he runs the lacrosse preseason workouts. The team does most of their workouts on the street because there is not enough room in the gym. With a bigger gym they wouldn't have to do this. Having a bigger theatre would mean more parents and other family members could attend performances. As it is now, it's a first come first ticket system for some of the concerts so if you're not fast enough you can't get a ticket.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ellen Little', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Ellen Little

William M. Fleishhacker
Ellen Kaye Fleishhacker
280 30th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94121

January 15, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

RE: Urban School North Campus Expansion Project

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are the parents of two students (Class of 2016 and Class of 2018) at the Urban School of San Francisco. We writing to support the Urban School's CUP application for the North Campus Expansion project. We support this project because of its benefits to (1) our family and the Urban School; (2) the Haight Ashbury neighborhood; and (3) the City and County as whole.

The benefits to our family and Urban are obvious, but worth mentioning. Our children have both enjoyed their time at Urban and our family cannot speak highly enough of the quality education and opportunities provided by the school. However, Urban is very much in need of additional classroom and office space. The school also does not have a high school sized gymnasium or full performing arts theater. Our daughter loves musical theater, and we are grateful for the opportunity Urban has provided her to perform in shows. However, this program (and her experience) would have benefited if the school had a larger theater, which is commonplace in many high-schools (and even elementary schools) in San Francisco. Although our daughter will not be able to take advantage of the project, because it will not be completed before she graduates, the project will benefit our freshman son, and future generations of Urban students.

The Urban School has been an important part of the Haight Ashbury neighborhood since 1977. We do not live in the Haight, but since our daughter began attending Urban, the Haight has become somewhat of a second home to our family. We eat and shop in the Haight before and after picking our children up from school, and have been going there more often on the weekends as well. One thing our children love about the school is the ability to eat lunch in the Haight and frequent the cafes and merchants there. There is no question that the school contributes economically to the neighborhood, and the project, which will allow increased enrollment, will only further this impact.

Finally, the project will benefit the City as a whole because the project will allow Urban to offer a quality educational experience to additional students in San Francisco. High quality college preparatory education is a priority for San Francisco families, but due to the lack of classroom space, Urban must turn down many qualified students. The project will allow increased enrollment and thus benefit San Francisco families seeking additional high school choices. And these additional students would represent a diverse spectrum of San Francisco families because nearly 30% of the students receive financial aid, and one of Urban's core values is the belief that a school made up of students, teachers and families drawn from many different

socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions and sexual orientations is the best way to prepare students for their 21st century lives.

For all of these reasons, we strongly support the Urban School's North Campus Expansion Project, and respectfully request that the Planning Commission approve the project.

Very Truly Yours,

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is on the left, appearing to be 'Ellen', and the second is on the right, appearing to be 'William'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ellen and William Fleishhacker

Barak Jolish
2432 Castro Street
San Francisco, CA 94131
(415) 640 4468

January 20, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: The Urban School Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approval for our
Academic and Athletics Center and for the later phase Performing Arts facility.

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to support the Urban School's CUP permit for its planned expansion. I am a native San Franciscan, and am raising two children in the City. The oldest attends Urban and is thriving in the school's progressive and intensive environment.

In general, the school's plans are a great opportunity for infill in an established neighborhood. While surface parking lots are not a good use of space in an area well-served by public transit, proving more educational facilities will help Urban thrive. I urge you to support the project.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Barak Jolish', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Barak Jolish

January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My name is Caroline Hutchinson and my two children attend The Urban School in San Francisco. I do not live in the area, but travel there frequently to support my kids' school activities. The Urban School's innovative 1:1 technology program and service learning drew us to the school. The Urban School offers us a generous scholarship, without which we would not be able to attend.

My son is a sophomore and my daughter a freshman and both have grown as a young man and woman through Urban's collaborative learning style and community activism. They are also athletes so I know firsthand about the need for a new gymnasium. "Home" games have to be held at rented out facilities and can be difficult to get to. Office and classroom space are very short and the expanded space will benefit not only the Urban community, but the neighborhood around it via Urban's service learning programs.

Urban's firm roots in the Haight and its desire to serve the community can only grow as our school grows. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Best,

Caroline Hutchinson

115 Central Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94117
January 9, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103
RE: The Urban School's North Campus Expansion Project

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

For nearly 20 years our family has resided at our Central Avenue address. Our 3 children have been raised in the neighborhood, and we have all benefited from the services, businesses, parks, library and community that are an integral part of the Haight-Ashbury district. Since our son, August, was a young child walking by the Urban School, he has dreamt of attending. Following his successful years in public school, this past fall his dream came true when he entered Urban as a freshman in the class of 2018.

As a family that struggles financially in the City that we love and very much call home, we are particularly grateful for Urban's policies of diversity and support that make it possible for August to attend. He's thriving at Urban and is thrilled to be part of its exceptional academic and social environment. As parents, we too feel heartily welcomed into the school community by staff, and by current and alumnae families.

The more we experience Urban, the more we come to realize what an important institution it is—not only for its student body and their families, but for our neighborhood and for San Francisco. Besides having an excellent academic program that sends well-prepared students into the next phase of their lives, it is one that does so with emphasis on acting in the world thoughtfully, innovatively, and responsibly. As neighbors we know firsthand that Urban and its students conduct themselves respectfully, and are a great presence in our neighborhood.

We wish to express our full support for Urban's North Campus expansion. With much needed additional space, we know that the school will better support its current students, and also create the opportunity for more San Francisco youth to join its student body in the coming years. Volunteering in the library every week, Hilda is amazed at how every space is used efficiently and harmoniously. Broadening options for our City's students and families who seek high quality secondary education will help to ensure that San Francisco's progressive and mindful values continue to be a cultural and intellectual beacon.

Sincerely,

Bruce Ackley
Hilda Mendez

January 9, 2015
2821 Broderick Street
San Francisco, CA 94123

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

My name is Susan Masto. I have lived in San Francisco for the last 20 years. I am a mother of 4 children ages 16, 14, 12 & 10. My two oldest children currently attend The Urban School of San Francisco. I am extremely supportive of The Urban School's North Campus Expansion Project.

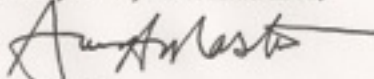
The Urban School is an amazing educational institution, reflecting the diversity of San Francisco. Urban is dedicated to having a diverse student body. As a result, 30% of Urban students receive financial aid. Urban has made a positive impact on the Haight neighborhood and on the city of San Francisco as a whole. Allowing Urban to increase its building footprint, programming, and student body will, without a doubt, only enhance the positive influences the school has had on the city of San Francisco.

Community service is a core part of Urban's educational program. Each year, Urban students volunteer at up to 100 agencies and non-profits throughout San Francisco and the Bay Area. Urban's mission is dedicated to preparing students for the 21st century, and a huge part of that preparation involves teaching kids how to be active citizens in their neighborhoods and helping to create positive change and impact. Specifically, my two Urban students have truly enjoyed singing for the residents at the Institute on Aging. Their interaction with an older generation has helped breed compassion and social responsibility for the elderly.

Urban's academic program is by far one of the strongest in the Bay Area. Unfortunately, Urban's current physical size, the lack of a standard-sized performing arts facility, and few athletic programs, make the school less desirable for highly qualified students. By increasing Urban's footprint and bringing more extra curricular activities into Urban's program, the school will have the ability to attract a larger number of highly qualified students.

I ask that you approve Urban's Conditional Use Permit. By allowing Urban to increase its building footprint and student body, the school will improve immeasurably and will continue to have a positive impact on the neighborhood and city as a whole. Urban is an amazing institution that truly helps prepares a diverse group of young adults for their future and encourages its students to take an active role in making the world a better place. San Francisco will truly benefit by helping Urban perform at its best.

Thank you for your consideration,



Susan Masto

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

As the parent of three current Urban students and as an active member of the Urban Parent Board, I am writing to you to support the Urban School's North Campus Expansion proposal.

We have been an Urban family for almost four years and the school provides and excellent education and a very special sense of community. But equally importantly to us as a Marin family, Urban can provide our children with a city high school experience. Our children travel to San Francisco every day, attend classes and learn how to manage themselves within a city environment. Our children support the economic viability of the neighborhood by shopping daily at the markets and restaurants on Haight Street. Our Urban students contribute to the San Francisco community. When our current senior volunteered at Project Open Hand for several months last year, he felt invigorated by being in part of a larger, supportive community effort. Our two freshmen are members of Urban Singers; over the holidays, their group traveled to the California Pacific Medical Center Alzheimer home to sing to the seniors. Every day, in ways big and small, Urban students lend themselves to the fabric of San Francisco.

The North Campus Expansion is an excellent opportunity for the school to grow modestly and by doing so, will allow other children, from various socioeconomic backgrounds, to both take advantage of the city as well as provide back to the larger community.

Thank you very much,

Kristin L. Baron

***Elizabeth Mills
425 Duncan Street
San Francisco, CA 94131***

January 8, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners.

I am a current, as well as an alumna, parent at The Urban School of San Francisco: my son is a freshman and my daughter graduated last spring. In addition, my family has long been connected with Urban, as both my brothers attended Urban and my father at one point served on the Board. I am writing today to show my support for the school's current North Campus Expansion Project, which I am hoping you will approve.

The primary reason that I support this expansion is that it will create more classrooms, a high-school sized gym and a large theater on campus, all of which would clearly benefit the school. Urban's unique educational experience is designed around the block system and smaller class size; more class rooms would clearly support this experience, as well as allow for more meeting space. On a personal level, I believe the small class size was key to my daughter's success at Urban, giving her greater confidence to speak in class. In addition, having a larger theater and high-school sized gym would not only bring to the facilities more on a par with other public and private high schools in the city, but would allow for more school support at sporting events, as well as at theatrical performances. It would be great not to have to travel to go to home basketball games, wonderful for the whole student body to see the same performance and nice to not miss a show because three runs in the existing small theater sold out.

I also believe that the expansion would help the neighborhood, not only by replacing a parking lot with a multi-use building, but also by continuing to foster the relationship that the school has with the Haight. Urban has been part of the local community for years, with community service a core part of its educational program. Students don't just go to school in the Haight, they take pride in their neighborhood: they volunteer at local schools and clinics, eat lunch at the restaurants, and shop at all the stores. My daughter still feels pride for all the work she did at Chinese Immersion School, just up the street from Urban. In addition,

whenever she is home, she heads to the Haight to meet friends for lunch or dinner and go shopping.

I also support the school's need to increase the student body size from 380 to 420 students. The new North Campus will enable the school to provide even more San Francisco families with a high-quality college preparatory education, a critical priority for many San Francisco residents. I know a number of students who have been turned away in the past not because they weren't qualified, but simply because there was not space. In addition, Urban students are made up of a fabulous mix of cultures, race, religions, and sexual orientation. Increasing the number of students will only increase that mix, as the school is very committed to a diverse student population that truly represents San Francisco.

When all is said and done, I highly encourage you to approve the North Campus Expansion Project at Urban School. Urban is committed to education, to San Francisco and to the community. Reward that philosophy by approving the project so they can do what they do...but even better.

Sincerely
Elizabeth Mills

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**Ronna A. Stone
Timothy D. Smith
276 Edgewood Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94117**

January 1, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissions:

We are writing as the parents of current and former students of The Urban School of San Francisco to formally voice our support for the proposed New Campus Expansion project. We are also live in the neighboring community and believe that the proposed addition will enhance the Haight-Ashbury and undoubtedly, be an improvement over the blacktop parking lots at the current site.

We have carefully reviewed the plans for the proposed addition. The expansion takes into consideration the needs of our future student population and as important, has taken seriously the needs of the community and the concerns of the neighbors. The additional classrooms, athletic and performance facilities will clearly benefit the entire Urban School neighborhood/community and will improve the school's ability to provide an even better educational experience to an even larger population of diverse students.

We want The Urban School to continue to be a beacon of first class education in The City and maintain its deep roots in the Haight-Ashbury community. The proposed project will ensure that both happen.

Please join us in supporting the North Campus Expansion project at The Urban School of San Francisco.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ronna Stone

Tim Smith

Dear San Francisco Planning Commission,

My name is Judy Jones, and I am a parent of a 9th grade student at the school. I live in the city, about 10-15 minutes from the school in Diamond Heights, and have passed through the colorful Haight neighborhood frequently during my twenty years of living in the city. I am writing this letter to strongly support the North Campus Expansion Project for many reasons.

I believe a real benefit to this project is to add beauty to this part of the city. It will serve to take away two blacktop parking lots and replace them with underground parking lots. I'm also happy to see that St Agnes parishioners will still have parking as this church draws people from many parts of the city (including me occasionally).

Since my daughter started going to The Urban School, I have been exploring the neighborhood and have enjoyed discovering places like Haight Street Market, Ambience, some of the little cafes, and Whole Foods Market. A beautiful high school, visible to all who drive down Oak Street, may attract more moms like me into the neighborhood. It highlights a positive, young energy into an area of the city that some families are hesitant to visit. The expansion will also allow a few more students in each grade to attend which will encourage more families to explore this part of the city.

A high-school sized gymnasium and theater will be helpful so that our school does not have to rent gyms and other facilities far from the school. I also hope that more families from around the area will come to our school events such as plays or playoffs. The Urban School gives at least 30% of our students some financial aid. Making Urban more visible may inspire more students in the surrounding neighborhoods to come visit, and perhaps even set a goal to attend high school here.

I hope this letter helps to illuminate a few of the ways that Urban's North Campus Expansion will help the neighborhood and why I support it.

Sincerely,

Judy D. Jones

January 7, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to write this letter and respectfully request your approval of The Urban School's Conditional Use Permit for the Academic and Athletics Center and for the later phase Performing Arts facility.

I have been a proud resident of San Francisco since 1987, and I have run a San Francisco-based consultancy since 1999.

My wife and I are fortunate to have both our son and daughter enrolled at The Urban School. As we became familiar with Urban more than ten years ago, we were impressed by the school's outstanding academic programs, its exceptional opportunities for growth through performing arts, athletics and extra-curricular activities, and its long-standing and deep connections to social issues in San Francisco.

Urban's Service Learning program — an important part of the curriculum for all Urban students — places young people in a wide variety of social-services roles across San Francisco where they gain a deep understanding of current community issues and how they can make a difference using their talents and skills. Each year Urban students volunteer at up to 100 agencies and non-profits throughout the city and Bay Area, contributing thousands of hours of service. My son, a senior, is currently volunteering for his second term at FACESSF preschool center at Masonic and Page.

For many Urban graduates, social service continues to be an important part of their lives — a commitment that has a profound and wide-ranging impact on San Francisco and countless other communities around the world.

Urban badly needs additional classroom space and suffers from the lack of a high school-sized gymnasium and a larger theater, both of which are commonplace in public and private schools in the City. The school is forced to rent gyms and athletic facilities, often at some distance from the school, as well as large performance spaces. Beyond arts and athletics, every space in Urban current facilities is used everyday for classes, clubs and meetings. Urban lacks sufficient office space for teachers, College Counseling, Learning Services and other student services.

My son has participated in half a dozen theatre productions during high school. Urban's shows always sell out, with ticket demand far exceeding the current theatre's seating capacity. A new performance space will give Urban a unique opportunity to bring the rich gift of theatre to more people in San Francisco and the Haight community.

My freshman daughter has learning issues and has already benefitted from the exceptional learning services Urban offers. Sadly, the lack of meeting spaces on campus means her regular meetings with the learning services coordinator take place in the student center or

other relatively public areas. The new facility would help Urban be even more effective at serving its students' learning needs.

Finally, I hope you'll carefully consider Urban's deep roots and strong ties to the neighborhood. Urban has been part of the Height since 1977 and for nearly four decades has played an active role in the neighborhood's economic vitality and daily life. Urban provides good jobs and teachers, staff and students (including both of my kids) support many Haight merchants.

Thank you so much for your careful consideration of Urban's Conditional Use Permit, and for your commitment to improving San Francisco.

Sincerely,

Kevin A. O'Connor
Urban Parent

Julie Lepinard - 2973 Jackson Street - San Francisco 94115

1/7/2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

As a parent of two Urban students I can not tell you how important this institution has been in our family and how grateful we are for our kids to be able to study there. Urban is truly a special place with incredible values and efforts to embrace San Francisco's diversities into its education, its student and staff bodies as well as its involvement in the larger community.

Our kids are growing up becoming, thoughtful, respectful, critical thinkers but more than anything they have a deep notion of empathy. We love the fact that our boys either take public transportation or bike to the school. It is a privilege and a luxury to have a school in an urban environment, especially in the Haight where so many things are happening.

Having very athletic kids I am thrilled with the Urban expansion; adding more space to this very crowded place is not a luxury. Having a place where kids can regroup and share their ideas would be fantastic. Having more classrooms would allow the school to breath a little and maybe allow a few extra students to benefit from this extraordinary education. Lastly, having a gym will certainly allow the school to celebrate even more its culture altogether in one place.

Please consider positively this expansion, for the many incoming families that will benefit from it.

Sincerely,

Julie Lepinard

January 6, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA. 94103

Our names are Catherine Carr and Stephan Ciulla, we are both architects, and parents of a current Sophomore student at Urban. The Urban School of San Francisco is an incredibly important aspect in our family's life for providing our child with an excellent education in a collaborative and inclusive setting; while also encompassing the widest arc of students from around San Francisco and the Bay Area. Whether it is evening plays, lunch-time meetings, or visiting speakers; the benefits of having a facility that we can quickly drive, bike, and walk to, are immeasurable and only strengthen the sense of community.

Urban has always set the pace for educational excellence, delivery, and deep pedagogy; and this new project will undoubtedly set new standards for educational facilities in dense urban environments. A school that can provide facilities that encourage a student's learning, theatre productions, sciences, civic events, and athletics will remain vibrant and lead; while one that becomes static will languish against its peers.

The new Oak Street Campus is keenly suited for providing valuable north facing daylight as well as important night-time functions to a section of the GGP-Panhandle that desperately lacks activity and safe levels of illumination. The scale, facade rhythms, and subtle level of craft is completely in keeping with, as well as contributing to, the visual character of the Haight neighborhood; all while providing its students, staff, and visitors an effective "beacon" for education. The education classroom experience, below-grade parking, and roof-top activity program is an extremely well-suited mix for this infill site; whereby the ground level experience along Oak Street will be safer, visually positive, and pedestrian friendly.

We fully support the mission of Urban, its careful vision, and the two phases of the Oak Street Project; and eagerly look forward to its effect on learning at this inimitable San Francisco high school and wide reaching community.

Sincerely,

Catherine Carr and Stephan Ciulla

Tara & Bryan Meehan
450 Belvedere Ave
Belvedere
CA 94920

January 3, 2015

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners,

Ref. Urban School North Campus Expansion Project.

My husband and I are parents to Olivia a Freshman at Urban School, which will be applying for a Conditional Use Permit on January 22nd. We are huge supporters of the school and hope that our two younger daughters will also be able attend.

Urban School is truly exceptional. Their unique teaching pedagogy, their use of technology, their embrace of green and sustainable ideas, the diversity of their students and teachers, their financial support of a large percentage of the student body, the distances students choose to travel to attend such a school, their outreach to the local community all make them a school to be greatly admired and lauded.

We wholeheartedly support their proposed expansion, which is cleverly designed to maximize space while taking into account the needs of the landlords. The proposed structure will help the school give the very best education to the students that attend the school as well as allowing the school to enroll more students from the Bay area.

We believe the school is a model member of the community in terms of employment, volunteer community service in the locality, the additional business gained by local restaurants and shops.

My daughter personally has grown so much by being at the school. Urban has opened her eyes to to breadth of wonderful opinions, attitudes and people in Haight and in San Francisco in a way that no other school would.

We strongly urge you to approve the CUP.

Sincerely,

Tara and Bryan Meehan

5 January 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are writing in support of The Urban School's request for its CUP approval. Urban's new Academic and Athletic Center and subsequent Performing Arts Facility are much needed additions and improvements to a highly valued non-profit member of the Haight community.

We chose to send our teenage daughter to The Urban School because of the values that the school espouses and lives in its day-to-day existence in San Francisco, namely: respect for diversity, giving back to one's community and love of learning. As we see her embrace these values and thrive as a student in San Francisco, we are confident that we made the right choice. She has already become a more tolerant individual and a confident advocate for others who deserve recognition.

With its new facilities, Urban will be able to continue its outstanding work of broadly educating future generations of Bay Area teens. By expanding their students' exposure to academic subjects, the arts and athletics, the school will continue to develop highly functioning future leaders and participants, wherever their travels take them. The Urban School is quintessential San Francisco, in the best of ways. As these young adults move on to college and beyond, they will represent the city well and many will return to their communities to keep giving back.

Please support The Urban School's request so that it can continue to produce outstanding young community members in San Francisco and beyond.

Very truly yours
Abby Adlerman and Brian Platter

Lisa Hartwig
1407 De Soto Avenue
Burlingame CA 94010

My name is Lisa Hartwig, and I am the parent of two Urban students, Freddy, class of 2012 and Harry, class of 2015. Freddy is currently a 3rd year student at the University of Chicago and Harry is a senior who will be attending Pomona College in the fall. Over the last 5 years, our family watched while our local school district tried to add a new elementary school, our daughter's K-8 suburban independent school added a high school and Urban planned an expansion of their high school. While watching these projects progress or stall (in the case of the public elementary school) we are reminded of how difficult it can be to get all the parties to work together for the common good. Allowing the Urban School to expand its campus would be such a good. In the 7 ½ years we have been at Urban, we have seen the school educate a diverse group of students with the mission and purpose of creating responsible citizens of a larger community. While I know that the larger community will need to make concessions for the expansion of the Urban School, I believe that the community, the city and its residents will benefit from the expansion of the Urban School. I hope that the San Francisco Planning Commission will approve the expansion.

Perhaps our family represents a demographic that is not the city's highest priority—a suburban family commuting to the city to educate their children. But as a consequence of their experience at Urban, our sons now consider themselves to be San Franciscans, and Urban has taught them their responsibilities as urban citizens.

Our son joins a carpool with 3 other students and a parent driver who works at UCSF. After school, our son runs cross country and takes MUNI and BART home. His commute from Burlingame to San Francisco in the morning is 40 minutes. At night, it takes him 60 minutes. He loves the school, so he doesn't complain about commute. More importantly, both of our boys developed an appreciation for the benefits and challenges of living in a city. Our oldest son, an introverted artist, would never have chosen the south side of Chicago as a college campus if he had not left our suburban bubble. Our middle son considers himself a city boy, showing us the latest apps for navigating San Francisco. Both boys want to return to the city once they graduate from college.

Urban's four year service learning curriculum, which is substantially different from other high school service learning projects, has helped our sons become responsible urban citizens. First, they learned about the other students and larger community through the Identity and Ethnic studies class. After questioning their assumptions about each other and the community, students went into the city to experience San Francisco's diversity. Both boys volunteered at 826 Valencia. Our oldest son tutored elementary students, our middle son assists with field trips. In his free time, our oldest son planned a fundraiser for the Tenderloin School with his classmates and then worked in the summer organizing their library.

Our children would not be commuting to the city if The Urban School of San Francisco did not have something unique to offer its students. The school is a community of creative, compassionate, interesting, diverse students who want more from high school than high SAT scores and GPAs. My oldest son is a visual artist, who spent summers at the San Francisco Art institute and stayed after school on Friday nights to sketch live models at Urban. My middle has an interest in politics and policy, visiting the GLBT History Museum to investigate the history of bath house closures and discussing the He for She Movement in the Young Men's Group he co-leads. My daughter, who is in 8th grade and hopes to join Urban in the fall, is a violinist who wants to perform with an ensemble at school, rather than with a conservatory. The facilities at Urban make for a cozy, intimate classroom experience, but they do not fully support the student body's creative expression or physical development. Students write and perform their own plays and deliver personal monologues about adolescence in a tiny black box theater. Students sing, play in the jazz band or chamber orchestra in small classrooms, only to perform in larger venues across town. Students criss-cross the city to play in gymnasiums that they do not have continual access to. The school has made do with the limited space and it hasn't dampened their school spirit but it comes at cost in terms of time and community. We could do more to encourage the artistic and physical development of these students. We just need the facilities to support them.

The city of San Francisco has many wonderful high schools. We visited many of them when we were looking for schools for our children but none of them has embraced the city the way Urban has. Our children have shopped at Haight and Hayes Valley stores, eaten at the nearby restaurants, volunteered at local nonprofits and raised money for disadvantaged schools. As a family, we have tried to limit our impact on the city by taking mass transportation and carpooling. We have introduced our children to a community of people they would not see in the suburbs and it has changed their perceptions about the world around them. When our sons chose to attend Urban, we did not yet know that they were gay. But they knew the first time they visited Urban that the school would be the kind of place that would support their growth and help them find their paths. I'm not sure this could have happened in the suburbs. I'm not sure this could happen in the tonier areas of San Francisco or on its outskirts. Urban is smack dab in the middle of San Francisco and is aware of its responsibility to the city and the students it educates. I hope that the city will, in turn, help encourage and develop an institution that has embraced it and the young people it is charged with educating. Please approve the North Campus Expansion.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hartwig

January 5th, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

As parents of a Freshman at The Urban School, we are writing to voice our support for the Urban School North Campus Expansion. The expansion will enable Urban to expand the school's facilities by leasing space from St. Agnes, turning two blacktop parking lots into Gymnasium, Theatre and classroom space and enabling the school to expand enrollment from 380 to up to 420 students.

We are obviously excited by the prospect of Urban being able to create more classroom, gym and theatre space. Our son Connor is a performing arts-oriented student, and as a middle schooler utilized his school's theatre space frequently, in addition to the gym and classrooms. Having those facilities available on campus will make for a more robust program for Connor and all Urban students -- students from a wide range of backgrounds. The ability to expand the school's enrollment will also help Urban bring in more students from a wider background.

Overall, we know this project will benefit the neighborhood in several ways. Leasing space from St. Agnes provides more funds for furthering their ministry in the Haight. Our kids already have service projects in the neighborhood and frequent the shops and restaurants on the Haight; not going off campus to other facilities for practices and events will certainly increase their local engagement.

Best,

Brian Elliott and Maureen McAvoy
parents of Connor Elliott, Urban School class of 2018

Kate Mayer & Richard Hagy
P.O. Box 370322
Montara, CA 94037-0322

January 5, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I'm writing to support The Urban School of San Francisco's North Campus Expansion. They are applying for a Conditional Use Permit for an Academic and Athletics Center and for a later phase Performing Arts facility.

Our daughter is a freshman at Urban. We feel very lucky that she's been able to join other students from San Francisco and around the Bay Area to attend high school in a diverse and vibrant environment that draws energy from and contributes to the surrounding neighborhood. From the beginning, we've been struck by the way Urban remains consistently considerate of its neighbors and neighborhood when planning events and ensuring that the school population helps contribute in many ways to the neighborhood. Often, parents meet at nearby restaurants and students venture out for coffee and snacks. We also shop in the area.

However, Urban also strives to weave the school community into the fabric of San Francisco in more lasting and meaningful ways. We've been very impressed by the way The Urban School contributes to the surrounding community, instilling values of good citizenship, social justice and commitment to service. In honoring many perspectives, the school develops good citizens who contribute to the world around them in exciting ways. By senior year, each student takes class time to volunteer at a local nonprofit. Many alumni give back to San Francisco and the world around them through their choice of service careers.

Part of what attracted our daughter to the school was its community involvement and service program. She likes the idea of real world learning while offering service to others; and she's grateful for the range of classes available. However, the school has limited physical space. The new building would provide a much needed Athletic Center and additional classrooms. In a later project, the school would like to build a performing arts space--a space that would be valuable to the school and the community. Their plan makes great use of an infill lot and would allow Urban to continue to educate San Francisco students, whose life work will make a difference in the world.

Sincerely,

Kate Mayer and Richard Hagy
kamayer@pacbell.net, rab_hagy@pacbell.net

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

We are sixteen-year San Francisco residents, and are raising our three boys, ages 10, 13 and 15, here in SF. Our oldest son Aidan is a freshman at The Urban School. It is an absolutely wonderful institution -- we feel extremely lucky to have their assistance in raising our son to be an intelligent and contributing member of his community.

Urban is bursting at the seams for classroom space, and is missing basic functionality that is available at most schools in SF, such as a full-sized gym and theater. We are extremely excited about the plans for Urban's new Academic and Athletics Center -- we feel that it is a great fit for the neighborhood and an ideal use for the two blacktop parking lots. Our son and his brothers are all athletes, and we are hopeful that they will have the opportunity to make use of this wonderful new space when it is available both for academic and athletic purposes.

We are proud to be part of a school that does so much to give back to the community, working with over 100 agencies and non-profits through SF and the bay area and with deep roots in the Haight community. We also recognize that high-quality college prep education is a critical priority for SF families -- another wonderful benefit of this project is that it will allow Urban to serve more families in the community, who will then also be serving the community.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or thoughts.

Thank you for your consideration,

Claudine Ryan
21 Jersey Street, SF CA 94114

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing today as a parent and a San Francisco resident in support of the North Campus Expansion project. I have two children, one who is a graduate of the Urban School of San Francisco and the other who currently attends and is in 10th grade. My husband and I live with our boys just across the park from the Urban School, so feel connected to both the school community and to the neighborhood. We have been members of the neighborhood for more than ten years and part of the Urban School for five years and love how the two have meshed into one.

Our children are both athletes who participate in a variety of varsity sports at Urban. Over the years they have had to travel across the city to practice soccer and tennis. By the time the student athletes return to Urban after practice, it is late and they have often spent more than an hour being transported. The parents too, need to drive all over San Francisco to watch even home games. Most schools, both public and private, have a gym and/or fields for their students to practice and host games, but Urban does not. The school rents space instead which can at times be unreliable and difficult to get to. My older son, who played basketball, and visited other schools that had their own facilities, use to say that a gym is more than a gym, it is a gathering place for a community. The banners hanging and students being able to attend games to support each other builds a tight network for a school. My son saw this elsewhere but it is a missing piece for The Urban School.

As a San Francisco resident, I believe that creating a facility where two parking lots currently stand would be an advantage not just to The Urban School but to the Haight. The students at Urban already use the Haight as part of their campus and education in so many valuable ways. I hope you will support this project for the community and for the academic and athletic space it will provide for San Francisco kids and their families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Beth Berliner

Beth Berliner
720 4th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94118

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

December 18, 2014

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to urge you to approve the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the Urban School's Academic and Athletics Center and for the later phase Performing Arts Facility. Your approval will not only benefit Urban students such as our 9th grade son but the neighborhood and city overall as well. The current lack of such facilities at Urban creates the need to bus our children to sports and cultural facilities all over the city for daily practices and events. This adds to traffic congestion and air pollution for all San Franciscans, greater expense to the school which is subsequently paid for by middle class parents through tuition, and needlessly longer days for our hard working students.

I made my home in the Haight Ashbury for six years before moving to the Mission Dolores neighborhood in 1997. The Haight is symbolically important to me and to many others and I want to see it prosper while maintaining its character. The Urban School is a perfect vehicle for achieving this goal and it deserves your support. Urban provides considerable employment for middle class San Franciscans, our children buy lunch and shop at nearby businesses, and the values promoted by the school are commensurate with those of the neighborhood's legacy. Indeed, our family chose Urban because it promised to be the diverse school that would welcome our son. I can assure you that our son's hopes have been fully realized. He is having a wonderful experience while being challenged academically in a way that will lift him up and brighten his future.

Expanding the number of classrooms at Urban will enable more students to benefit from an outstanding education. Many middle school students who applied last year were turned down. This was the case with a number of our son's friends. The planning commission can contribute to the goal of enabling more youth from many different walks of life to enroll in this unique institution (with an impressive 30% receiving financial aid) by approving the Conditional Use Permit.

Sincerely,
Peter Altman
431 Dolores St.
Father of Yossi Altman-Bukowski

S.F. Planning Commission

1650 Mission Street suite 400

S.F., Ca. 94103

Dear Planning Commission members,

As a parent of a current student, as well as a recent graduate of the Urban School, I am writing to urge you to approve plans for the North Campus Expansion project which would yield multiple benefits. In addition to more classrooms and a proper size gymnasium and theatre, office space is badly needed for teachers, college counseling, and service learning. This expansion would enhance the lives of so many current and future students as well as to create more space enabling a larger enrollment to this wonderful school.

Urban has been a part of the Haight since the 1970's and has a strong identity in the neighborhood. Urban students including my children have supported the local restaurants, markets and shops adding economic vitality to the area.

Urban's service programs assist the San Francisco community and its many agencies with hundreds of hours of volunteer work by students. These relationships forge meaningful connections between citizens and Urban students such as my son's experience working with the Homeless Prenatal Program as well as the Bay Area Women's and Children's Center. These experiences have further cemented my child's sense of social justice, just one of many very special things about Urban.

Finally, the plans to use the 2 blacktop parking lots makes great use of the available space for a much needed upgrade that would be such a constructive addition to the school and neighborhood.

Sincerely,


Nina Hartunian

2496 Filbert Street

San Francisco, CA 94123

7 January 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission

1650 Mission Street, Suite 400

San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the Urban School's North Campus Expansion and encourage you to approve their Conditional Use Permit. As the parent of two current Urban students, I deeply value the high quality, college preparatory education Urban provides in a nurturing and inclusive environment. The addition of seven classrooms will enable The Urban School to serve more San Francisco students and offer families additional high school choices. Currently, Urban provides nearly 30% of their students with financial assistance, clearly demonstrating their commitment to ensuring that a broad range of students have access to an Urban School education. Our family believes in providing educational opportunity to high achieving, under-served San Francisco students. Personally, I serve as the National Board Chair of the Breakthrough Collaborative and am proud to support Urban's expansion to allow more students to benefit from an Urban education. The best way to prepare students for their 21st Century lives is learning at a school made up of students, teachers and families drawn from many different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions and sexual orientations; something our daughters attending Urban benefit from daily.

I would be happy to discuss my unequivocal support for this Conditional Use Permit if desired and can be reached at (415)776-8772.

Sincerely,


Eve M Niquette

To the SF Planning Commission,

I am writing to ask that you please approve the project that The Urban School of San Francisco is proposing. I fully support Urban's North Campus expansion Project and see their plan to remodel the gym and parking lots across the street from the school as a well needed supplement to the small space they currently inhabit.

The school needs a regular sized gymnasium, the one they use now is very out of date and does not meet current standard size requirements. Also, Urban is in need of more classroom space, more office space for teachers and faculty, a larger sized auditorium for performances would be very beneficial, as Urban's theater and performing arts programs is very evolved and a big part of Urban. The space they currently use is tiny and can only accommodate a small crowd. A regular sized cafeteria for the students would also be a nice addition to the small space that is used now. It would be helpful if the school had a commercial kitchen that could feed the kids properly and more space for the kids to gather at lunch. This room is used as a multi purpose room as well and really is not big enough to accommodate all the parents attending the meetings.

My son, Larkin White, is a freshman at Urban and has had a remarkable experience there so far. I cannot believe how happy he is and how satisfied we are with the education he is receiving. It is not just academically superior, but also the amount of care and effort that goes into helping the kids succeed in every walk of life is astounding. They work hard at helping the kids learn about social justice and what it means to live in a neighborhood like the Haight. They teach the kids to be respectful of their neighbors and involve them in community service in the area whenever possible. My son receives a good amount of financial aid so that he can attend this school. It has been an amazing opportunity for him and we are indebted to the school for their generosity.

The fact that Urban is such an established school in San Francisco, with an excellent reputation is evidence of the wonderful job it is doing turning out competent, well educated, caring citizens that will contribute positively to society. The addition Urban is proposing will no doubt be beneficial and will undoubtedly enhance the educational program that Urban is always striving to give. The expansion will help The Urban School of San Francisco to grow in many ways and is very much needed.

Sincerely,
Leslie Sullenger



January 21, 2015

San Francisco Planning Commission
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Honorable Planning Commissioners:

My name is Jane Tobin and I am the Co-President of Friends of San Francisco Animal Care and Control. We are a non-profit organization that raises funds and awareness for San Francisco Animal Care and Control, the city's municipal shelter. I am writing you today to voice my support for the planned expansion project at The Urban School of San Francisco.

Volunteers are critical in offsetting costs for resource challenged organizations such as San Francisco Animal Care and Control (ACC). When we were evaluating our volunteer program to include students, we looked specifically at The Urban School as a model in youth civic engagement. Through the thoughtful Service Learning program that is incorporated in all years of the Urban School curriculum, we were able to build the case that everyone (including children) can contribute to their community in meaningful ways.

Urban students have been volunteering at San Francisco Animal Care and Control (ACC) for two years. Returning students have come back ready for more responsibility. They are enthusiastic and curious volunteers willing to take on any task no matter how small. The year-round curriculum allows for the students see the depth of services and issues that ACC faces each day. They share in the joys of uniting a lost pet with its family or a new pet with its new family. They also experience the reality of what it means to be an "open-door" shelter. ACC takes in over 10,000 animals each year regardless of its medical or behavioral condition. Lastly, they learn that ACC serves not only the animals but the people of San Francisco.

We find The Urban School students to be kind, compassionate and thoughtful additions to our volunteer program. We have learned quite a bit from their students and many things from their program as well. We would be delighted to have them expand their campus so that more students and agencies will benefit from partnerships such as ours has.

On behalf of the animals, the board of Friends of San Francisco Animal Care and Control, we thank you for the opportunity to share our support of The Urban School expansion project.

Sincerely,

Jane Tobin
Co-President
Friends of San Francisco Animal Care and Control

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