

Item L-9

C15-2015-0068

Meade, Nikelle

Subject: FW: Griffin School (SPC-2014-0216CT) - Street width variance

From: **Stookey, Scott** <Scott.Stookey@austintexas.gov>
Date: Thu, Jun 4, 2015 at 8:08 AM
Subject: RE: Griffin School (SPC-2014-0216CT) - Street width variance
To: "Nhat M. Ho, Civilitude" <nhat@civilitude.com>

Nhat:

AFD concurs with your statement. As was discussed, the proposed location of the building has two AWU fire hydrants within 400 feet of the structure, with the hydrants accessible from two separate streets. The current access from the public roadways provide sufficient access for AFD apparatus to be positioned so hose streams will reach all sides of the new and buildings within hose lay distances of 150 feet or less.

Scott Stookey

Engineering Associate C

Engineering Services – Fire Marshal's Office

Austin Fire Department

505 Barton Springs Road, Suite 200

Austin, Texas 78704

Office: [512-974-0157](tel:512-974-0157)

Scott.Stookey@austintexas.gov



From: Nhat M. Ho, Civilitude [<mailto:nhat@civilitude.com>]
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2015 7:46 AM
To: Stookey, Scott
Subject: Griffin School (SPC-2014-0216CT) - Street width variance

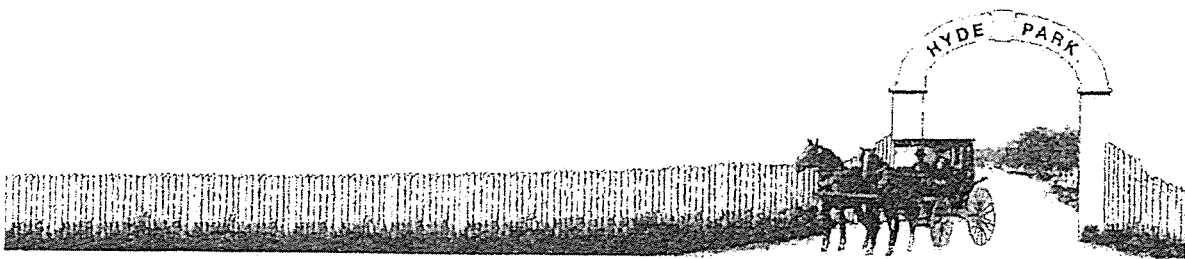
C15-2015-
0068

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 49427 • Austin, TX 78765 • www.austinhdepark.org

The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association passed the following resolution with regard to Griffin School on June 1, 2015:

The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association is in favor of the Griffin School's application for a variance from the minimum street paved width requirements of Section 25-2-832(1) of the Austin City Code in order to add new classroom facilities to the school and increase its enrollment to a maximum of 125 students.



Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
Support of Variance

I am familiar with the Griffin School, and I believe it is an asset to the community. I am in favor of the Griffin School's application for a variance from the minimum street paved width requirements of Section 25-2-832(1) of the Austin City Code in order to add new classroom facilities to the school.

Tom

First Name

Hadfield

Last Name

5012 Evans Ave

Street Address

GAE

Signature

5/8/15

Date

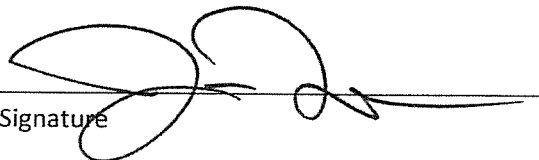
Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
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Jesse
First Name

Hill
Last Name

5011 Evans Ave Apt A.
Street Address


Signature

5/8/15
Date

**Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
Support of Variance**

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Margaret Waish
First Name Last Name

5013 Martin Ave
Street Address

P7282 5/10/15
Signature Date

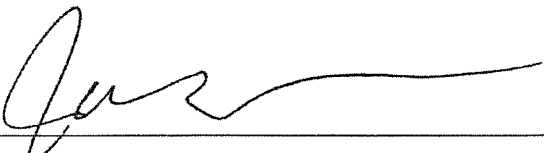
Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
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John
First Name

Lyon
Last Name

5013 Martin Ave, Austin TX 78751
Street Address


Signature

5/9/15
Date

Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
Support of Variance

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RAMZI

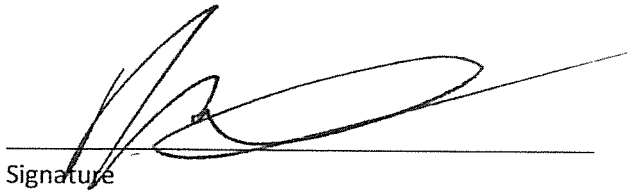
First Name

CHITOUR

Last Name

5009 MARTIN AVENUE AUSTIN TX
78751

Street Address



Signature

10 May 2015

Date

Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
Support of Variance

I am familiar with the Griffin School, and I believe it is an asset to the community. I am in favor of the Griffin School's application for a variance from the minimum street paved width requirements of Section 25-2-832(1) of the Austin City Code in order to add new classroom facilities to the school.

I want Griffin School to be successful.

Robert Truax

First Name

Last Name

700 E. 50th ATx 78751

Street Address

Robert H. Truax

Signature

05/20/2015.

Date

May 11, 2015

Karen and Chris Robertson

5110 A Caswell Ave
Austin, TX 78751

Re: Griffin School – New Building

To Whom it May Concern,

It has come to our attention that there is a discussion about the proposed building works at Griffin School in Hyde Park.

We live very close to the school so we wanted to express our support for the work and the school.

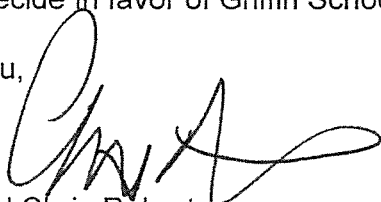
We moved to the area so that our son could attend the school. Part of the appeal of the Hyde Park area was the school's involvement with and participation in the community. Before our son ever started, we went to the launching of the mural that was created over a three-year period in Shipe Park. We've attended local gardening projects and volunteer events in the area, representing the school as well.

One of the key values of the school is to be a good neighbor and whenever we have a school event, we are reminded where to park and to be considerate of residents.

We walk to school with our son and occasionally drop him off. Drop off and pick up congestion has never been a problem that we've observed at the school.

Please decide in favor of Griffin School's request.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris', written over the 'Thank you,' text.

Karen and Chris Robertson
512-578-5936 (Karen)

Richard Finley
4529 Avenue G
Austin, Texas 78751

June 3, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Re: Board of Adjustment, 6/8/2015; case #C15-2015-0068; 5001 Evans Av, 5000 Martin Av

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I write in support of Griffin School being allowed to increase its maximum number of students to 125, and of the school's application for a variance from code requiring that a secondary school be situated on a street at least 40 feet wide.

I frequently walk, ride, or drive by the school, including at drop-off and pick-up times, and have never observed a traffic problem around the school. Nor have I noticed any increase in street parking on the surrounding streets since Griffin School moved to the area from its previous Hyde Park home.

What I have noticed is a tremendous effort on the part of Griffin folks to address, from the time they first moved to their current facility, concerns any of their neighbors had about living near a school. They rent nearby parking, encouraging carpooling, think through traffic flows, etc. They really are a good neighbor.

I fear that a decision against Griffin's application would eventually lead to Hyde Park losing this school which does so much for Hyde Park in the way of volunteerism, meeting host, summer camp programs, adult education, promoting the arts, etc. And so I encourage you to vote in favor of the school's application, thereby assuring that it continues to serve as Hyde Park's vibrant art and civic core for decades to come.

Regards,


Richard Finley

Board of Adjustment

City of Austin
Austin City Hall
301 W. 2nd Street
Austin, TX 78701

May 6, 2015

To the Board of Adjustment Members:

I hope this finds you well! As homeowners in the immediate neighborhood (4803 Evans Ave 78751) of the Griffin School, we'd like to weigh in on the proposed adjustments that enable the Griffin School to expand into an additional building.

We 100% support the expansion of the school. The administrators, staff, and students have been excellent neighbors in our community, and we believe that fostering the school community truly enhances our neighborhood. We were pleasantly surprised to find that there is almost no traffic/congestion related to school drop-off/pick-up. Both students and parents are respectful of the school's neighbors, strictly following guidelines to only park (and drop-off/pick-up) in designated school parking spaces.

The school is very well maintained, and it fits in well with the homes in the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, the school performs a number of community service projects, directly and positively impacting its neighbors.

We have gained insight into the Griffin community via our son, a sophomore student at Griffin. Through him and his classmates, we continue to see the overall attitude of the school demonstrated – respect for each other and their neighbors.

Overall, we support both the school and its mission, as well as its opportunity for growth within our neighborhood. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Best regards,

Nicole & P.J. Tanzillo

4803 Evans Ave
Austin, TX 78751

nicoletanzillo@gmail.com

pjtanzillo@gmail.com

June 7, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015


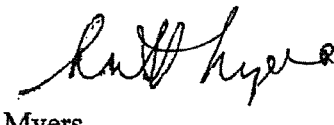
Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

We live in north Hyde Park and are neighbors with the Griffin School. The school is a great neighbor. It does a lot for the community, including summer camps for kids, art classes for adults, mentoring of Ridgetop Elementary School kids, and volunteering at the neighborhood park. The school provides quality education for its students, as we know from family friends whose children have been there.

We walk by the school almost every day and have never observed any traffic or parking issues. We think the school has good proactive plans in place to address potential future traffic and parking issues as it grows.

We fully support the school's need and goal to grow to a maximum of 125 students.

Sincerely,

 
Heidi Bojes and Scott Myers
4907 Ave G

Kevin Heyburn
3811 Avenue H
Austin, Texas 78751
(512) 420-0103
kmheyburn@gmail.com

May 7, 2015

To the Honorable Members
Board of Adjustment
City of Austin

Dear Members:

I support the Griffin School's development plans that are currently on your May 11th agenda.

The Griffin School has been an excellent neighbor, and their plans to improve their campus will only enhance Hyde Park. The school's administration has diligently worked with parties interested in the school's plans, and I am satisfied that all neighbors' concerns have been addressed.

Please support the Griffin School's efforts to improve its campus.

Sincerely,



Kevin Heyburn

512-656-5505 mlfishman@gmail.com 3903 Avenue G Austin TX 78751

June 7, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

We support the Griffin School's goal to grow to 125 students. This number of students will allow Griffin to be a sustainable school and business that has proven to be a desirable component of the viable community that many have worked so hard to foster for many, many years. As residents of the Hyde Park neighborhood for 24 years we are quite satisfied that the parking and traffic situation at Griffin has been and will continue to be quite well managed. I can think of no better use of the school property. As a vibrant neighborhood and a growing city we must encourage and support those institutions and businesses that have embraced the ideals that have contributed in so many positive ways to building a better community. Our family lives in Hyde Park, and we own rental property here as well. The Griffin School has made our experience in Hyde Park richer in every way. I am certain the school will continue to do so if they are permitted to grow to the level of sustainability they are requesting in the case before you tomorrow.

Sincerely

Mark & Aviva Fishman

3903 Avenue G

June 3, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am resident and homeowner in Hyde Park and I am writing to you in support of the Griffin School's application to grow their enrollment to a maximum of 125 students.

The Griffin School is an amazing part of our Hyde Park neighborhood and embodies everything that being a good neighbor in modern urban society entails. I support and encourage their growth.

As a residential real estate broker, I have often driven past their location during school times while showing properties for sale in the area. I have never noticed a current parking or traffic problem in the neighborhood and actually, I quite often point out the Griffin School, our local private high school dedicated to the arts, as a positive attribute of the Hyde Park neighborhood.

Furthermore, I have total confidence that the owners of the school and the governing board will be proactive and constructive in addressing future traffic and parking needs as they grow. These are individuals committed to fostering a sense of community and enriching the Hyde Park neighborhood.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Young". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Tammy Young
Neighbor, 44th & Avenue H

Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
Support of Variance

I am familiar with the Griffin School, and I believe it is an asset to the community. I am in favor of the Griffin School's application for a variance from the minimum street paved width requirements of Section 25-2-832(1) of the Austin City Code in order to add new classroom facilities to the school.

Jill

First Name

Nokes

Last Name

4200 Ave. F Austin, Tx 78751

Street Address

Jill Nokes

Signature

6.2.15

Date

June 5, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

We are writing in favor of the Griffin School's application for a variance. As parents of a rising sophomore, we have spent the last year witnessing the many ways in which the school is an asset to the immediate community and believe that its expansion will only deepen this value.

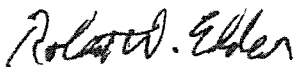
First, the school demonstrates consistent and strong support for both parking and traffic flow. As prospective school parents, we were informed of parking guidelines prior to our first informational visit to the school. The school communicates proactively prior to every school event and at regular intervals in between. I do not witness this same sense of responsibility from any other community business in the vicinity.

Second, the school's past, current and future utilization of the property are consistent with the spirit of the historic Hyde Park neighborhood and include features like gardens and art. It is a family friendly environment, and the school has hosted numerous community events, including meetings of the neighborhood association.

Finally, the Griffin School fills an educational niche that is currently lacking in our community. The blend of artistic development, college preparation and community service are unique and deserve the chance to expand to capacity.

We are present during the regular drop-off and pick-up hours and do not observe traffic to be a significant issue – particularly compared to AISD campuses. We believe school adds tremendous value to the community and support its expansion. Please do not hesitate to contact us at with any questions.

Sincerely,



Robert Elder
(512) 507-9558



Susan McDowell
(512) 426-8486

2506 Cascade Dr., Austin, Texas 78757

Leane Heldenfelds and Austin Board of Adjustment Members
Case Number C15-2015-0068, 5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Ms. Heldenfelds and Board Members,

I am writing to you in favor of the application in the above case for The Griffin School. My son has attended the Griffin School in the current location for the last four years. We are so fortunate he was able to have this amazing educational experience in our neighborhood. We live within walking distance of the school. The growth to 125 students would take them to the ideal size for classes and social opportunities.

As a parent and living in the neighborhood, I have never had a problem picking up or dropping off there is always a place to safely park. Adam is always very conscientious and asks families to park in appropriate places for school and events.

I have known Adam and Caroline Wilson for many years and they have always made the effort to be involved in the community and encourage the students to do the same. There could not be a better neighbor.

Respectfully,
Sara Protzmann

May 11, 2015
Emily Dollarhide
602 Fairfield Lane
Austin, TX 78751

Re: Griffin School – New Building

To Whom it May Concern,

I have lived in Hyde Park since 1988, and like many other residents, I have seen the neighborhood grow and change over the years. Twenty-seven years is a long time to live in one neighborhood, and in that time I have moved around the various avenues. Eventually I put down roots when I purchased a home at 602 Fairfield Lane, which is two blocks from Griffin School. I feel that over the years I have learned what it means to be a good neighbor. A good neighbor cares for their property. A good neighbor participates in events within the community like meetings, homes tours, and "It's My Park" days. A good neighbor respects and listens to the concerns of those around them.

Since I started working at Griffin School last year, I have seen that the school contributes to the community in a positive way. Our school building at 5001 Evans Avenue is a place where we garden, celebrate learning, and appreciate our surroundings. From my perspective, we are good neighbors. Our students, even those who live outside of 78751, clean our grounds, care for our building, volunteer at local organizations, and provide diversity and value in Hyde Park.

I would like to note that we have our own designated parking lots so that we do not interfere with the flow of traffic in the neighborhood. I have never had an issue finding a spot in our lot, and for any events that we have, we recommend parents and students park in the parking lot that we rent on 51st Street.

Thank you,



Emily Dollarhide
512-971-5743

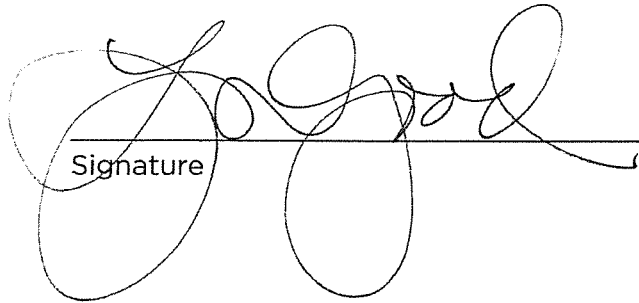
Griffin School Board of Adjustment Application
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Lynn
First Name

Osgood
Last Name

4015 Avenue D Austin, TX 78751
Street Address


Signature

5/31/15
Date

Cynthia A. Ayala
Ridgetop Elementary Teacher
5005 Caswell Ave
Austin, Texas 78751
June 1, 2015

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Meeting
Austin, Texas 78765

Dear HPNA,

I am writing to express my full support for the pending decision on the new variance application for Griffin School located in this lovely and unique neighborhood.

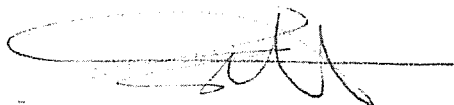
I understand that some in our community have voiced concern while many more have voiced support for the school, its students, and its continued growth.

I have been a teacher at Ridgetop Elementary for nine years. Through the years our community has changed, Griffin School being our neighbor has been on the most positive transformations. I have enjoyed seeing the diversity of talents and strengths that Griffin has shared with our Ridgetop students. Director Adam Wilson has been a great facilitator in student responsibility to community, citizenship. Because of his strong belief in bettering oneself by bettering the community, his students have tutored and mentored numerous Ridgetop Rattlers. Additionally, they have helped with teaching marital arts classes, painting educational murals, and helping with our gardening initiative. Our Ridgetop Rattlers have benefited greatly from our new neighbors. We look forward to a continued relationship.

As a parent, I am happy to see the camps that are offered to a variety of ages. My daughter, who is an Ann Richards Star, was extremely excited to see what Griffin's summer camps had to offer. She decided to sign-up for the Radio Camp where she'll actually have the opportunity to see how a live show works at KUT and KOOP. How cool is that?! I believe that Griffin School is symbolic of what Hyde Park is known for, a community of socially aware and uniquely creative Austinites.

I urge you to move forward with the approval of Griffin's variance application so that may continue to grow and give to this amazing community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia A. Ayala', with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Cynthia A. Ayala
Bilingual Special Education Teacher
Ridgetop Elementary

4705 Avenue H
Austin, Texas 78751
(512) 453-0947
June 1, 2015

Dear Board,

I am writing in support of the Griffin School's request for a variance to increase enrollment at their current location in the Ridgetop neighborhood. I live nearby in the Hyde Park neighborhood and my children go to Ridgetop Elementary School. We have been thrilled to have the Griffin School nearby and would like to support their success as a school that has led to their opportunity to grow.

As an actively involved parent at Ridgetop Elementary, I speak for many when I say that we have seen firsthand the many benefits of having a nearby school of older students. Griffin High School students fill the roles of much needed mentors for our children. They also serve as counselors and role models for after school capoeira classes. From the first year Griffin came to this location, they reached out to us about MLK Day when their students do community service around the city. For years now, they have sent a group of students to help with our garden projects, library projects, and art murals. I cannot tell you how much a small school like ours appreciates having them as neighbors.

I have also seen the Griffin School's contributions to the community as a resident of the local neighborhood. I have participated in their mosaic workshops as they opened their school to include as many neighbors as possible to create the Shipe Park mural. The school and its director Adam Wilson also have a strong presence at every It's My Park Day when they provide volunteers, materials, and live music from their students. The school's presence in the area has added much to our neighborhood community.

I understand that parking is one of the main issues that may affect the variance. As it is now, I never notice problems with parking or traffic. I pass the school every day on the way to drop off and pick up my children at Ridgetop Elementary and if anything, I see more pedestrians and bikes at Griffin than vehicles. (Our school is another story, so I know what it is to see school congestion!) In fact, the Griffin School allows patrons of Flightpath, a nearby coffeeshop, to park in their lot after school hours, helping to alleviate the local business's parking issues. Furthermore, it seems the Griffin School has a plan to use the nearby parking lot at Ridgetop Baptist Church to accommodate the extra cars that would come with increased enrollment.

Considering the positive impact of the Griffin School on the neighboring school, park, and neighborhood community, I ask that you approve their request for a variance. I am happy of the success that is allowing them to grow within their means and space. They have the support of many neighbors and hope the City will support them as well.

Thank you,


Annette Lucksinger

*Ridgetop Elementary School CAC member
and Hyde Park neighbor to the Griffin School*

June 6, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am IN FAVOR of the application for variance and encourage you to approve the variances.

I am the parent of a now rising sophomore at The Griffin school and have been visiting this school for various reason for several years now. I feel that this school provides a valuable and unique educational experience for not only students in the neighborhood but to students throughout the Austin area. One of the attractions of Griffin is that it is a very small school. It just happens to need to be a just little larger to provide an optimally sized body of students. The goal is to grow to a maximum of 125 students which is 32 more students than now attend. There have been studies in educational journals that recommend school communities optimize at about this size.

As I have said, I have been visiting this school at various times for the past several years and daily during this last school year. To me it is obvious that Griffin School DOES NOT contribute to traffic congestion or parking issues. As a matter of fact, the traffic and parking around the school is far better managed than the surrounding businesses and even residences. You never see Griffin faculty, staff, students or parents parked on the surrounding curbsides. The main reason is that there is plenty of parking designed into the present plan. What you will see is people parked curbside away from the school going to the area businesses such as the coffee shop, yoga studio and especially in the morning, Biscuits and Groovy. There are other businesses in the area that have people parking on the curb on the south side of 50th street. These people are not connected with Griffin.

Drop off in the morning is the busiest time of the day but it remains calm and controlled. So much so there has never appeared to be a need for more controlled traffic pattern. There is always enough parking spaces for parents to pull into a parking space, drop their student(s) off, back out and drive away. It's only at the ends of the blocks away from Griffin property is there any congestion. Once again, congestion not associated with Griffin.

Pickup is even more relaxed as that traffic is spread out over a longer period of time. Actually several hours. Once again there just isn't a problem associated with the Griffin traffic or parking.

Griffin is wanting to grow to a maximum of 125 students. This is 32 students more than now attend. At most half of that number will be of driving age and there is plenty of parking two blocks away from the

school. It doesn't seem like many of the driving age students actually drive themselves to school. The remote parking is not completely utilized as it is now.

Once again let me point out that I have been coming to this school for many years at all times of the day and all parts of the year. I just don't see parking and traffic as being a problem. On top of all that, the administration is willing to devise plans to address traffic issues if they do come up in the future. And I'll say again that there has perceived to be no problem in the past and that is the only reason efforts haven't been made to date.

I understand that there is some concern regarding the possible aesthetics of new construction. I would point out that Griffin is a College Prep High School emphasizing the artistic and creative aspect of their students and since they are seeking to enroll the best and brightest students in the Austin area, there is no advantage to the school to build an aesthetically displeasing structure or one that doesn't acknowledge the unifying goals of urban planning. There are just too many talented and smart people involved in this project to let something like that happen. From what I see of the plans the new construction actually protects or isolates the neighbors from the school.

If you have read all of this letter, let me say thank you for listening to my thoughts. Griffin is a positive addition to this neighborhood. There are people who are buying houses in this area just so that they can work and attend this school. We are considering it ourselves and I have considered the traffic and parking situation from the point of view of a potential resident.

In closing I will say that this is the third time that I've been involved in the expansion of a small school in an established neighborhood. Both of these were in neighborhoods far more exclusive than this one. The last one was in Tarrytown. In every one of these expansions there were concerns voiced by a few very vocal residents. Their concerns were real and were listened to by the schools and in each case the issues were addressed and proved to be unfounded. And in each of these cases the presence and growth of the school was a net positive for the neighborhood and the residents.

I sincerely believe that you should allow the variances as there is far fewer issues here than each of the other instances I've been involved.

Sincerely,

Michael J Willy



GRIFFIN SCHOOL

Adam Wilson <adam@griffinschool.org>

letter of support

Nancy McCranie <nmccranie@hospiceaustin.org>
To: Adam Wilson <adam@griffinschool.org>

Sun, Jun 7, 2015 at 2:05 PM

June 7, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference
Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of adjustment June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

My two sons are current students at Griffin High School, one is a rising sophomore and the other is a rising senior. As a native Austinite, I'm aware of and sensitive to the changing traffic patterns of this wonderful city in which we live. In the three years that the boys and I have been driving to school, however, not once have I noticed anything even remotely resembling congestion or crowding around Griffin School. In fact, there are usually numerous spaces around the school and the neighborhood in the morning when I drop off and in the afternoon when I pick up. Likewise, when I have been to the school in the middle of the day all is quiet and serene. Whenever I drive down Martin Avenue to drop the boys off I especially notice how little through traffic there is, how peaceful it is. Whenever the school has an all school event there is great care taken to inform school families as well as guests about where they can park and where they cannot.

Families are encouraged to park several blocks away in the overflow lot for a nearby Baptist Church. My experience is that Griffin families are extremely cooperative in complying with these parking rules. In fact, just this past Saturday for graduation I was witness to numerous individuals and groups of families happily walking together from the Baptist parking lot to the school.

The Griffin School community is led by two amazing people: Adam and Caroline Wilson. They are people we all hold in the very highest esteem for their integrity, honesty, kindness, thoughtfulness, and high standards. They, along with the faculty and staff, have created a remarkable place where young people are not just educated, they are nurtured and encouraged to be their best selves and to strive to become the kind of people who will be forces for good in the world.

These teenagers do gardening and yoga, they work with children at a nearby elementary school, they create art and music and drama, they study hard and they figure out how to work through problems and conflicts by working together, not pulling apart. In other words, Griffin School is a light in this world that is hungry for light. As a parent and member of the school's Board of Directors, I can give you my sincere assurances that growing the student body just slightly to a maximum of 125 students will not only make the school sustainable, but will help these remarkable young people have a broader social and academic context in which to grow. I can assure you as well that detailed considerations have been made as to how this step will not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood in any way. In fact, I believe that having this school in its midst makes it a safer, more beautiful, more vibrant, and peaceful place; a neighborhood set apart because of the positive work going on inside and on the grounds of this wonderful school. Therefore, I urge you to approve the request of the Griffin School.

Most sincerely,

Nancy

The Rev. Nancy Chester McCranie
Director of Volunteer and Bereavement Services
Hospice Austin,
512-567-5527

06/07/2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am in favor of the Griffin School's application for variance from the Board in terms of the content. I believe that this should happen so that the school expand and reach a more sustainable size.

I have attended Griffin for the past four years and it has been a very supportive and greatly assisted me in my education. Therefore I feel that Griffin is a benefit to society and believe that it should be allowed to carry out its plans to expand to reach a more sustainable size so that it can continue helping students, as it had helped me. Also, increasing the number of students will allow Griffin to offer more different and advanced classes, which would make it an ever better school for preparing students for life. Although Griffin will increase its enrollment if the plans are carried out, it will still only have a maximum of 125 students, which is very small compared to many other schools. This means that even though there will be more students, it will be a quite small school and should not be too disruptive to the surrounding community.

I have heard that there have been complaints about the school already causing traffic problems on the nearby streets, but I have not seen severe parking problems myself. I have been picked up on Martin Ave most afternoons for the past two years at about 4:15 and have very rarely seen any traffic problems and there has usually only been a few cars from Griffin at most. From my observations, Griffin is not currently causing any regular traffic problems.

I therefore am in support of the Griffin School's application because I believe expanding will allow the school to continue helping students for a longer time and provide an even higher level of preparation to those students. Also, the school is not currently causing any severe traffic problems on a regular basis.

Sincerely,

Gunnip Muellen
Gunnip Mueller

Kathleen Winslow Morgan

603 N. CUERNAVACA UNIT 1004

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78733

KATHLEENWINSLOWMORGAN@GMAIL.COM

June 4, 2015

Leane Heldenfelds, Planning and Development Review
& Austin Board of Adjustment Members

Re: C15-2015-0068 501 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave.
Board of Adjustment, June 8, 2015

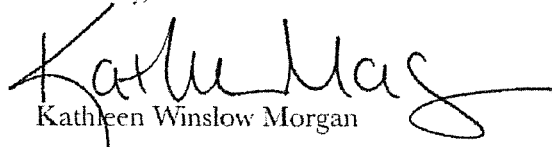
Dear Members of the Board of Adjustment:

I understand that you will hear and decide a request for a variance regarding 501 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave. which is The Griffin School. Please be advised that I am "IN FAVOR" of The Griffin School's application for a variance from the Board. My daughter is one of 93 students currently attending The Griffin School. I highly support their goal of growing to a student population of 125, and this variance will enable them to sustain that growth and promote progress that will benefit the students, the surrounding community and Austin as a whole. My daughter currently walks with a group of Griffin students through the neighborhood to Ridgetop Elementary to serve as mentors for these deserving children who need extra support. This is just one of the ways this school serves the immediate community.

I understand that neighbors have complained about cars parking on the street and have attributed this increased traffic to the school. However, my daughter and the other upper class students who drive, park each day at the Ridgetop Baptist Church parking lot as The Griffin School leases parking space for the students. I volunteer frequently at the school and have never had a problem finding a parking spot in front of the school; as well as have never had to park on the street. I have however, observed other individuals park in front of homes on the street and walk around the corner to the retail shops on Duval.

Please consider the positive impact the approval of this variance will provide, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,


Kathleen Winslow Morgan

June 5th, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068: 5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

The growth of Austin is a hot topic especially when it comes to increased traffic but with growth comes opportunity. In the case of the Griffin School, growth is good and necessary to allow more students in Austin to take advantage of this unique and wonderful campus. Unique and wonderful- two words that describe Austin itself and something we don't want to lose as our city grows. The school meets the needs for a small, diverse group of students and keeping the school small is part of the attraction. The school is planning to add only thirty-five more students, which does not mean an additional thirty-five more cars parking at the school. So many of the students and teachers walk, bike ride, bus/metro, carpool or are dropped off at the school. I have never had a problem with traffic during the drop off or pick up hours. An additional expansion should not have a large impact on the neighborhood but rather increase its value.

In turn the Griffin School will continue to be an integral part of the community itself. Griffin students volunteer at the local elementary, take on art projects in the neighborhood, and work at the school gardens, which are open to neighborhood residents. The school itself provides a local gathering place for neighborhood associations to meet. The Griffin school continues to model for its students how to live in community and work together by proactively implementing solutions such as: leasing parking from a nearby Church for the two annual events held at the school, hosting car sharing space on weekends and by making available its own parking spaces evenings and weekends for neighborhood resident use.

Our family has decided to make this our home for high school and we look forward to the growth of the school that will round out the learning for all students and allow a few more families here in Austin to benefit as we have from this unique and wonderful place. **Please allow the Griffin School to continue with its building plans.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. H. Klingler". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Elizabeth Klingler

June 6, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:
Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

We hope you will approve the Griffin School's building permit application. We are parents of a Griffin school student, and we feel that the school is an important part of this dynamic central Austin neighborhood.

The number of students that Griffin is looking to add should not significantly affect our presence in the neighborhood but it will be a major impact in the ability of the school to provide a variety of classes and extracurricular activities.

I understand that the neighbors have some concerns about traffic and parking. But in my experience driving through the neighborhood at various times of the day, most of the parking issues (and related traffic congestion) are unrelated to Griffin School, but rather result from people parking and walking to the businesses and bus stops along Duval.

The administration has always reached out to parents to make sure we minimize our impact on the neighborhood, and I know that have proactive plans to address the additional traffic that will come with an increased student body. Every Griffin student and parent we know are eager to be good neighbors.

We hope that you will approve the permit so that the Griffin School can continue to be a sustainable school in Central Austin.

Thanks for your consideration,

Gin & Bill Tolany

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gin Tolany". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Gin & Bill Tolany".

Deborah Shelton, MD
4615 Spicewood Springs Road
Austin, TX 78759
512-241-1420

Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015
Case # C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave

Dear Leane Heldenfields and Austin Board of Adjustment members,

This letter is **In Favor** of the application for a variance from the board. As a parent of a rising 11th grader who has attended programming at Griffin for over 4 years, I have the necessary experience to comment on the board decision.

My daughter has Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and ADHD. There are very few schools, or arguably any other local schools, that can provide my daughter with a small class size, rigorous college-prep education, and accommodate her special needs. Despite our daughter's learning differences, she has been able to **thrive** in this **rigorous academic environment** because the educational demand is balanced with **dedicated and passionate teachers** and administrators who make the work exciting and interesting.

In addition, the **school is a tremendous asset to the Austin community**, encouraging student leadership and responsibility, such as weekly volunteer work at the nearby elementary school, as well as participation in local arts in the East Austin Studio Tours, and inviting the community to participate in making a mosaic mural and other improvements for Shipe Park.

A small increase in **growth to 125 students is reasonable for sustaining appropriate and necessary high school programming** for a well-rounded education in academics, fine arts, and athletics, as well as the opportunity to take advanced placement courses. Several private high schools in town already fulfill certain sectors of our population, for example the upper social classes, or children having difficulty making it in regular high schools for a variety of reasons, but the Griffin School is unique in the Austin community, providing a pretty even blend of students from a variety of backgrounds, all coming together in a melting pot of love for academic curiosity, and **reflecting Austin as a smart, artsy and vibrant place to learn.**

Regarding parking, I drop off my child and pick her up from school on a daily basis. I have never had a problem finding a parking spot in the designated parking. In fact there are usually several parking spots unfilled. On event days, parents park at the church parking lot and walk over. It is **my impression that neighborhood parking in front of people's homes must be due to overflow at local businesses on the next street.** Adam Wilson, school director, makes a written and verbal announcement at every event, reminding parents to please be considerate of the neighbors by not parking in front of their homes. And the parents are glad to do so. We want the neighbors to be happy and participate in what we bring to the community.

Sincerely,

Deborah Shelton, MD



GRIFFIN SCHOOL

Adam Wilson <adam@griffinschool.org>

Reference Case Number C15-2015-0068, 5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave

David Cordova <dave_cordova@sbcglobal.net>

Sun, Jun 7, 2015 at 3:17 PM

Reply-To: dave_cordova@sbcglobal.net

To: adam@griffinschool.org

Ms. Leane Heldenfelds and Austin Board of Adjustment Members.

I am a parent of a 4 year Griffin student. The Griffin school has been an amazing school for my daughter. I feel completed to write you today in favor of The Griffin School application for a variance from the Board. I support the school's goal to grow to 125 students. This is the scale will enables the school to be sustainable as a school community and as a business. The school currently has 93 students, so this only adds a maximum of 32 more.

There is a perception by a few of the school's immediate neighbors there is a terrible parking and traffic situation in the neighborhood already. Yes, it has been my understanding that there are parking issues on 50th Street and Evans because of people parking to go to the coffee shop and yoga studio and other nearby businesses. Those are not Griffin School cars since, at Griffin, there are always on-site parking spaces available for the staff and students who drive.

It is my understanding that the school is planning a number of ways to avoid traffic problems as it grows in the coming years. One way includes requiring the students, who drive, to park offsite at the Ridgetop Baptist Church parking lot. This will leave many on-site spaces open for drop-off and pick-up vehicles.

Thank you're your thorough review and consideration of all aspects of this case. Should you have any questions for me, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,

David Cordova.

06/07/2015
Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjust for June 8th, 2015

Dear Leane Heldenfelds and Austin Board of Adjustment Members,

My name is Berdie T. Valdez and I would like to inform you that I am IN FAVOR of the Griffin School's application.

I have been involved with the Griffin school for 4 years now and fully support the school trying to grow to 125 students. It is important that the school be able to do this in order to be sustainable. Why? Well this school is not like any other school. The impact it has on not only the student's lives, but the family's they come from, is incredible. They "are" the school that makes a difference in people's lives. In fact, I have attended three graduation ceremonies held by the school. This year my family and friends attended. Everyone could not believe the heartfelt stories told by parents, siblings, teachers, friends, and extended family members. It was one of the most beautiful and unique ceremonies they had ever been to. A ceremony that left them touched by people that were complete strangers, but whose lives were positively impacted by the school.

With regards to traffic in the area, I can tell you first hand that I have seen individuals park on Evans and 50th street then walk over to 51st and Duval. Usually these individuals resemble that of college students. I have never seen a huge amount of congestion but I have seen non-school personnel park in the area.

The school has also been very responsible in letting school personnel know where available parking is located and also informs school personnel and their families where "not" to park. This is done numerous times throughout the year. They work hard to keep their neighbors happy. Not because they have to, but because they genuinely want to.

The world needs more schools like Griffin. Please help them to become sustainable so that they can continue to impact more lives.

Thank You,
Berdie Valdez

512 297-5454

June 6, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

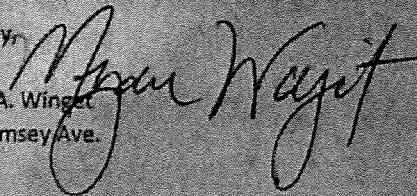
I am writing to say that I am IN FAVOR of the Griffin School's application for a variance. I understand that some of the school's neighbors are in opposition to the variance primarily because of parking and traffic concerns. However, I have not seen significant traffic and parking problems, and I am at the school daily, during the times when there would be such problems – namely, drop off and pick up times. I have had parking problems in this neighborhood before the Griffin School was in the neighborhood (and these problems persist), but that was because of the terrible parking situation caused by Flightpath Coffee, the bike shop, and the food trailer. I'm not sure that the Griffin School should be held responsible for the problems caused by the commercial district on the next block at 51st and Duval.

These neighbors also cite the problem of growing the school to 125 students from its current population of 93. This is an additional 32 students. These 32 students will help the school remain financially viable, and build a sustainable and vibrant community. I fear that losing this variance will force the Griffin School to eventually close its doors – which would be bad for the neighborhood, for the kids who go to the school and the families who love the community that Adam and Caroline Wilson have created.

I'm curious to know what the neighbors who object to the variance think is going to happen if the Griffin School leaves the community? Realistically, another school will go in its place, with no guarantee that the new school director would be so accommodating as the Wilsons have been. They've rented the extra lot for parking, going above and beyond parking code. They've asked that parents drive in a particular pattern in the neighborhood, and are working toward instituting one-way streets to enforce that pattern. They stagger drop off and pick up times so we don't inundate the neighborhood. They keep evening events to a minimum. They take pains to have nice, engaging art in the yards, plant gardens, and get community input on new structures. I live in another downtown neighborhood (Rosedale), and I'd be happy to have the Griffin School in my neighborhood. Again, I am IN FAVOR of the variance.

Sincerely,

Megan A. Winget
4213 Ramsey Ave.



June 6, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am writing to say that I am IN FAVOR of the Griffin School's request for a variance to build an extra building on their property on Evans Avenue. My neighborhood, Rosedale, recently had a problem with a restaurant that requested a variance – Épicerie, on Hancock Avenue. The variance was granted, in opposition to neighborhood complaints, even though they only had 8 parking spaces for their 75-person restaurant (they lied and said that they had 21 spaces), were installing a dumpster 10 feet away from the bedroom window of a single-family home, and stated that their establishment would not have any effect on traffic patterns in the neighborhood.

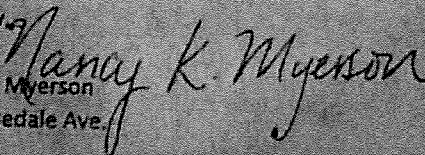
On the face of it, these seem to be the same kinds of complaints that the Griffin School's neighbors have. However, there is a huge difference. The Griffin School has gone above and beyond parking code to lease spaces from the Ridgetop Baptist Church down the street, they've asked parents to be cognizant of the neighborhood traffic patterns, and are taking proactive steps to enforce one-way traffic to improve flow through the neighborhood, they've staggered drop-off and pick-up times so parents don't overwhelm the neighborhood with cars and kids; and they've welcomed community input to their new structures and proposed landscaping. Whereas Épicerie has actively alienated the Rosedale community (including complaining about the "unwelcoming atmosphere" of Rosedale neighbors to the Austin-American Statesman) – the Griffin School has, it seems to me, gone out of its way to promote goodwill among the Hyde Park community in which it lives.

The Griffin School wants to build a new structure so they can grow their student population from 92 students to a maximum of 125. This is an additional 32 students. These extra students will help the school grow to reach financial sustainability and will provide a healthy base to build on the already engaging and vibrant community that already exists. I'm afraid that if the Griffin School can not add these 32 students, they will eventually have to close – which will be bad for the Austin community in general, the Hyde Park neighborhood specifically, the students who make Griffin their home, and the families who love the community that Adam and Caroline Wilson have built.

I actively fought against Épicerie. I understand what it's like to have a bad neighbor in a small neighborhood. The Griffin School is not a bad neighbor. I believe that the Griffin School has acted, and will continue to act, in good faith and should be granted the variance.

Sincerely,

Nancy K. Myerson
4016 Rosedale Ave.



June 4, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:
Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am "IN FAVOR" of the application for variance.

My son has just completed his freshman year here at The Griffin School and I cannot think of another school that encompasses the spirit of Austin, not to mention the neighborhood of Hyde Park. Griffin students learn and live communitarian values: We emphasize social responsibility, and engage all students in school governance, whole school activities, and service both to the school community and to the larger community of Austin. Being an inclusive and engaging community does not just happen because of our size – we work really hard at it!

Therefore I feel it is very important to increase the size of this school to 125 students. This permit allows us to expand our facility to incorporate our population growth. Growing to 125 students is the scale that enables us to be sustainable as a school community and as a business. Growing to that level gets us to what we believe will feel like a robust school community for our students with the kind of diversity and scale that allows for a healthy social world for teenagers. It allows us to adequately fill out the programs we have in fine art, athletics, and Advanced Placement courses. It protects us from fluctuations in enrollment and from unforeseen crises that can affect any organization. Sustainability is what we are seeking with this growth. Recognizing that 125 students is still a very small high school on anyone's standards would help put this in context. You can also note that we have 93 students now, so we are only talking about adding a maximum of 32 more.

There is a perception that we have created a parking and traffic situation in the neighborhood already. During the week I am always able to park in a school parking spot as I drop-off and pick-up my son from school. My observations are that we always have parking spaces available on-site for our staff and students who drive. Drop-off and pick-up traffic is spread across time in the morning and afternoon and never backs up into the roadway or even onto curbside parking in front of our neighbor's homes. I feel the coffee shop and yoga studio on the corner of Duvall and 51st street create more of an issue. During special events at the school we are advised to park in the Ridgeway Baptist Church parking lot.

June 7, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

My daughter, Katherine Morris, graduated from The Griffin School yesterday. She attended Griffin for all four years of her high school education, the same length of time that Griffin has been in its current location on Evans Avenue.

During this time, I have seen incredible growth—in my daughter Katherine, in Griffin's potential student census, and in Austin's need for a school such as Griffin.

Before Kat began attending Griffin, she was shy to a fault and wouldn't look into people's eyes when they spoke with her. She refused to join any extracurricular activities and would skip lunch to avoid sitting with people. Her academic performance was average. Kat had previously attended a school that was very rigid and that catered to a select few students, leaving her and several other students to fend for themselves both socially and academically.

As soon as Kat and I shook Caroline Wilson's hand, we knew we had found Kat's new school. Caroline's passion and care for her and Adam's school and their students are very evident in the courses they choose to offer, the depth of the faculty's academic and intellectual knowledge, and the socialization of their students. It is obvious in the personalized approach the entire faculty takes with each student, each course and each activity. The teachers somehow are able to take all of the students under their wings, foster their strengths, and give them confidence that many of them didn't know they could ever have.

As for Katherine, she graduated with honors and as a member of the National Honor Society; she completed AP classes, joined several clubs, and performed musically several times in front of audiences. As I watched her graduate yesterday, I felt as if I was truly watching a miracle. I was not alone in that feeling; other parents were feeling the same way about their own children. As I said to Adam and Caroline, I will be eternally grateful for Griffin.

Griffin is a gift to parents, students, and the community. Based on Griffin's small size, students who excelled at Griffin, would not have been able to realize their true potential in a larger or different type of school. Growth to Griffin is necessary to allow future students to be able to obtain the same level of success as my daughter was able to achieve.

In regards to the possible traffic problem that some neighbors are anticipating or discussing, I ask that you please look at the streets surrounding Griffin. There are nearby businesses that have a larger traffic count than Griffin and have few, if any, parking places off the street for their customers. Griffin has parking directly on their property, as well as ample parking at Ridgetop Baptist Church. There is no reason that the students or faculty will be parking on Evans or any neighboring streets.

Additionally, I can attest that Adam Wilson has been very clear with all Griffin parents and students that street parking is not allowed. We follow that rule closely, to show our respect not only for Griffin, but also for the neighborhood. I know a real estate agent who sold a house on Evans; he said the homeowners said that the parking and traffic on Evans were not a problem and that they were moving only for a larger house. They also said that if they had children, they would welcome the idea of living across the street from their children's school.

As a final point, I am sure you are aware that approximately 140 people a day are moving to Austin. The public schools are facing possible overcrowding (*"Austin ISD Considers Long-Term Overcrowding Solutions"*, KXAN, April 20, 2015) and the private schools have limited accessibility. The fact that Griffin has the potential to increase their enrollment by 32 students is a true gift to the Austin school community. To think that Griffin can help 32 students each year as they helped my own daughter thrive is something that should be celebrated, not debated about.

I understand that the neighbors are concerned about traffic and parking, but these are issues that Adam has resolved with new traffic routes and an additional parking lot. To refuse Griffin the permission to expand is to take away the possibility of success and confidence to 32 children a year. I am hopeful that you will be able to see the opportunity to help students and their families with your decision.

Please free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Lynn Morris

2015 June 8

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

As a family man living within 3 blocks of Griffin School, I am writing to voice my strong support for the Griffin School and its goal to build and expand to 125 students.

I have lived in Austin north of the U.T. campus on multiple occasions between 2000 and 2015 and have always loved the area. Having lived in East Texas, Tyler, Houston, Dallas/Plano, Buda, San Antonio, and Austin, I can easily say that Austin is by far my favorite city in Texas! I moved to the Hyde Park area (53rd and Martin Ave, 3 blocks north of Griffin) in the summer of 2014 specifically to work with the Griffin School. I taught Latin and English enrichment at the school this year, and I was excited to be able to walk to work. I can also say that of the many schools I have worked with as a teacher, Griffin is my favorite for the high-quality, personalized education and care given to each student. I love living in this neighborhood, within easy walking distance to Griffin School, Flightpath Coffee, the convenience store on 51st and Bruning, and the little park on 52nd and Bruning. I also run in these neighborhoods for exercise, and I walk in these neighborhoods in the evening with my wife and/or by myself. It's a pleasant area.

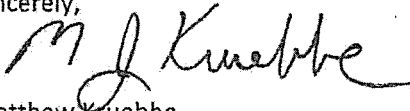
The Griffin School is such an asset to the community. It is a small, well-run school that really cares for and nurtures its diverse student body. The school has an excellent faculty, excellent academics, and wonderful arts, music, and fashion programs. The students and faculty stay on the cute little campus, usually in classes, but sometimes in the outdoor classroom, the garden, playing frisbee on the front lawn, playing ping pong in the back yard, or eating lunch outside on pretty days in a nicely landscaped environment. I have eaten my lunch outside on many occasions, and I have taken the students to the outdoor classroom on many occasions. The students are quite well behaved and well managed. Far from being any kind of problem for the neighborhood, they contribute so much to the family-friendly environment of Hyde Park. 3 blocks away is close and convenient, but I love the school so much, I wish I were across the street! I have many students, also, who walk to school or ride their bikes. I, the other faculty, and some parents and senior students also support neighborhood businesses like Flightpath and the convenience store. Griffin is a great place.

I and my wife are expecting a child this summer. We would love to be in this area long term, for our own and our children's benefit. We support the need of Griffin School to grow to 125 students. I've seen first-hand what a wonderful job they do with the kids, and I would love to see them add a mere 33

more young people, both for the immeasurable life-long benefit it will bring to those students and their families, and for what it will mean in making the Griffin School economically sustainable long-term. With its dedicated staff and proposed new building, Griffin can easily manage 33 more students without creating adverse consequences for the neighborhood. Well-managed growth for Griffin will mean growth in benefits to the community.

I would like to bear witness that Griffin parking and traffic is not a problem for the neighborhood. I and many students often walk or bike to school/work; Griffin has extra parking off site 1.5 blocks away, and I rarely see all the school parking spaces filled. Griffin administration has been excellent in handling traffic and parking issues. The neighborhood would lose so very much if it ever lost Griffin School. I wholeheartedly support the school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. Kruebbe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" and last name "Kruebbe" clearly distinguishable.

Matthew Kruebbe
600 East 53rd APT 132
Austin, TX 78751

June 7, 2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:

Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am a parent of a student which graduated last Saturday from the Griffin School. I would like to write to you today and state that I am ***IN FAVOR*** of the Griffin School expansion that is being discussed in the public hearing on June 8, 2015.

The Griffin School is a very unique and special school, unlike any other. My daughter Jules, attended all 4 years of High School at the The Griffin School. Jules is a very creative and smart child. She needed a college prep environment where her creative side would also be nurtured and have a secure place in her daily schedule.

When we found Griffin, we were overjoyed that a school existed which brought such a high level of education and combined it with a focus on superior creative and artistic classes as electives. The Griffin School staff and teachers are the most caring and dedicated group of people we have ever met. They provide an environment which develops not only academic and artistic talent, but critical thinking, problem solving and leadership skills to name a few.

We truly believe that there is no other school which could have provided the opportunity that Griffin has for Jules. Her life is now on a completely different trajectory than it would have ever been without the teachers and staff of the Griffin School. Saturday she graduated with Honors and is going onto to College with the highest level of scholarship the school provides.

The Griffin School is developing future leaders. They understand the powerful progress that can occur when children have an opportunity to develop both academically and creatively equally. They are teaching leadership skills which support them into cultivating their full potential, contributing to their communities and become role models. These are the leaders every Griffin student is being guided to become. It creates a ripple effect on everyone they touch.

Adam Wilson has done an amazing job in leading this school, growing in a sustainable way while always placing an importance on respecting the neighbors. The Griffin School has a solution to the parking challenges that are common to all of the

neighboring businesses surrounding the school. We have always cared about the community through awareness, respect, open communication, and numerous volunteering activities done by the students and staff. These include student mentoring at the nearby Ridgetop Elementary, Food Bank food drives and other regular activities. This is a school which cares about the Community and teaches the students to get involved as well.

The school needs to grow to 125 students to create a sustainable environment and be able to provide the complete program offering. The growth planned is controlled and is implementing a business plan that was set from the beginning. As everyone knows, providing superior education today costs money, this small expansion will allow them to cover the costs for this effort.

The Griffin School is a model school that the neighborhood community can be proud of and we would appreciate the committee approving this growth.

Please feel free to call or email me anytime if you have any further questions,

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Cordova". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robin" and last name "Cordova" clearly distinguishable.

Robin Cordova

robin_cordova@yahoo.com

512-342-2920

06/07/2015

Leane Heldenfels
PO Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Reference:
Case Number C15-2015-0068
5001 Evans Ave & 5000 Martin Ave
Board of Adjustment, June 8th, 2015

Dear Ms. Heldenfels and Board of Adjustment Members,

I am in very much support of the Griffin school's need and goal to grow to a maximum of 125 students. While it is currently a wonderful school that has excellent academics and students, a larger student body would create more opportunities for improvement, and serve the needs of Austin's creative industry. In addition, in my opinion, the school has gone out of their way to create a cooperative relationship with the surrounding community. Moreover, the building, as originally created, used as a church, would have had at least as much traffic and noise with the traditional use, as the proposed school size could ever produce. The Griffin school is a positive entity in the community, and its viability is crucial to the success of Austin as a city.

My daughter has been attending Griffin for the last two years. She has a slight learning disability, and the public school was unable or unwilling to give her the extra time she needed to succeed. My sons had similar issues, and stayed in the public school with less than adequate results. After it was suggested by the middle school principal who had been at the high school my sons attended, that my daughter go to a different school, she attended Griffin. The difference in Elyssa has been amazing. She went from hating Math, and having serious writing issues, to loving the subject to the point where she is considering majoring in engineering and learning how to write significantly better. In addition, she has been able to host a radio show an average of twice a month that is nationally aired. Her self-confidence and competence has also greatly improved, and she has loved the creative opportunities (having her art in the school art show, having good parts in the school plays, and having drum lessons at school.) She is also able to catch up on the Math class where she fell behind in the summer program at the school. Her only complaint is Griffin's size. She wishes it were a little bigger, so basketball and soccer wouldn't have to be the only sports available to her.

Austin needs a school like Griffin to feed the creative industry. There are professional programs for musicians at the school that have led to some students releasing cd's, having record contracts, and other opportunities in the entertainment industry. This summer, my daughter will have an internship at a record company, as her current goal is to manage bands. Frequently, we hear of former Griffin students working for local newspapers like the Austin Chronicle, or going to prestigious colleges. If you ever attended one of the Griffin Art nights, you would see the talent of students being fueled by the Griffin school, even in endeavors like fashion design. One of the best features of Griffin is that the students have opportunities they would never have been given elsewhere. Elyssa was unable to be in the big plays at the local high school because there weren't enough parts for all the kids who wanted to participate, and those who were able were mostly those connected to the

school's politically based infrastructure. She never had one piece of art in the previous school's art show because there simply wasn't enough space. Also the art she was able to create was superior at the Griffin school because of the resources available. For example, she made an amazing piece in a metal working class that was an interpretation of an abandoned roller coaster, and a printed tote bag that has been complimented almost every time she wears it. She is now taking drum lessons, something she had wanted to do at the public school, but there was no availability in the band.

In my opinion, Griffin has gone above and beyond to have a symbiotic relationship with the community. The frequent art nights and summer camps are very popular, and enrich the younger children and parents of the community in ways that are immeasurable. The art nights have a nominal donation, and provided evenings of amazing entertainment for the community. In addition, every time the school has an event like this, the administration makes a point to tell everyone to park in the big parking lot a few blocks from the school if there's none in the school parking lot. There doesn't seem to be issues with parking because I usually see availability at the school itself, and have rarely had to use that parking. Students from Griffin are also encouraged to help out with community endeavors like volunteering at the neighboring school in an organized program, and working at the park improvement day.

Finally, the building used to be a church. I have churches near my house that cause much more disruption to the surrounding community than this school ever has. On Sundays, there is always a police officer directing the huge traffic flow that still disrupts traffic to the point where I choose other routes to drive. If the Griffin school had to move to a different location, the building would be sold to another entity like a church that would very likely be much worse for the community than Griffin ever was. Finally, the traffic in the neighborhood that is being complained about is likely due to the other much more populous school, coffee shops and restaurants, and its proximity to major thoroughfares that the roads lead to. The school is not the cause. To keep there from being traffic and parking issues in the future, Adam Wilson has a plan for one way traffic and required off-site parking by the students who drive, so the approximately 30 extra children won't be an issue. I personally would argue that the small number of extra children will not make a significant difference, so they are actually not necessary precautions.

To sum up, The Griffin school has gone out of its way to be conscious of and meet the needs of the surrounding community. The school has been a positive institution in Austin for the last several years, and it is right and appropriate for them to grow in order to continue to be a viable entity. The few more students that it will add will not make a significant difference to the community, but will give the students added opportunities at a place that already has the strength of allowing them to try new things in a safe and supporting environment. The alternative could be that the school moves to another location outside Austin, or worse closes down due to lack of funds. In the second scenario, the city loses a school that has a track record of helping kids, who are a little different, be able to realize dreams of art, music, and creativity. Please don't let that happen.

Thanks,

-Sarah Sernaker
sdsernaker@gmail.com