



Government of the District of Columbia Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1D

Resolution Preserving Early Childhood Education

Introduced February 20, 2024

Whereas: The Mount Pleasant neighborhood is home to two exceptional educational institutions, Bancroft Elementary School and the Rosemount Center, that anchor our community and support families from across the city.

Whereas: At present, these are the only two educational sites covered under the District's flagship universal pre-K plan in the ANC1D commission area.¹

Whereas: Bancroft Elementary School is a DC Public Schools success story with exceptional educational programs and strong ties to a cohesive neighborhood. The school is one of only seven dual language elementary schools in the city and consistently receives high ratings for its academic offerings and diverse student body.²

Whereas: The Rosemount Center is a cherished community institution with over 50 years of service providing quality early childhood bilingual education, exemplified by its role as provider of Early Head Start and Head Start services. The majority of Rosemount's children speak Spanish or another non-English language as their primary language at home, and Rosemount provides a critical bridge for non-Native English speaking children to participate in high-quality early childhood education.³ Its programs directly address educational gaps by meeting critical demand for high-quality childcare and preschool education, serving families across the economic spectrum.

Whereas: Both these schools, despite their crucial roles and deep roots in the community, are facing significant challenges that threaten their future operations. Bancroft Elementary School is currently over capacity and its utilization rate is projected to increase further in coming years. As part of the Boundary and Student Assignment Study, the Deputy Mayor of Education (DME) is considering reducing the school's boundary, breaking off an essential part of the community that has been central to Bancroft's success, and cutting off access to quality bilingual education and ancillary social services for students drawn out of the boundary, including native-Spanish speakers and at-risk students.

The Rosemount Center is facing closure this summer because the organization that owns the building, House of Mercy, will not renew their lease beyond the current academic year.

Rosemount serves hundreds of families with quality bilingual education, including a majority of students who are served by the Head Start program.⁴

Whereas: The school and neighboring communities have mobilized to protect both these institutions and are ready to support the city in finding solutions.

Whereas: For Bancroft, cutting the boundary falls far short of addressing utilization challenges as enrollment next school year is projected to be 100 students over capacity. The community has instead coalesced around the idea of setting up an annex to adequately address the near-term capacity needs of the school. The community has spoken out on this issue in several ways:

- Over 400 people attended two DME Town Hall meetings on Bancroft, where 80% of attendees selected an Early Childhood Education Annex as their top solution to the capacity challenges when polled.
- A [DME survey of the Bancroft community received 1,253 responses](#) in which 85% of respondents similarly selected the annex as their top choice.
- Since the beginning of the year, 61 personalized letters were sent to the Mayor, the DME, and the Council encouraging the city to acquire a building for the annex. (See attachment)

Whereas: Members of a neighborhood working group have identified and presented the Henderson building at 16th St and Park St NW as a potential location for the annex. The DME has since visited the location and DCPS sent a team in January to view the building.

Whereas: The closure of Rosemount was made public for the first time on February 2, 2024. However, the community has quickly rallied to save the school from closure, engaging House of Mercy, the city, and the media to explore solutions for keeping the school in operation. These efforts include an open letter to House of Mercy with over 1,000 signatures, encouraging the organization to reconsider their decision to end Rosemount's lease and to engage in discussions with community representatives on potential paths forward that would allow the Rosemount Center to continue to operate.

Whereas: A solution for Rosemount requires swift action in order to reduce administrative and financial risks to the school, staff, and affected families. For instance, Head Start grants typically require applications in the Spring ahead of the next school year

Whereas: Councilmember Nadeau and State Board of Education representative Ben Williams wrote [a letter to the Mayor](#), stating that:

- Early childhood education is a priority shared amongst the Ward 1 Councilmember, Ward 1 State Board of Education, and the Mayor.
- Due to high demand at Bancroft and other Spanish language elementary schools in the area, there is a pressing need for additional space for pre-K classrooms.
- These two challenges could be turned into opportunities with mayoral support.

Whereas: On February 9, 2024 Councilmember Nadeau introduced the “[Early Childhood Facilities Expansion Act of 2024](#),” which states the Mayor shall enter into negotiations to lease or acquire the Rosemount Center and the Henderson Buildings for the purpose of preserving and expanding early childhood education facilities.

Therefore, be it resolved that: ANC 1D calls on the Mayor, Deputy Mayor of Education, and the Council to take the necessary actions to secure an annex for Bancroft and maintain Rosemount’s operations in its current location without interruption.

Be it further resolved that: The Commission supports the letter presented Councilmember Nadeau and Representative Williams and the legislation drafted by Councilmember Nadeau.

Be it further resolved that: The Commission reiterates its strong opposition to reducing the boundary for Bancroft Elementary as an ostensible solution to dealing with the capacity issues.

Be it further resolved that: The Commission requests the city to engage directly with House of Mercy to better understand their demands and to identify a solution that secures Rosemount for the long-term.

Be it further resolved that: The Commission designates Commissioners Erika Nunez, ANC 1D03, and Omar Parbhoo, ANC 1D05, to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this resolution.

Be it further resolved that: In the event the designated representative Commissioner cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, the Commission authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this resolution.

Be it further resolved that: Consistent with DC Code, only actions of the full Commission voting in a properly noticed public meeting have standing and carry great weight. The actions, positions, and opinions of individual commissioners, insofar as they may be contradictory to or otherwise inconsistent with the expressed position of the full Commission in a properly adopted resolution or letter, have no standing and cannot be considered as in any way associated with the Commission.

ATTACHMENT: 61 letters from residents supporting an annex for Bancroft Elementary School (withheld from public viewing for the privacy of the senders)

^[1] <https://find.myschooldc.org/>; <https://www.myschooldc.org/find-schools/school-options-outside-my-school-dc>; <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/pre-kindergarten-pk3-and-pk4>

^[2] <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/bancroft-es-profile>;
<https://schoolreportcard.dc.gov/lea/1/school/204/report/explore/105>

^[3] https://www.rosemountcenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Rosemount_AR_2022_Final_web.pdf

^[4] <https://childcare.gov/consumer-education/head-start-and-early-head-start>

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Certification: At a regularly scheduled and publicly noticed meeting held on February 20, 2023 Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1D considered the above resolution. With a quorum of six Commissioners present, the Commission voted with 6 yea's, 0 no's, and 0 abstentions to adopt the above resolution.



Angela Allison (Feb 28, 2024 19:41 EST)

28/02/2024

SIGNATURE

ANGELA ALLISON

CHAIR, ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1D






Resolution Preserving Early Childhood Education (1)

Final Audit Report

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