



Catherine Palmer &lt;council@babnc.org&gt;

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## Objection to the proposal by Education First

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Ameet Keny &lt;ameetkeny@hotmail.com&gt;

Mon, Apr 10, 2023 at 8:53 PM

To: "jarrett.thompson@lacity.org" <jarrett.thompson@lacity.org>, "katy.yaroslavsky@lacity.org" <katy.yaroslavsky@lacity.org>, Dylan Sittig <dylan.sittig@lacity.org>, "gary.gero@lacity.org" <gary.gero@lacity.org>, Elizabeth Barcohana <Ebarcohana@gmail.com>, "plu@babnc.org" <plu@babnc.org>

Dear Councilwoman Yaroslavsky and members of the Planning and Land Use Committee of the Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council,

We join our neighbors and fellow homeowners of Bel-Air Park in our opposition to the proposal set forth by Education First, the for-profit company in escrow to purchase the American Jewish University. EF's proposal is not a simple re-use of the property as they claim. It is a massive change to the current conditional use permit and a major intensification of use of the premises.

The reason their proposal involves a massive change is because they are a for-profit company and it behooves them to maximize their revenue by housing and enrolling as many students as possible at all times. These are the basic principles of business. Their intention of having 700 students reside on campus as well as having an additional 200-500 students get shuttled to the campus on a daily basis will have staggering effects in a variety of ways. First and foremost, these sorts of numbers will put the lives of their students as well as those of the homeowners in the surrounding areas at risk. If another fire or natural disaster were to happen and all the homeowners and students needed to evacuate, there is only one road in and one road out of the community. All of us would need to share this exit. This was our terrifying reality in December 2017 when the Skirball Fires south of our community forced us to evacuate our homes. There were 500 homeowners jammed onto Casiano Road and then onto the two-lane Mulholland Drive in an attempt to flee for safety. Fortunately, the fires were contained and did not cause substantial damage to our community. But imagine something similar happening and in addition to all the homeowners, the 1200 students and the undisclosed number of faculty, advisors and staff had to evacuate as well. This would be a threat to life for everyone involved. EF's suggestion to allay our fears was to have a shelter in place order for their students and employees, which is not only impractical, it's highly dangerous.

There are many other ways in which the proposal from EF is incorrect and non-sensical. EF suggests that their students will not own cars and will not be permitted to drive. We know this to be untrue since several of their students at the San Diego campus have cars. Further, EF states that the impact on traffic will be insignificant. However, it is a fact that these students come from families of wealth since the tuition for their program is upwards of \$2000/week and \$20,000 for the 9-month course they offer. These students will be ordering food to be delivered regularly and if they aren't driving, they will be summoning rideshare services to the campus on a regular basis to take them all over Los Angeles and bring them back. This has been shown to be the case at their San Diego and Pasadena campuses. The feature about the AJU campus that will amplify the students' use of delivery and rideshare services is the fact that there are no restaurants, cafes, or entertainment within walking distance of the AJU. The impact of having so many rideshare vehicles coming and going at all hours has not been studied and EF has deliberately overlooked its effects by saying it's difficult to predict.

Since entering escrow, EF has falsely stated time and again that they want to work collaboratively with the homeowners to come to agreeable compromises. However, when the homeowners objected to their first proposal of having 480 students residing on campus EF went back to their board and returned with a revised proposal that had an even higher number of students residing on campus (700)! The homeowners were stunned to discover that our primary concern had not only been ignored, it had been worsened. EF is not a trustworthy organization and while they are good at appearing like they want to collaborate, they have demonstrated that the only thing that matters to them is their bottom line. For all of these reasons and more, we stand with our neighbors in objecting to their proposal. And we hope you will align with us and reject their proposal.

Sincerely,  
Ameet Keny, MD, President, Casiano Estates HOA  
Jennifer Keny