

April 10, 2023

To whom it may concern:

I am a homeowner in Bel-Air Park, a community of approximately 150 homes located adjacent to the American Jewish University and Stephen S. Wise Temple and School. Recently, I learned about a proposal by a for-profit international language school, Education First, wanting to purchase the American Jewish University and convert it to an English Language Boarding school. While I think that repurposing the American Jewish University to be used as an educational institution is a good idea, the proposal that was presented by EF is incredibly disturbing and dangerous.

EF wants to house 700 students on the campus year-round. AJU has never housed more than 200 students on campus since its inception. The campus was never designed for such a large occupancy. EF has also proposed to shuttle 200 more students to the campus on a daily basis from September - June and an additional 500 students during the summertime for an overall enrollment of 900 and 1200 students, depending on the time of year. The American Jewish University was built with a Conditional Use Permit that allows for only 200 students to live on campus at any given time. The CUP also does not allow 900-1200 students to be on campus at the same time. Additionally, these numbers do not take into consideration the number of faculty and auxiliary staff that will be needed to manage and teach that many students.

Furthermore, the campus was constructed in the 1970s, more than 50 years ago. There have been no significant changes to the infrastructure of the campus or roads and areas surrounding the campus to allow for such an increase in population. I have concerns over the power utilization of that many students, especially given the frequent power outages in Los Angeles, and how this increased usage will impact my community. I have concerns about the sewage system and its capability to handle an additional 1200 students as well as the ancillary staff and faculty that will be needed on campus to manage that many students. There is only one way in and one way out of our community for all 150 homeowners and their families (Casiano Road) and this connects to a 2 lane, heavily trafficked street (Mulholland Drive). And during emergencies, the hundreds of homeowners from Bel-Air Crest and Mountaingate would also need to evacuate using that one exit.

I have strong reservations about EF's proposal and I hope the BABCNC Planning and Land Use Committee will see the potentially harmful impact that such a proposal will inevitably have on the neighborhood and communities. I am asking that the Planning and Land Use Committee deny EF's proposal to ensure the safety and well-being of all homeowners in the area.

Thank you.

*Osep E. Cunniff*