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**ELIOT K-8 SCHOOL FAMILY COUNCIL SUBMITS PROPOSAL TO RE-PURPOSE  
FORMER PRINT AND A-1 POLICE BUILDINGS TO RESOLVE SPACE CRISIS  
FOR SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN SCHOOL**

*Family Council also Issues Support Letter for North Bennet Street School Proposal*

BOSTON, February 16, 2012 – The Eliot K-8 School Family Council (ESFC), a 501(c)3 unincorporated association representing all Eliot School families, today submitted a proposal to move the Eliot K-8 School to the properties at 150 North Street and 130-140 Richmond Street to resolve its space crisis. The proposal would also enable the school to add a third line (“strand”) of grades K-8, substantially increasing the number of children it could accommodate across the underserved downtown Boston communities.

The ESFC also wrote a letter of support for a proposal to be submitted by the North Bennet Street School (NBSS), with which the Eliot K-8 School has enjoyed a long partnership for the benefit of its students. The ESFC remains grateful for the accommodations the NBSS has made historically to accommodate its students, and is hopeful that their relationship will continue to strengthen.

“We remain open to exploring any and all solutions with the City of Boston, the Boston Public Schools and the North Bennet Street School, as long as the Eliot School’s untenable space issues are resolved in a way that enables our school to secure an adequate and effective learning environment for our children,” said Israel Ruiz, Co-Chair of the Eliot School K-8 Family Council.

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## *ESFC Submits Proposal/2*

The ESFC letter of support for the NBSS bid is contingent upon the current NBSS buildings being used to expand the Eliot School. Currently, the Eliot School is fortunate to have use of some borrowed space at the NBSS for specialty classes such as art; however, this short-term solution will no longer be sufficient by Fall 2012.

Preceding the proposal, the ESFC initiated an electronic petition to garner support for expansion of the Eliot K-8 School, which to date has gathered more than 800 signatures from individuals across the city. In addition, a letter was submitted by the ESFC to both Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Boston Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Carol R. Johnson, which pressed for a commitment from the city for both a short- and long-term solution to the Eliot School's increasing space deficit.

"Due to the population boom taking place in the downtown neighborhoods of Boston, there is a substantial community need for our city to expand access to high quality public education." said Israel Ruiz, ESFC Co-Chair. "We strongly believe that expanding access to the Eliot School offers a proven academic solution and that the City of Boston and Boston Public Schools should address this critical need before any decision is made on the sale of these large North End properties."

Urgency is mounting at the Eliot K-8 School, which has seen its enrollment increase from 175 students in 2008 to 320 this year, with a wait list of more than 400 children. Part of this rapid enrollment increase is due to the addition of a second strand of classes that was added in 2008 in response to demand for more seats in downtown schools. Next year, and each consecutive year until the second strand of grades K-8 is complete in 2017, a new classroom needs to be located by the school to house this class, which is entering Third Grade in Fall 2012. As a result, the Eliot School has had to sacrifice its library, music room and art room. Even the teacher's lounge is annexed for two periods a day for student instruction.

“I’ve seen the Eliot School population almost double in size since my children entered in 2008, yet the physical space remains static,” said Anne Occhipinti, whose daughter is in the Eliot School’s second strand class that will enter the third grade next fall. “I’m very concerned for my daughter that we could be facing more program cuts for next year – or worse - potential school reassignment, if the Eliot School is unable to secure more space by this September.”

### **About The Eliot K-8 Family Council**

The Eliot School Family Council (the "ESFC") funds improvements and administrative leadership initiatives at the John Eliot K-8 School that significantly enhances students' K-8th grade learning, and which are currently beyond what the tax-funded school budget can support. Distributions are made to support programs enriching math skills and the science curriculum, promoting 21st century technology, improvement of literacy, expanding social studies and world culture, providing professional development for teachers, elevating the arts, and enhancing the social and physical well-being of students. Membership in the ESFC is open to all parents, guardians, and families of children enrolled in the Eliot K to 8 School, alumni of the John Eliot School, and the surrounding community.