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CENTRO DE LA COMUNIDAD UNIDA UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER

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Ald. James Bohl, Chair
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City Hall
200 E. Wells Street
Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Ald. Bohl:

I am writing to express my full support of the proposal before the committee for the new School, St. Augustine Prep to be located on the south side of Milwaukee. This school is good for the families, students and all citizens of Milwaukee.

The United Community Center has been here for more than 25 years providing quality education to the many families who reside on the south side. The number one way to attract and retain families in the City of Milwaukee is quality schools. This school will help serve as an attraction for the many families looking for a high caliber school to ensure their child receives the best education possible.

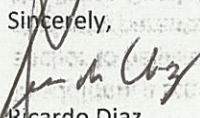
In addition, a school at this location can serve as a catalyst to improve the neighborhood. It will become an anchor to help stabilize housing, lower crime, and improve overall safety with the constant presence of students, parents, staff, and visitors in the neighborhood. My experience with UCC is a perfect example, as the Bruce-Guadalupe Community School, now with more than 1000 students has helped to bring first-time homebuyers to the area, more businesses in the vicinity and more community presence at all hours of the day which has helped deter crime significantly.

As the former Commissioner of the Department of City Development, I know how important it is for the city to bring new families to Milwaukee and keep families in the city. The key to this has always been quality schools. Economic development will follow. Additionally, a high school option such as this is vital to help prepare Milwaukee's future workforce. We need more quality high school seats to help ensure Milwaukee's economy has a qualified and prepared workforce of the future. Currently, many students from the area are traveling long distances to attend high schools outside of the area, apart from Carmen High School of Science and Technology and Ronald Reagan High School, there are not enough quality high school options for the many students in the pipeline.

Lastly, I can tell you from personal experience that the Ramirez family has been a consistent and integral partner in UCC's growth and the rigor and quality of our school. I am confident they will embark upon this new endeavor with the same passion, commitment, and dedication to the students and families of Milwaukee that they have shown us for many years.

I hope the committee understands how important a school like this can be to the families of this community. Education is the great equalizer, the road out of poverty, and an opportunity that all children deserve. Please give the students on the south side of Milwaukee that opportunity.

Sincerely,


Ricardo Diaz

Cc: Gus Ramirez, José Olivieri, Mayor Barrett, Council President, Alderman Michael Murphy,
Ald. Jose Perez, Vice Chair, Ald. Willie C. Wade, Ald. Robert J. Bauman, Ald. Nik Kovac

