

**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**Regarding The Children's School Special Use Permit Application**  
August 20, 2007

**What is a Special Use Permit?**

A Special Use Permit (SUP) is an authorization by local zoning authorities to conduct certain activities within a zoning district. Entities such as independent schools and churches, for example, must obtain and operate under an SUP in order to carry out their stated functions.

The approval of a new SUP will have no effect on our ability to continue to operate as we are operating today in our current facilities. However, in order to change the footprint of our campus, or construct any new buildings that were not in our former SUP, The Children's School needed to apply for and obtain a new SUP.

**What changes to The Children's School campus does the new SUP contemplate?**

The Children's School's new SUP is a blueprint for the future of the school—a future in which the quality of our facilities will match the quality of the education we provide.

The changes contemplated by the SUP will greatly enhance the school's facilities and enable it to better meet the educational and other programming needs of our students. Those changes include the following:

- replacement of the blue/grey building at 325 10th Street, which is currently owned by the school but held as rental property, with classroom facilities;
- expansion of the gym building to the south to create a multi-purpose facility that will include a performing arts center for the school;
- replacement of the converted condominium buildings that currently house the 5th and 6th grade classrooms and the kindergarten classroom building with facilities that will be more suitable for educational use; and
- reconfiguring and increasing our total play area, and doubling our underground parking for faculty and staff.

When fully implemented, this plan eventually will provide the school with more and better play space and parking, improved classroom facilities, expanded facilities for specialized instruction, and a proper facility for the presentation of school productions.

All of this will be accomplished in a manner that will be in keeping with the architectural style and character of our wonderful Midtown neighborhood.

**Why does The Children's School need any more space, or any new buildings?**

The Children's School is very proud of what it is accomplishing with its current facilities, but it strives to be the very best it can be. The changes contemplated by the new SUP will help achieve that goal.

- With its **recent renovations**, The Children’s School has addressed its most pressing needs, insofar as existing facilities are concerned, and the results have been impressive.
- However, several years ago The Children’s School commissioned the award-winning architectural firm of Lord, Aeck & Sargent (LAS) to perform a thorough review of our facilities based on the functional requirements of our unique educational mission and philosophy.
  - LAS was chosen because it has dual expertise in meeting the design needs of educational institutions and in historic preservation, a combination that has served The Children’s School and its surrounding neighborhood well.
  - This evaluation was a collaborative effort between LAS and our administrative staff, oriented toward identifying those changes or additions to our existing facilities that would enable us to fully realize our potential.
- Based on that review, we concluded that certain changes and additions to our grounds and facilities would enable us to better meet the educational and other programming needs of our students and—by making our school an even more attractive option to new families—help to assure the school’s long-term success and well-being. Those changes are reflected in the school’s master site plan and are summarized above.

### **Why should the broader community support the changes to The Children’s School?**

As The Children’s School has grown over the years, it has filled a need in independent education in Atlanta and is now one of the most respected elementary schools in the city. Besides providing excellent academics, The Children’s School brings together children from “the east, the west, the north, and the south,”<sup>1</sup> which is of great value in bridging differences and creating a community that extends throughout the city. This has not been accomplished without growth and change. The new SUP’s master plan is a vision for the future of the school that continues its tradition of looking to the future, addressing shortcomings, and seizing opportunities to improve its facilities and programs--benefiting not only the school’s students and families, but the community at large.

### **Does The Children’s School plan to increase enrollment?**

No. There are no plans to add grades, increase the number of classes, or increase class size at any level. As a condition of its new SUP, The Children’s School has agreed to limit its enrollment to no more than 450 students.

### **How will the Midtown neighborhood be affected by The Children’s School’s SUP?**

- The parking shortage on nearby streets will be lessened due to the addition of 28 underground parking spaces for faculty and staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Speech by TCS founder Lila McDill.

- The streetscape on 10<sup>th</sup> Street will be enhanced as all new buildings will be consistent in scale and appearance with the existing buildings that make up the school and its immediate surroundings.
- School-related traffic will **not** increase as a result of these plans because we will not be increasing enrollment.
- As we have in the past, we will make every effort to work with our neighbors to minimize the inconvenience posed to them by any construction.

### **When will the work be done under the SUP?**

We anticipate that the work outlined in the SUP will be done in phases, over a period of years.

- SUPs have no expiration date, nor does our new SUP include a required timeline for completing the work.
- There are many factors that will be considered in determining when to complete the new construction that is contemplated by the SUP, with the availability of funding and avoiding disruption to the school's operations being major considerations.
- We currently expect that the work will be done in three or more phases, each of which will be supported by a capital campaign, over a period of 10 years or more.

### **What happens next?**

With its new SUP in place, The Children's School can begin the process of formalizing the phases of building out its master plan and conceptualizing the buildings and playspaces. The school's Board of Trustees and staff will develop a comprehensive plan for financing these improvements. As part of its agreement with the MNA, The Children's School will submit the design plans for the 10th Street exterior façade of the new building to be constructed at 325 10th Street to the MNA's Historic Preservation Committee for review and comment.