


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BC decides not to move Campus School

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE STAFF FEBRUARY 14, 2014

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After pushback from parents, Boston College announced Thursday it has stopped exploring a proposal to relocate a longstanding on-campus school for children and young adults with disabilities to another site a few miles away.

In November, BC said that it was weighing a plan to move the Campus School by merging it with the Kennedy Day School at the Franciscan Hospital for Children nearly three miles away in Brighton.

University officials said at the time that the Day School's

new 20,000-square-foot facility would offer better programs for children in the Campus School, which had seen enrollment dip to 38 from 49 in 2007.

But parents, who said they were caught off-guard, objected. They got 4,500 signatures for an online petition opposing the move, and pleaded with BC leaders to allow the school to remain on campus. They said a key reason they chose the Campus School was for the unique culture and environment afforded by its college home.

On Thursday, BC administrators said they had reached a deal with Campus School parents to collaborate on a strategic plan to strengthen the school at its current location.

Both sides will work to find ways to increase enrollment, including by tapping parent ambassadors and improving marketing. In addition, BC said, the pact calls for action to shore up the budget with fund-raising that officials hope will help pay for capital improvements and better wages for staff.

Officials said administrators and parents talked extensively to reach the agreement.

“These discussions have been very helpful as they have given Campus School parents a better understanding of the issues facing the school, while giving Boston College a greater appreciation of their commitment to preserving and strengthening the program,” interim provost Joseph Quinn said in a statement.

“The Campus School parents asked for an opportunity to keep the Campus School at BC, increase enrollment and balance the school’s budget, and we have agreed to give them this opportunity,” Quinn added. “We are all committed to making this plan work.”

Kristen Morin, a leader of the Campus School’s Parent Advisory Committee, said she has “100 percent confidence” that the plan will lead the school to “thrive in the years to come.”

The publicly funded school serves students ages 3 to 21 who have severe disabilities. Housed in Campion Hall, it has operated on BC’s Chestnut Hill campus since its founding 44 years ago.



Campus School director Don Ricciato described the deal as a “win-win” for the university and the school.

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