

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ROBERT F. KENNEDY SCHOOL

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November 6, 2000

Mayor Anthony Galluccio
City Councilors

I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of allowing immigrants to vote in School Committee elections. As an educator, I see the necessity of full parent involvement at all levels of a child's education, this also includes being part of the process of choosing appropriate elected officials who oversee the functioning of the entire school system.

At no other time is this process more important than now. This city is experiencing and will continue to experience the arrival of immigrants in search of a better way of life for themselves and their families. As they arrive, they are subject to taxation of every kind. Their money is also used to provide services to all city residents yet they are not allowed to participate in the most basics of civic responsibilities which is to participate in the local level elections. How can we as a civic-minded city take their money but not allow them the opportunity to participate in the voting process.

As a former New York City resident and educator I have seen first hand how including parents in the decision making process of local school elections have served to tear down divisive racial, economic, and resource lines of disparity. I have seen how elected officials have been able to tackle such issues as bilingual education, allocation of resources, building and renovation of school buildings. It was because of the committed New York City officials who had the foresight to consider the future of schools and the city, all parents were allowed to help make decisions that directly impact their children's future. Including immigrants in this process will give all parents the opportunity to share in similar concerns that parents have in about their children's needs.

It is my wish as an educator that all parents be truly involved in all aspects of their children's life's because it is this collective inclusion that will bring about the building of a cohesive city where color, language, race, gender, and religion are no longer obstacles to this city's progress and future development. I respectfully urge the Mayor and city councilors to move this immigrant voters rights forward so that the most basics of civic responsibilities is carried out by all city residents and not just a few.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lydia E. Rivera-Torres'.
Lydia E. Rivera-Torres



New School

Harrington

Graham Parks

Robert F. Kennedy

November 6, 2000

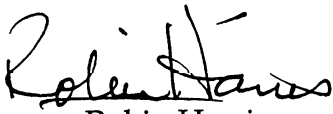
Mayor Anthony Galluccio
City Councilors

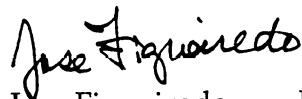
We are writing to urge you to vote in favor of allowing immigrants to vote in School Committee elections. As educators, we understand the necessity of full parent involvement at all levels of a child's education, this also includes being part of the process of choosing appropriate elected officials who oversee the functioning of the entire school system.

This city is and will continue to be a city that attracts immigrants from every corner of the world. They come here to try and secure a better future for themselves and their families. They come with the promises of liberty and justice for all. What is just? Is it just to take from these Immigrants State and local taxes but then exclude them from the voting processing that helps to decide how, when and where monies are spent? But even more detrimental is the process of keeping them outside of the very mechanism that shape their children life's. We know that education is the key to the creation and development of a successful citizen yet immigrants are kept out of the basic decision making mechanism that elects school committee members that help to form district policy.

We respectfully urge Mayor Galluccio and all Councilors to address the issue of immigrant voters and to make the right decision for this city's future. You have the power and the opportunity to take a stand that will put this city head and shoulders above others and will propel this city to a new level of true equality. Please take that stand today.

Respectfully,


Robin Harris


Jose Figueiredo

Len Solo


Lydia E. Rivera-Torres

Principals of the Cambridge Public Schools

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GRAHAM & PARKS ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Dr. Leonard Solo, *Principal*

Patricia Beggy, Acting Assistant Principal



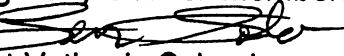
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TO: Cambridge City Council Members

FR: Len Solo 

RE: Immigrant Voting in School
Committee Elections

Nov. 2, 2000

I am in full support of extending voting rights in school committee elections in Cambridge to immigrants.

For me, the issue is straight-forward and simple: we educate many children of immigrants in our schools. For example, Haitian children make up 25% of the total student population here at the Graham & Parks School. But the adult family members of these children, who are mostly immigrants, do not have the right to help to choose the people who make policy decisions which directly effect their children. This is not democratic.

I also look at this issue as an educator: what a great opportunity for us to immediately teach new-comers to this country the great power of voting, of participating in the democratic process!

For these reasons, I strongly support extending voting rights to immigrants and urge you to pass such an enabling law as soon as possible.

"One of the Country's Outstanding Schools" - Redbook
Disney Learning Partnership Spotlight School of the Year - 2000
The Cambridge School Department is an equal opportunity / affirmative action employer

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Consent Communications

Communication from Lydia E. Rivera-Torres,
Principal, Roberts School, urging the City
Council support for allowing immigrants to
vote in School Committee elections.

In City Council,

November 6, 2000

Placed on file