



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

MASSACHUSETTS 02139 • 617-498-9090

Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor

January 10, 1983

The Honorable, The City Council,

Enclosed for the information of the City Council is a communication from the Mayor to the School Committee concerning Affirmative Action in the Cambridge School Department.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alfred E. Vellucci".

Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor



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Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor

January 4, 1983

The Honorable, the School Committee,

Enclosed is a statement by the Mayor concerning our progress and problems with affirmative action.

I would hope that the School Committee would join with me and endorse the sentiment of this statement.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Alfred E. Vellucci". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "V".

Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor

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enclosure

We now conclude the first year of this School Committee's term in office.

Much work has been done in the areas of minority concerns, in affirmative action; much controversy has swirled and so continues to swirl around the subject.

We face the new year, the year 1983 and the issue of race sits squarely on the public agenda, for the struggle of the races continues.

I have spent nearly seven decades upon this earth and have spent more than three decades in public life.

I had hoped and thought that by now the journey towards equality in American would be over. I had thought that by now the understanding that all of us are equal would be a part of the American mind, a part of the American heart and so, a part of American life.

It is not so. The struggle continues. The journey is not over. The work is unfinished.

We will keep going.

Let me briefly review the accomplishments of our Committee in this area.

We took a divisive suit out of Federal District Court and reached a mediated settlement in the Mayor's Office over the issues of affirmative action and seniority. I am proud that our City faced its obligations itself rather than surrendering the power of solution to an outside court.

I believe all parties to the suit grew in understanding as a result of the process we went through together. The act of mediating a settlement was itself an achievement in tolerance, understanding, mutual respect and self reliance.

The Settlement which was reached through mediation yielded further gains.

Our School Committee, with our union's blessing, reached an agreement over layoffs which is more protective of minority rights than any such agreement reached by any

School system in the United States. No agreement could be
be more protective or stronger or more simply stated: NO
MINORITIES WILL BE LAID OFF AS A RESULT OF A REDUCTION IN
FORCE. We have set a standard which others may look to,
but, as a simple proposition of logic, none can exceed.
We have further stipulated that the policy of the School
Committee shall be to amend the Affirmative Action Plan of
October 1980 so as to increase from 20% to not less than
25% the goal for composition of our faculty and adminis-
trative staff.
A goal which lacks a plan for reaching it is meaningless.
As such, the Committee has agreed that until our goal is
reached and as a way of reaching it, we shall make good
faith best efforts to recruit and hire (3) qualified
minority persons for each (1) qualified non-minority
person whom we newly employ in regular full or part-time
positions. No court has required any school system to

try to hire minorities at a rate in excess of 50%. We on our own have agreed to try to recruit and hire minorities at a rate of 75%.

Since finalizing our agreement, our good faith best efforts have yielded the following results: 53.7 of newly hired teachers have been minorities and 50% of newly hired administrators have been minorities. We will continue to try to achieve better results, but note, no prior Committee has done as well.

We have strengthened the office of Affirmative Action. He has been given sign-off authority for all School Department hiring, with respect to certifying compliance with affirmative action hiring policies. It has been made clear that he works for the Committee, through the Mayor and the Mayor is presently reviewing his office, staffing and budget needs with the intention of making the operation first rate. The Mayor is committed to whatever recommendations are required to make an effective Affirmative Action Office and expects that the

School Committee will be equally supportive.

We further amended the Affirmative Action Plan of October, 1980 to include the creation of an Affirmative Action Advisory Committee (AAAC). The Mayor of the City and a member of the School Committee (Mrs. Henrietta Attles) sit by definition on the AAAC and are active, participating, voting members. The AAAC is now organized, has officers, (Sandra Spooner is Chairperson), and has an appropriated budget for the present fiscal year. The AAAC is responsible together with the Affirmative Action Officer, for formulating affirmative action goals, and planning, implementing, evaluating disseminating information about the Cambridge School Department's affirmative action plan. We expect that together they will keep us moving forward.

We have had two setbacks over this term.

The attorneys for the plaintiff-intervenors have challenged the Superintendent's recommendation and the Committee's

subsequent confirmation of Mr. Coady to be the Master of the Morse School. Thus, on this issue of implementation of the mediated settlement, we are now in court. We expect the judge to hear the case in January and to rule whether or not the Committee has in fact violated the terms of its agreement. I believe we have not.

As a result of issues arising from the appointment of Mr. Coady, Mrs. Dorothy Jones, the Director of Desegregation announced her intentions to resign her post. In January she we will decide, based upon her own principled reasoning whether or not that decision is irrevocable.

I hope that it is not.

I believe in my heart that this Committee acted with sincerity when it reached its mediated agreements. I believe we have acted sincerely in trying to make those agreements a reality.

Nonetheless, there are doubts. People in our community,

acting with equal sincerity, question our willingness to live up to the agreements we have reached.

I believe we should begin the new year and the second year of our term together by reaffirming our commitment to our mediated settlement. I believe further we should, as an elected body, restate our conviction in the beliefs that underlie that agreement and commit ourselves to making the settlement work.

We have done too much and come too far to allow doubt and division to stand in our way. If we can help to resolve sincere doubt by restating our own sincerity, then we should stand up and do so.

This community is just that, a community. It works better when we work together in a spirit of harmony and cooperation.

Comm. from Mayor Vellucci re: S-15A
Affirmative Action in the Cambridge
School Department.

January 10, 1983