



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor

MEETING THE JAPANESE CHALLENGE IN THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

KIDS

&

COMPUTERS

A Proposal for The Cambridge School System

By

Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci

Mayor Alfred Vellucci is joining hands with Senator Paul Tsongas to make first class computer education an essential fact of life in the Cambridge Public elementary schools. Together, they are determined to create a computer literacy program in Cambridge that will be a model for the rest of the State as well as other States in the nation.

The Mayor has always believed that the earliest education is the best education. Children readily learn foreign languages at an early age; children with learning disabilities overcome them more easily when treated at an early age. It therefor makes good sense to follow the same approach and teach our students in the uses and applications of computers at an early age.

On the fifteenth of October, Mayor Vellucci heard Senator Tsongas address the Chamber of Commerce at their regular monthly meeting. The Senator spoke eloquently of the challenge posed to the United States by Japan and other nations who are outmaneuvering us in the high technology growth areas of the future. We are being out distanced on a number of fronts; government planning, real commitment to research and development and educational preparation of our younger generation so that they will be ready for the competitive job market of the future.

Senator Tsongas has made his point repeatedly; most notably in the Congressional Record of May 27, 1982 and more recently at the Centennial Celebration of the M.I.T. Department of Engineering on October 2, 1982. Senator Tsongas' message is clear for any who choose to listen: either America faces up to the high technology challenge of Japan and others or we face the future unable to compete. Nowhere will this impact be felt so deeply as here in Massachusetts where we depend so heavily upon a promising high-technology future and thus would be doubly hurt by a national failure to meet the challenge of other nations.

I believe the Senator is right, I believe the challenge he portrays is real and I for one intend to work with him and address one significant part of the problem here in Cambridge where I chair the School Committee.

I intend to develop a computer literacy program here in the elementary grades of the Cambridge Public Schools that will make my dear friend, Tasheki Araki, the Mayor of Hiroshima, come running back to Cambridge to see what America can do when it goes to work!

During the past week, I have had the pleasure of meeting twice with Senator Tsongas. I asked the Senator to join me for working lunch last week to see if he would be interested in making Cambridge a prototype City to implement the goal

of making our elementary school age children computer-literate. The Senator agreed. We then agreed to hold a second meeting in the Mayor's Office that would in fact represent the prototype: a consortium of forces coming together to reach this goal.

The five (5) components of the prototype are: The Federal government, State government, local government, the universities and private sector.

All sectors met on Wednesday, November 9, 1982 in the Mayor's Office. The Prototype Group will meet weekly from now on to develop a scheme to make this program happen in the Cambridge Public Schools.

The members of the working group are:

From the Federal Government:

Senator Paul Tsongas and His Staff Mr. Andy Bagley
and Mr. John Quinn.

From the State Government:

Mr. Gerald Indelicato, Representative from Governor Elect Dukakis

From the Local Government:

Alfred E. Vellucci, Mayor
Richard McKinnon, Executive Assistant to the Mayor
William Lannon, Superintendent of Schools
Rose O'Rourke, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Mary Lou McGrath, Coordinator of Elementary Education

From the Universities:

Robin Schmidt, Vice-President of Harvard
Jacqueline O'Neill, Director of Community Affairs for Harvard
John Terry, Provost's Office of M.I.T.

From the Private Sector:

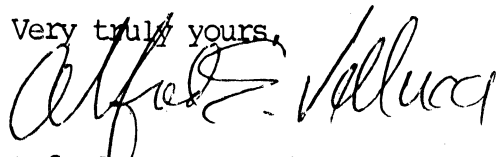
Barbara Sullivan, For the Chamber of Commerce
Paul Horwicz, Bolt, Beranek & Newman, Inc.
Wallace Feurzig, Bolt, Beranek & Newman, Inc.

I believe we will develop a great program here in Cambridge. I believe we will contribute towards Senator Tsongas's goal of meeting the Japanese challenge. I believe we will make our student prepared for the world which awaits them.

I am committed. The Senator is committed.

We will make this work.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alfred E. Vellucci". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alfred" being more prominent.

Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor

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S-708

Comm. from Mayor Vellucci Re: establishment of
a computer education program for elementary
school students.

In City Council,

November 15, 1982

11/15/82

-Placed on File