



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
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April 29, 1996

To the Honorable, the City Council:

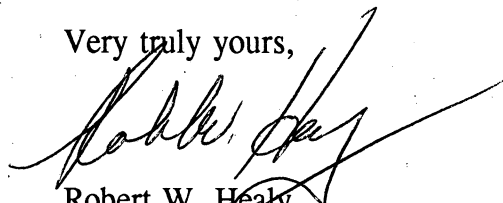
In response to Awaiting Report #8 regarding a status report on the TECH 2000 plan and examination of the President's GOAL 2000 Plan, please be advised of the following:

The FY97 submitted budget includes substantial funds for technology improvements in the schools. In the capital budget, \$1 million is included for the development of Fiber Optic Network Infrastructure citywide. This is a multi year project, with an additional \$750,000 projected for this purposes in each of the next two years. This project will be the cornerstone of the TECH 2000 plan to dramatically increase the use and capabilities of computers in the classroom, in computer labs, and in school administrative areas. The network will fund the internal cabling needed to connect computers inside schools as well as the external cable needed to connect schools to each other, to central school buildings, and to other places. In fact, over 70% of the funding is directly attributable to technology improvements for the schools.

The FY97 budget includes two additional sources of funds for hardware and software needs in the schools: approximately one-third (\$200,000) of the \$600,000 in the capital budget for the acquisition of for the schools; and approximately \$370,000 in the School Department operating budget for the purchase of additional computers.

For information regarding potential federal and state funding opportunities for technology and the President's GOAL 2000 Plan, please find attached a report prepared by Noe Medina from the Office of Program Development and Assessment of the Schools.

Very truly yours,



Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Attachment

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT
159 THORNDIKE STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02141

MEMORANDUM

TO : Interested Parties
FROM : Noe J. Medina
SUBJECT : Technology Grants
DATE : March 23, 1996

As a result of recent inquiries, I have prepared this memo to summarize state and national initiatives around educational technology acquisition and use. In addition, I have outlined suggestions I have developed in consultation with Joanne Krepelka for pursuing these grant sources.

State Sources

I have talked to some folks from the state department of education and reviewed material from their web site. Here is a summary of what I discovered:

- A \$60 million funding program (Educational Technology Bond Bill) is pending state legislative approval. If approved as proposed, the program will provide funding support for the implementation of local educational technology plans. This could include hardware and networking costs.
- Joanne Krepelka is part of a loose statewide network of educational technology specialists who are monitoring the progress of the legislation. She will keep us informed of issues or problems related to its passage and implementation.
- Once the program receives formal approval, the funds will be immediately available for distribution to school systems by the state department of education. Receipt of funding is dependent on the approval of a local educational technology plan and the commitment of appropriate local funding in support of the plan. Thus far, only two communities (Somerville and Rockport) have received approval for their plans and are thus eligible for funding if it becomes available.
- Joanne Krepelka has been contacted by state department of education staff who have strongly urged that Cambridge submit its proposed plan as soon as possible. Based upon the plan described in the *Tech 2000* document, our plan would stand a good chance for receiving quick approval. Joanne has been working to prepare our local educational technology plan under the guidelines established by the state. However, she needs additional information and assistance to complete this plan in a timely manner. Please provide her the information and assistance she requires.

Federal Funding Sources

Although the Clinton Administration has placed significant rhetorical emphasis on educational technology, their strategies for promoting its acquisition and use by the schools remains in the developmental stage. The Administration's strategy will focus on four areas for expanding access to educational technology by the schools: (1) placing hardware in the schools (2) providing online connectivity to schools, (3) training staff, and (4) creating software, online resources, and engaging technology-based educational programs.

The Administration has urged Federal agencies funding educational improvement (including the Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment of the Humanities) to incorporate the last two areas of improvement (staff training and materials program development) into existing grant programs. NEH has been the first agency to comply. We are currently preparing a proposal to submit in the Fall under the newly revised initiatives.

At the same time, the Administration has announced a five-year \$2 billion proposal for a state matching grant program on educational technology. This proposal will complement the effort to refocus other federal education grants in support of educational technology use in the schools. This grant program will support hardware purchase and wiring for telecommunications, as well as training and materials/program development. However, Congressional consideration of this proposal will not occur for several months (if not longer). I will keep everyone informed on its progress.

The third element of the Administration's strategy involves local, regional, and national volunteer efforts. The recent California effort to wire schools for Internet access (which involved a loose coalition of organizations and a one-day event) represents one model being studied by the Administration. Ongoing volunteers from technology-related firms represents another strategy. A Massachusetts organization of technology volunteers (with which Cambridge is involved) is an example of this strategy.

Suggested Funding Approach

Given the current configuration of external resources, opportunities for a major technology-focused proposal are relatively minimal. This office will investigate private funding sources (i.e. corporate and foundations) to see if interest in a technology-focused proposal exists. My information suggests that little interest exists in technology as a topic. Instead, we are focusing on embedding technology acquisition and use into proposals with content area foci. Our response to the NEH grant programs is one example. Our recent bilingual education proposals included some resources for technology acquisition and use. This approach does not make it likely that enormous amount of money will be received for technology. Rather it will provide much smaller levels of funding but from a more diverse set of sources.

Consent Agenda #6

S-233

Relative to Awaiting Report Item
Number 8 regarding a status report
on the TECH 2000 plan.

In City Council April 29, 1996

Placed on file.