

All,

I just learned that inventor, technologist, futurist and best-selling author Ray Kurzweil just sent a very moving support letter to the Mayor, the Chancellor, Mr. Cahall and all councilmembers. Word is getting around indeed.

Let's keep the effort going to encourage our friends and supporters to join with those who have stepped forward and called for Dr. Sieben's reinstatement and email these letters to the following decision makers:

adrian.fenty@dc.gov
mayor@dc.gov
amfenty@hotmail.com
Michelle.Rhee@dc.gov
petecahall@hotmail.com
Pete.Cahall@dc.gov
VGray@DCCOUNCIL.US
MCheh@DCCOUNCIL.US
yalexander@DCCOUNCIL.US
jrauch@DCCOUNCIL.US

Here is the text of the letter he sent.

----- Forwarded Message

From: Ray Kurzweil <ray@kurzweiltech.com>

Date: Tue, 15 Jul 2008 13:38:18 -0400

To: <adrian.fenty@dc.gov>

Subject: Wilson SHS - Letter of Support for Dr. Arthur Siebens

Dear Sirs/Madams,

I have devoted my life to discovery and invention, applying science and inspiration to need, setting out to achieve what has not been achieved before, and then working to surpass it. I am the principal developer of the first CCD flat-bed scanner, the first omni-font optical character recognition, the first print-to-speech reading machine for the blind, the first text-to-speech synthesizer, the first music synthesizer capable of recreating the grand piano and other orchestral instruments, and the first commercially marketed large-vocabulary speech recognition.

Because science propels me from one discovery to another, I am greatly troubled to have learned that my fellow scientific adventurer, Dr. Arthur Siebens, has been summarily dismissed from Wilson Senior High School without explanation.

While I have received my share of honors – the National Medal of Technology, our

nation's highest honor in technology, the MIT-Lemelson Prize, induction in the US Patent Office's National Inventors Hall of Fame, and fifteen honorary doctorates and honors from three US presidents – my honors combined pale in comparison to the honors Dr. Siebens has earned at Wilson SHS for 18 years: the honor to challenge and inspire young minds to realize that the only limitations they have are the ones they impose upon themselves. What Dr. Siebens has done day in and day out, and so often after school hours, on holidays and over weekends, year in and year out, is to inspire, cajole, encourage, enlighten, entertain, support and champion Wilson students in their intellectual growth. His students are an enduring testament to his passion and his performance.

Instead of cherishing Dr. Siebens for his extraordinary gifts, I understand that the administration has chosen instead to abruptly remove him from the faculty on the basis that he does not fit in with the restructuring plan for the school. This is a tragic loss for Wilson, its students, and its future.

I implore you to act in the best interests of Wilson students and rehire Dr. Siebens so that he can return to his classroom where he belongs. To not do so is a terrible and inexplicable waste of a remarkably scarce and wondrous convergence: a teacher who loves to teach and students who love to learn from him.

Sincerely,

Ray Kurzweil

Chairman and CEO, Kurzweil Technologies, Inc.
