

John Stroh,
Manager, MAD

Dear John,

I am in receipt of your letter dated May 18, 1998 and the draft employee handbook and the proposed policy changes. I am in agreement with you that open communication should lead to resolution of some of the issues brought up at our meeting of March 25 subsequent to my letter of March 12. I am happy to clarify the expected outcome or specific remedy being sought for each one of the items which were told to you verbally on March 25. Also, my members and myself still have some unanswered questions from our original letter. In addition, our meeting of May 12 and the verbiage and tone of your memo to the Board of Trustees dated April 21 have brought up some new concerns.

In regards to the remaining questions from our March 12 letter:

Item #1 - Can you give us an example of when the "open door" policy has been mocked or trivialized by the concerned employees? Merely stating this in your memo seems an attempt to make the employees look petty and their concerns insignificant. We assure you they are not! Also, you may feel the employees' comment regarding reprisal is unwarranted but look to your cover memo to the Board. You state you feel it is "...apparent that a large portion of the concerns raised at the March 25 meeting appeared to be from one person, and that some of these were trivial..." and in the previous paragraph you had named Duane Bridgewater as the representative who provided the additional concerns. Linking these two as you have shows a subtle form of reprisal. You should know that reprisals are not always blatant and cannot always be proven but the perception the employees have is that this occurs at the District and as the Manager we feel it is your duty to correct this.

Item #2 - While you may not feel this is the personnel style of either yourself or the assistant manager it is the perception of the employees.

Item #4 - I would like to remind you I have been the SJPEA representative for well over a year now and I have never had the MCT IV position clarified to me. I also verified with the previous Representative, Marcia Mooney and her understanding is the position was created when the two districts were combined. However, there has never been clear justifications as to why you maintain the position is not in our group. Therefore, I would like to see, in writing, under what statute you have deemed this position to be exempt. It is not an administrative nor confidential position. He has the same responsibility level as the MCT III and has no commonality of interest with the other positions you have grouped him with.

Item #5 - The employees are looking forward to reviewing what was received from the agencies and the implementation of the safety measures.

Item #6 - My hope is that you have "no comment at this time" because you are working on addressing the problems and seeking satisfactory resolution for both the District and its employees.

Item #7 - Absolutely, the group would like to meet with the Executive Committee as soon as it can be arranged.

The expected outcome or specific remedy being sought for the additional items presented at March 25 meeting:

#1 - "No confidence in top management" We feel the assistant manager should be present for any additional meetings we hold with you and/or the Executive Committee. In this way he will be present and hear first hand what is stated and therefore will be unable to assert he was told something different at a later date. In the future employees will need to ask for clarification of the intent of what is told to them by you or the assistant manager. This should prevent future questions as to what you meant. This way if the intent is later changed it would need to be rephrased to the employees.

#2 - "Written documentation of accounts, manager disregards and makes own interpretation, some employees have to follow exact letter of the law." The MOU language for the shut down period between Christmas and New Year stated it would be for five (5) days and you changed it to four (4) days. We would like the contract implemented the way it was negotiated.

#3 - "Disrespect for field operations, work never appreciated." This should be easy to rectify by showing some recognition for jobs well done.

#4 - "Management influence must remain out of employee of the quarter." Assistant manager has refused to accept a nominee for employee of quarter in the past. This simply should not happen.

#5 - "Opportunity for work during Christmas holiday denied for full-time employees, but given to temp employee (Angie Mullens). Except for one day offered for full-time employees to clean toilets." If there is work available during the shut down period it should first be offered to full-time employees before outside, part-time help is hired.

#6 - "One's time of service being commented about, the cost to the District, i.e. vacation accrual, longevity and Overtime." This seems to always be brought up at negotiations when we are told the Board feels the employees are already overpaid and receive too many holidays. Just because someone says something does not make it so. There have been comments from the assistant manager that if a person is that old then maybe they should

retire. This again shows a lack of recognition of the quality of employees you have working for the District.

#7 - "Complaints about supervisors and employees from unknown sources brought up months and years after the fact. When complaints do come in about employees, they are usually presumed guilty before they can prove otherwise." Once an issue has been dealt with that should be the end of it. If someone has a legitimate complaint, they should be willing to come forward in an honest manner. The recent memo to the employees regarding drug use which was initiated after an anonymous phone call was an overreaction. You stated the attorney told you to have every employee be brought in and tested. You have to have more than this to go on.

#8 - "Technicians doing college accredited duties while ones zone work becomes low priority" We discussed the need for recognition that even if an employee volunteers to help on special projects their duties need to be performed in a timely manner. Their co-workers should not be expected to take up the slack.

Most of the remaining additional items from the March 25 meeting dealt mainly with negotiations. We will again try to address these at the appropriate time.

Items requested and easily rectified included; 1) Posting the Board agenda in the break room prior to the meeting so employees who may be interested in attending a session would be able to make an educated decision based on the agenda. 2) Posting the Board minutes in the break room after the meetings. 3) Posting the annual budget for employees to see. 4) Posting of monthly expenditures, in this way employees may be able to give good suggestions regarding ways to save money.

Finally, we truly need the position currently performing road side spraying to be defined. Is this or isn't this an assignment. If yes, then it needs to be open for bidding just like the open zones are. If not, then we need a clearer reason you don't feel it is. It certainly looks like an assignment.

I hope this clarifies our positions and keeps us moving in the right direction to resolving the concerns of the employees. Please contact me so we may set the meeting between the membership and the Executive Committee.

Sincerely,