



YAKIMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

YAKIMA SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 7

104 N. FOURTH AVENUE
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON 98902-2636
(509) 573-7000

April 14, 2014

John Epperson

Yakima, Washington 98902

Re: Two Day Suspension without Pay

Dear Mr. Epperson:

The purpose of this letter is to issue you discipline in the form of a two-day suspension without pay for supervision concerns and to give you an opportunity to correct your actions going forward.

Scott Izutsu and Shirley Jenkins met with you on April 9, 2014, regarding "inappropriate touching" that a student was engaged in while under your supervision on your bus route. Your Teamsters Union Representative, Rick Salinas, was also in attendance. They communicated to you that on March 28, 2014, a parent reported to both Adams Elementary and the Special Education Services Department that he observed that his daughter's face had red scratches after she returned home from school on March 27. Mrs. Jenkins and Mr. Izutsu then proceeded to review numerous video tapes from your bus route. The tapes reviewed covered the p.m. portion of your route during the period of February 21, 2014 to March 27, 2014.

During the meeting your conduct as shown on the tapes was discussed and reviewed. As agreed by both parties, although included, not all of the tape footage used as the basis of this discipline was reviewed due to the emotional impact you were experiencing. Based on your responses to questioning and video clips presented at the meeting, the District has determined that you were remiss in your duties as follows:

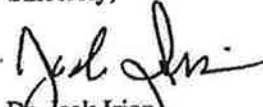
1. Failure to recognize signs that inappropriate touching was occurring:
 - a. Placing a 5th grade male student with a 2nd grade female student in the same seat;
 - b. Failing to observe the 5th grade male student legs were dangling backwards in the aisle;
 - c. Failing to notice the 5th grade student was unusually quiet for extended periods of time;
 - d. Failing to notice the 5th grade student was frequently not visible because he was crouching behind the seatback;
 - e. Recognizing the 5th grade student's behavior changed when the student was faced with the possibility he could not sit with the 2nd grade student;
 - f. Failing to recognize surrounding student behavior that indicated some type of inappropriate activity was occurring on the bus;
2. Failure to utilize the interior mirror to scan student activity in accordance with prescribed training techniques and redirect any behavior of concern.
3. Engaging in excessive dialogue with the paraprofessionals assigned to ride your route, thereby undermining your ability to supervise.
4. Failure to follow student seating protocol.

5. Failure to recognize a student in a distressed state of mind.
6. Failure to investigate "crying" on the bus.
7. Failure to investigate after "calling out" the 5th grade student when you suspected he was up to something.
8. Failure to follow-up on a suspected injury to a student while being transported (i.e. potential scratches on a student).

As you are aware, the primary responsibility of our school bus drivers is to transport our students safely to and from school. This includes diligent supervision of students to ensure their health and welfare is protected. The District will not tolerate any further lapse in supervision. Any further lapse or failure to abide by the District's policies and procedures regarding transportation of special needs students, or further employment issues, will be met with further, more serious disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Because of the serious nature of the incidents that occurred on your bus route, I find it necessary to suspend you without pay for a period of two (2) days. Your unpaid suspension will be served on Tuesday, April 15, 2014, and Wednesday, April 16, 2014.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jack Irion
Deputy Superintendent

c: Scott Izutsu, Associate Superintendent for Business Services
Jill Kelleher, Director of Human Resources
Shirley Jenkins, Director of Transportation Services
Rick Salinas, Teamsters Business Representative