



Jose A. Gonzales
Attorney at Law

12222 A Woodside Ave. # 182
Lakeside, CA. 92040

Phone: 619-561-4339
jgonzaleslaw@hotmail.com

April 19, 2012

Lawrence Schoenke
General Counsel
San Diego Unified School District
4100 Normal Street, Rm. 2148
San Diego, California 92103

Re: Dr. Brenda Campbell

Dear Mr. Schoenke:

██████████ the Administrative Assistant to Dr. Brenda Campbell, raised the issue of whether Campbell's interactions with her (Campbell's) office personnel has been unprofessional. In response to these concerns, I was asked to interview District central office employees who may have personal knowledge as to ██████████ office duties and as to how Campbell interacts with her staff.

The material facts provided by the persons interviewed are summarized below.

██████████

██████████ has known ██████████ since 2006 when she ██████████ started working for the District. ██████████ was an administrative assistant for the then Communications Interim Director, ██████████. As there were changes in the person holding the Director position, ██████████ continued to be that person's administrative assistant. When ██████████ started with the District, there was also an administrative aide in their office. At some point ██████████ was assigned as the administrative assistant for ██████████, ██████████ who was in charge of the district's ██████████ Office.

██████████ duties in the Communications office and with ██████████ included helping answer phones, greeting visitors to the office, helping prepare Board of Education sponsored resolutions, helping review administrative policies and circulars before they were posted, handling the mail for the director ██████████, handling travel authorizations and expenses for the director, and managing the director's calendar. ██████████ would also help ██████████ prepare reports.

The office administrative aide handled the office time keeping tasks, assisting with preparation of the office budget and budget reports, handling procurements paperwork, answered phones, and also attended to walk in traffic. The workload in the [REDACTED] offices could be busy, with many phone calls and a large volume of walk in traffic. It was frequently necessary for staff, including [REDACTED], to switch between tasks on short notice. Certain tasks are routine and happen all of the time. But, there are also emergencies when something might happen at a school. Everyone would then have to adjust to the immediate issue and stay calm. Their office is an organized office, even in busy times. There are procedures in place for handling different situations. If [REDACTED] had questions on what to do, she could always ask for help. Everyone helps out in the office, no matter what the task is. Different office staff help each other out regardless of what each person's duties are. There is a lot of camaraderie and teamwork in the office. Everyone is very collegial and the work environment is friendly.

[REDACTED] never saw any performance problems or issues with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was a typical executive assistant to a high level executive. She would handle the executive's calendar, travel, mail, phone calls and messages etc. [REDACTED] did not do budget reports, time sheets, or the more skilled work with computers, such as spread sheets, power point presentations etc. [REDACTED] was not strong on computer skills, or doing power point presentations, or performing the more independent tasks. She was more of a traditional executive secretary.

[REDACTED] is currently an administrative assistant II [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has worked for the district for 23 years. She is also a volunteer mounted patrol officer for the Chula Vista Police Department. [REDACTED] has worked for [REDACTED] off and on for about four years. Before that she worked for [REDACTED]; before that for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at the same time; before that for [REDACTED]; and before that for [REDACTED]. She has been an administrative assistant II in all of these positions. She worked for these different administrators as a result of numerous district central office reorganizations. She has never worked for Brenda Campbell.

About a year ago [REDACTED] was assigned to work for Campbell. Campbell's office and Wilson's office are side by side. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] desks are also side by side and a few feet across from Campbell's and Wilson's office doors. [REDACTED] is near [REDACTED], Campbell and Wilson, and can see and hear what happens between Campbell and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] did not know [REDACTED] before [REDACTED] was assigned to Campbell.

Campbell has no "people skills." Campbell would speak to ██████ as though she was an idiot. Campbell would tell ██████ "You don't know what you're doing. You don't belong in this job." It was very hard on ██████ to see how ██████ was treated by Campbell. ██████ was losing weight. Campbell would talk to ██████ as though ██████ were a dog. Campbell was always really rude and pushy with ██████. Nothing ██████ ever did was good enough. Campbell's body language and her tone of voice with ██████ was "rude and demeaning." Campbell would chastise ██████ in front of coworkers, principals and other staff. Campbell also spoke to ██████ in the same way on one occasion. The first day of ██████ assignment with Campbell, ██████ was not there. ██████ had moved a file cabinet that had been in the way. Campbell, unhappy with the cabinet's location, yelled at ██████. ██████ stated Campbell spoke to her as though she (██████) was an imbecile and as though she was "dirt." ██████ described Campbell as "a rude unhappy lady" and as "such an unhappy lady."

Campbell would constantly call ██████ into her [Campbell's] office. ██████ had never done budgets or term purchase orders. ██████ was trying to learn how to do this, but never had the time to finish her training on these subjects because Campbell constantly kept giving her things to do.

██████ regular work consisted of contacting principals, copying, preparing materials for professional development days, making conference arrangements, making travel arrangements, handling the phone bills, answering phones, sorting mail, keeping calendars, and typing. ██████ workload was about three times bigger than ██████ workload. ██████ was so overworked that she was never getting her breaks or lunch. Campbell would give ██████ a project. Fifteen minutes later Campbell would give ██████ something different to do and would tell ██████ to do the new thing immediately. ██████ would have to put the project she had just started aside to work on the new project she had just been given. ██████ constantly had to keep putting projects aside. The projects ██████ put aside kept piling up. As a result of all the special projects ██████ did not have time to do her regular work.

All of Campbell's professional development preparation was done at the last minute. Professional development work consists of preparing informational materials to be given to school principals at meetings. There are usually about 30 principals so you need about 30 information packets to hand out at the meetings. The materials have to be prepared by Campbell. Then they have to be copied and assembled. If the administrative assistant gets these materials at the last minute, the administrative assistant has to stay late to finish them in time for the next day. Campbell would give these materials to ██████ at the last minute.

██████████ states ██████████ is the nicest, hardest working person. ██████████ tried to do everything she could to help Campbell, but it was never enough. ██████████ stated that her ██████████, Area Superintendent ██████████ is not rude. ██████████ is organized and does not demean ██████████. Unlike Campbell and ██████████ relationship, ██████████ and ██████████ relationship is one of coworkers.

██████████ believes that all the staff who have transferred away from Campbell are not the problem, and that Campbell is the problem. ██████████ questions why Campbell is allowed to do the things she does.

██████████

██████████ is an Administrative Assistant II with ██████████. She has been in this position since July, 2011. Before this, she was assigned to ██████████ as an Administrative Assistant II. She was with ██████████ from January 2011 to July 2011. Before that she worked for ██████████ Campbell. She worked for Campbell from July 2010 to January 2011. While in Campbell's office, Shirley Wilson was ██████████ immediate supervisor. ██████████ transferred out of Campbell's office.

Campbell would hold weekly staff meetings. The staff included two ██████████ and ██████████. Campbell would go over what she wanted done during these meetings. Every meeting with Campbell was disorganized. ██████████ described Campbell's management as "It was so disorganized." The staff would take notes as to what Campbell assigned so they could check their notes against what Campbell would later tell them to do. When they turned their work in, Campbell would say it was not what she had asked for. Campbell would not explain why their work was not what she had asked for. This happened most of the time because Campbell's directions were not clear. Staff would compare the notes they had taken at the meeting when Campbell assigned the work. Their notes showed that they had turned in what Campbell had asked for.

One example of the projects that were assigned to her was preparing for school principal professional development days. These development days happened once a month. Principals would meet with Campbell to go over current issues. ██████████ had to put together materials for these days. This would take days to prepare. ██████████ would check with Wilson to make sure ██████████ was doing what she was supposed to be doing. ██████████ would give Campbell electronic and paper copies of the presentation materials days in advance of the presentations for her review and comment. Campbell would not respond to these requests for review. Campbell would find fault in everything at the last minute before the materials were to be used. The night before the development day Campbell would change everything, requiring ██████████ to stay late at work. Campbell would ask for new data within the hour, but

that data took days to gather. The next morning, [REDACTED] would have to deliver the conference materials to the presentation sites. Campbell would be at the presentation sites and would say that the materials were all wrong and would tell [REDACTED] to go back to the Education Center to redo them. These last minute changes were "chaotic". This chaos could have been avoided if Campbell had reviewed the presentation materials earlier.

Other tasks [REDACTED] had were typing notes from meetings, prepare Campbell's materials for her meetings, perform necessary tasks when filling principal vacancies, answer phones, sort mail, schedule meetings, process travel documents, help prepare the office budget, help make payments to vendors. [REDACTED] would try to have Campbell tell her how much money should be placed in the various office accounts, as required by the District's finance department. Campbell never provided direction as to how much money should go in the various office accounts. [REDACTED] would make payments out of the discretionary fund, instead.

[REDACTED] workload was overbearing. Campbell would give her many projects. She could not take breaks because she was always trying to keep up with the projects Campbell assigned to her. Campbell seemed to like chaos. Everyday Campbell would ask [REDACTED] do new projects. It would be hard for [REDACTED] to do her regular work because of the daily new projects.

[REDACTED] described Campbell's attitude as follows: Campbell would demean her, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Campbell favors people she likes; and Campbell is a bully. However, [REDACTED] has never heard Campbell yell or be profane.

Unlike Campbell, [REDACTED] current supervisor, [REDACTED] is organized and plans ahead. He gives [REDACTED] projects, but does so in advance and with timelines. Every now and then there are emergencies and she has to work late. But with Campbell, every single day was an emergency.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] previously worked as a [REDACTED] for Campbell. His duties principally consisted of working with parents to listen to their complaints or issues, and to help resolve those matters. He was also asked to help prepare materials for Campbell's presentations.

Campbell has a tendency to humiliate people publicly. He was humiliated by Campbell at a staff meeting. His area school principals asked him to attend the "principals coffee meetings." These are meetings between a school principal and parents. These are regular meetings where principals meet informally with parents to listen to parent concerns and issues. Some principals wanted [REDACTED]

to attend their meetings so he could be a resource person for them at the meetings. [REDACTED] brought this request up at a staff meeting to see if Campbell would approve it. In front of all the other staff Campbell said "You don't have time to be socializing with the principals." This was said in a very demeaning and condescending way, without giving him a chance to explain why the school principals had asked him to be at their meetings.

On another occasion Campbell humiliated [REDACTED] in the office in front of some parents. [REDACTED] was speaking to about five Latino parents that were in the office. Campbell thought that [REDACTED] should not have been speaking to the parents. In front of the parents Campbell said to [REDACTED] "You are supposed to do what I tell you to do and nothing else." Campbell was waving her finger at him when she said this. [REDACTED] states the parents looked at him in shock. [REDACTED] states Campbell's behavior was rude, condescending and caused him embarrassment.

On yet another occasion when Campbell found out [REDACTED] had applied for a position in another office, Campbell yelled at [REDACTED] in front of other staff, saying "Why didn't you tell me you were applying for another position?" [REDACTED] tried to intercede on [REDACTED] behalf. Campbell said "I don't want to hear it from you. I want to hear it from him. You're [REDACTED] supposed to tell me these things." Campbell was waving her finger at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] described Campbell as "overbearing, demeaning and condescending" on this occasion.

Campbell's management style was "chaotic." Whenever there were professional development days, Campbell would always find something wrong with what the staff did. Campbell had asked him to help organize a community meeting. Campbell wanted to have different parent groups at that meeting. He set up tables for parents to sit at, organized and numbered by the various groups. When he arrived at the meeting location there were several hundred people there. Then, right there on the spot Campbell changed the table arrangements. She had previously approved the arrangement he had set up, then changed it at the last minute.

Campbell would correct staff publicly in a negative, condescending way. Working with Campbell was very stressful. He never knew how Campbell was going to react. Just going to work would be stressful because every day he knew he would have to deal with Campbell.

[REDACTED] now works for [REDACTED], [REDACTED], for whom he also worked for a short period, were completely different from Campbell. Both of them are very fair. [REDACTED] has retired. [REDACTED] are both fair, level headed, no nonsense, professional people 100% of the time. They made him

feel comfortable discussing work issues with them. [REDACTED] never admonishes anyone in public. [REDACTED] are both very organized. [REDACTED] is "precision" organized, while [REDACTED] is a little more relaxed. But both are by far more organized than Campbell. Campbell is not even in the same field with them. They are both very approachable, but are still in charge. They always provide praise directly to staff, or they give staff credit for work the office does.

All persons that have worked for Campbell have left her office. His question is: "Why doesn't the school district administration do something about this?"

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. She has been there since July 1, 2011. Before that she had the same position, but with Brenda Campbell, from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. [REDACTED] was assigned to Campbell as a result of a school district central office reorganization.

At the beginning of the 2010-11 school year Campbell was very authoritarian. It was either Campbell's way, or no way at all. Campbell was very cut and dried at staff meetings. Campbell would come into the meetings, give orders, then leave. She and the other office staff kept detailed notes of the meetings because Campbell would give directions, then after the work had been done according to the directions Campbell had given Campbell would say that was not what she had ordered. This made it difficult to work with Campbell.

Campbell was working on converting an elementary school into a middle school. Campbell had to write a report for this project to present to the Board of Education. Campbell gave this assignment to her [REDACTED], told Campbell she had never prepared board reports. Nevertheless, [REDACTED] did some research on preparing board reports. She told Campbell she was not sure she knew what she was doing. [REDACTED] prepared a very rough draft of a board report that she e mailed to Campbell. [REDACTED] gave Campbell the draft as an example of a previous board report of a school that had been converted to a middle school. Later [REDACTED] found out that Campbell had presented this draft board report to other administrators without finalizing it. When [REDACTED] returned to work in December 2010, after having taken a leave, Campbell said that things did not go well with her board report presentation and that this was [REDACTED] fault. [REDACTED] explained she had given Campbell examples of past board reports and a draft report so that Campbell could prepare the final report. She had told Campbell that she (Campbell) had to finalize the report. After this, it was all downhill for [REDACTED]. Campbell was always keeping an eye on her, micromanaging everything [REDACTED].

When [REDACTED] returned to work in February 2011 after a car accident everything had changed. [REDACTED] was treated as though she were new to the district. Campbell became non verbal towards [REDACTED] from this point on. [REDACTED] workload tripled. Around May 2011 [REDACTED] felt that Campbell was not giving her a "hard time" any longer. [REDACTED] was given a little more freedom with handling parent complaints. She and Campbell finished the year fine. Still, eleven months of stress was too much for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] thinks Campbell is a good person, but Campbell has a difficult time with how she treats people. Campbell does not have "people skills." [REDACTED] transferred out of Campbell's office at the end of the 2010-11 school year.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is on workers compensation leave from her assignment as administrative assistant to Campbell. The purpose and scope of the interview was described by me to [REDACTED] when I first telephoned her. [REDACTED] stated she would first have to check with someone before she could decide whether or not to be interviewed.

After this one and only direct conversation, various phone messages were exchanged between [REDACTED] and me, but we were never able to speak directly to each other. My impression is that [REDACTED] was reluctant to be interviewed. For this reason, I did not pursue the matter further.

Conclusion

The consensus description of Campbell's management skills is that she fails to adequately plan for projects. As a result of this lack of adequate planning, Campbell is disorganized and unprepared in her work. This lack of preparedness causes the imposition of unnecessary last minute workloads on staff, creating stress and a chaotic work environment. Campbell's planning and organizational skills are described as inferior to those of other [REDACTED] for whom the interviewees have also worked.

Campbell's personal traits, too, were severely criticized. Campbell's demeanor was uniformly characterized as rude, condescending and overbearing towards her staff. [REDACTED] is the only interviewee who described Campbell as a "good person." However, [REDACTED] nevertheless describes Campbell as someone who does not have "people skills."

Although [REDACTED] was not interviewed, [REDACTED] provided detailed information as to the interaction between [REDACTED] and Campbell. [REDACTED] assessment of Campbell's management skills and demeanor is consistent with that of others

interviewed who had worked for Campbell. ██████ account of Campbell's conduct is telling because ██████ is an impartial observer. ██████ did not know ██████ until ██████ was assigned a work space next to hers. ██████ also has never worked for Campbell. ██████ generally gave the impression to the undersigned as someone genuinely concerned for ██████ health, and as someone who had the best interests of the District in mind.

Sincerely,

Jose A. Gonzales

JAG:jg
