



Bentonville Public Schools

500 Tiger Blvd.
Bentonville, Arkansas 72712

Memorandum

To: Lauren West
From: Dr. Gary Compton, Superintendent
Date: May 19, 2011
Subject: Termination of Employment Contract

Hand Delivered

Dear Lauren:

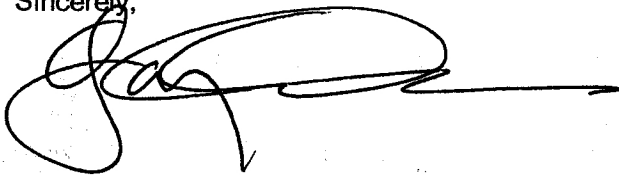
This letter is to notify you that you are immediately suspended from your duties as Athletic Director and that I plan to recommend to the School Board termination of your employment contract with the Bentonville School District. The reasons for this are:

1. Your management with regard to training programs conducted at the TAC - We have discussed the suspicions of District personnel that one or more of the District employees is running a training business out of the TAC. After our discussion, you sent out documents which show you do not have a good understanding of the District policy on use of District facilities, specifically the TAC, with regard to which you are in a key position for enforcement. This policy has been in effect since October, 2009. That is when it was communicated by you to the coaches that the way of operating training programs in place at that time was being changed. The District's financial records reflect use of the facility outside of our of District programs to be minor, but it clearly is not. There are camps, clinics, and other training programs going on constantly at the TAC, for which the athletes are being charged. Neither the revenues generated by such programs or the employee expense associated with such programs is reflected to the extent they should be in the District's financial records. You were responsible for enforcing the District's policies in this area and it is clear that you have failed to do so. An email from you dated April 12, 2011 shows you knew that Dustin Coon was being paid for his training sessions outside of his District pay.
2. Your having failed to report your own absence appropriately and your having approved the time sheet of your husband which failed to reflect his absences correctly with regard to your December, 2008 trip to a conference in San Diego - District records show that both you and Jim attended the NIAAA athletic director's conference in San Diego, having reported your absences beginning on December 12, 2008. The conference began that day and ended on the 16th (except for a NIAAA Board meeting on the 17th, which was scheduled to end mid-morning that day). Your time records show you to be gone only December 12th. Jim's time record, which you approved, shows that he was gone from December 12th through December 18th for the conference, but was at work on December 11th, as well as on December 19th, the last day of school before Christmas break. The records you and Jim turned in with your reporting of expenses for the conference reflect both of you having flown out on December 11th at 2:00 p.m. and not returning until December 26th. Further, your expense reporting related to the trip reflects the District paying for your hotel room on the night of the 17th as well as your rental car charges through the 18th. Additionally, I must note that approving a trainer's attendance to the Athletic Director's conference as professional development is suspect to me as well, and in my view, you failed in your responsibility to properly manage the situation of having your husband as an employee under your supervision by approving this as professional development.

3. Your having improperly approved the absence of a trainer as "comp time" - Immediately before the December, 2010 Christmas Break, you allowed one of the District's athletic trainers to be absent, without requiring the absence to be appropriately reported. You indicated to us that you considered the absence to be "comp time." As an Administrator in the District, you should have known that you were not authorized to grant "comp time." Additionally, the employee involved, who is an exempt employee, is not eligible for "comp time." Lastly, your reasoning for granting her "comp time" does not make sense. You indicated the reason for granting the "comp time" was that she had been required to work a lot of nights and weekends. That is just the nature of the job for which trainers are hired, and her carrying out her normal job duties should not have resulted in you granting her any time off of this nature.
4. Your overall management of the athletic program – I am dissatisfied with your progress in leading this important program of our District and have concluded it is time to move in a new direction. In addition to the regular complaints from patrons, which have at times in the past led me to counsel you in writing, it is my understanding that the morale of the personnel from the Athletic Department is deteriorating. You have not exhibited the administrative control of the Department I would expect from someone with your tenure, which in part is reflected above.

Under the Public School Employee Fair Hearing Act, you have twenty-five (25) calendar days from your receipt of this letter to request a hearing on this recommendation before the Board of Education. In order to do so, you must make a written request for a hearing to the Superintendent. Upon a request, a hearing will be set and conducted in accordance with the Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Compton", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Gary Compton, Superintendent

PC: Steve Potts, Executive Director of Human Resources
George Spence, Attorney
Personnel File