



SANTA CLARA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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STEVE STAVIS
SUPERINTENDENT

Angie M. Cardoza, Foreperson 2009-2010 Civil Grand Jury
Superior Court Building
191 North First Street
San Jose, California 95113

FILED

AUG 24 2010

DAVID H. YAMASAKI
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk,
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara
BY D. ALDYCKI

August 3, 2010

Re: Grand Jury Report Dated June 24, 2010: Looking at Policies Our Schools Use to find and Place Employees

Dear Angie M. Cardoza and Members of the Civil Grand Jury:

The Santa Clara Unified School District has existed, in part and as a whole, since 1846. Generations of families have studied and worked in its schools, and schools named after Founding Fathers and Mothers have seen their heirs serve as employees at their namesakes. As such, the strong belief of Santa Clarans meshes with the Grand Jury's assertion, "that the employment of relatives is not necessarily a negative, as relatives of a current employee may be the best candidate."

Agreement exists with Grand Jury recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7. Specifically, the collective bargaining process is an appropriate arena in which to discuss competency as the determinant factor in the job candidate selection process. To avoid the appearance of bias or favoritism in the recruitment and assignment process, disclosure of the hiring and assignment of known relatives of managers should be made to the Board. The direct supervision of spouses and immediate relatives is not appropriate, and the Superintendent's overriding the placement of an employee under a relative's supervision should be reviewed by the Board. Finally, reasonable measures should be taken to identify familial relationships during the hiring process.

Providing an opportunity for teaching candidates to demonstrate their teaching skills, recommendation #2, is, on face value, a worthwhile provision. Strict implementation is not always possible, sometimes impractical and not routinely necessary. The recommendation is also somewhat weak in that, "providing an opportunity," is vague and does not mandate its occurrence. Is observation of a student-teacher by a master teacher sufficient? Is observation by a college supervisor sufficient?

A policy on identifying familial relationships and tracking them, recommendation #6, has no legal mandate, and may serve to discriminate against very valuable candidates.

Sincerely,

Steve Stavis
Superintendent


Andrew Ratermann
Board President

"The mission of Santa Clara Unified School District is to prepare students of all ages and abilities to succeed in an ever-changing world."

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