



AFL-CIO

## California School Employees Association

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April 23, 2018

Dr. Richard Newman  
Superintendent  
Alpine Union School District  
2001 Tavern Road  
Alpine CA, 91901

Re: Safety Concerns Regarding Bus routes and Transportation agreement between  
GUHSD and AUSD.

Dear Dr. Newman:

CSEA has stated safety concerns with regards to the transportation agreement between Grossmont High School Union District (GHUSD) and Alpine Union School District (AUSD). These are issues that have been reoccurring since the implementation of the transportation contract on April 10, 2018. At the bargaining table on April 12, 2018, CSEA Chapter President, Holly Hernandez, reported to you her concern that GUHSD would not be able to operate safely with only four routes in Alpine due to the volume of work available, number of students, and the geography in Alpine. We gave specific reports of stops that were unsafe and stops where students would need to cross busy rural roads.

Alpine transportation continued to try to operate under the bus route restrictions imposed on Alpine by your contractor GHUSD. This attempt was a complete failure. After days of attempting to operate with only four bus routes (reduced from 7), the following occurred:

- Very late or very early bus pick up times; the new routes and schedules caused buses to get to the bus stops in the mornings very early because of last minute route changes causing children to miss their bus.
- Parents were not being properly notified of route and time changes.
- There continued to be incorrect student rosters, which is a safety issue.
- Alpine drivers have no way of knowing who should be on the buses at any one time; there is no way for drivers to know if someone was left behind.
- There were Kindergartners that were having their bus time extended on the bus to almost two hours. This all caused for very worried and frustrated students, parents, and staff.

When morning stop times are changed to earlier pick up times, and families are not notified, this leads to the potential for children to be standing at stops waiting for the usual bus pick up time. Both parents and children are completely unaware that their bus has already stopped and left, and therefore they do not have transportation to their Alpine school for that morning. This is a very serious safety concern. This has happened time and time again after CSEA reported this issue to the District at the bargaining table.

If parents are not notified then they are unaware that they must either get their children

to the bus stop earlier to make their new pick up time, or they must plan to get their children to school later. Late buses have caused students to miss breakfast and sometimes children must eat their breakfast in the classroom affecting the children's learning. Children were left behind alone at their designated bus stop, waiting for a bus that never arrived.

Parents work schedules and students after-school activities have also been greatly affected by the recent change from AUSD to GHUSD transportation. When CSEA brought these concerns to your attention at the bargaining table, we expected a prompt response given the concern for children's safety. CSEA further proposed that a couple of Alpine buses be staged in Alpine for multiple reasons, including the possible need for evacuation of school sites. CSEA has a very serious safety concern when AUSD wants to stage and maintain all the buses at the GHUSD bus yard, that is eighteen miles away and can be subject to Interstate-8 road closures and other traffic delays. In an emergency, AUSD would be at the mercy of GHUSD sending buses to Alpine. We strongly believe this is unsafe. CSEA's proposal and feedback should be given good faith consideration.

Furthermore, on the afternoon of Friday, April 13, 2018, we were informed that GUHSD finally agreed to add a fifth bus route in a sign of better judgement. The new routes went into effect on Monday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, however route and time changes are still occurring daily. Elementary afternoon bus routes are also not working safely and effectively and continue with problems. GHUSD buses have also caused delays over the past two weeks. Buses break down regardless of where buses are housed, as is evident by the breakdown of GUHSD buses during these last ten days. We proposed to maintain a few buses in Alpine for safety and a working spare bus in Alpine for use when breakdowns occur, and expect this to be given thoughtful consideration in the name of common sense and children safety.

Lastly, AUSD currently has a pool of transportation experts that are not being utilized. When AUSD drivers are reporting to you and GHUSD that a stop or a condition exists that is not safe, they should not be ignored EVER. If safety isn't a big enough reason for you, perhaps considering that this situation is influencing students not getting to school at all in some cases, which can cause an ADA funding loss to the District, or can infuriate enough parents to have them move their children to other schools. Also causing a drop in ADA funding.

These are all scenarios that we see happening, which in turn will affect the AUSD funding, and precipitate further cuts. CSEA should in no way be held responsible by a loss of AUSD funding that could have been prevented. Your lack of funds due to lack of planning and poor service to parents, should not be passed on to the Alpine community in the form of future service reductions.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at [dortiz@csea.com](mailto:dortiz@csea.com) or call 858-202-2626.

Sincerely,  
California School Employees Association



Dan Ortiz  
Labor Relations Representative

C: Chapter President; Regional Representative; Area Director; Field Director; File