

From: Pedro Almeida palmeida@d49.org
Subject: COO Resignation

SLT Teammates,

This email is to advise you that I submitted my notice of resignation from District 49 and the role of Chief Operations Officer, effective July 27, 2022.

I must express my deep appreciation and honor of having had the opportunity to work alongside every single one of you: a truly exceptional team of leaders at all levels in the district. I wish to single out two particular teams, however. The consistently stellar example of leadership shown by Peter and Brett while providing executive leadership in the face of a global pandemic, unprecedented challenges for academic growth, social justice movements, shameful public and Board unwarranted criticism and mistrust, personnel shortages, fiscal limitations and a myriad of other challenges cannot be overstated. I have had the unique opportunity to work with and observe gifted leaders at the highest levels of our government and military, and Peter and Brett's leadership is among the best I have ever seen... period.

Second, the abilities and skills of the outstanding team of Operations Directors also cannot be overstated. They make the mission happen every single day and never fail to create a positive work environment for their teams in spite of severe personnel shortages, the tumult of a pandemic response, and the wide array of new challenges that hit them constantly in their respective lanes. These leaders, and the hundreds of Operations teammates behind the scenes who keep the district safe and operational, deserve more recognition than I can possibly provide here. We owe them all a debt of gratitude for their unselfish service.

Despite the pleasure and honor of working alongside you, these and other leaders and teams, I determined I must depart for two mutually reinforcing reasons related to the current Board of Education. First, I have watched over the last 14 months as the Board of Education has individually and collectively demonstrated support for (or, at a minimum, non-objection to) a range of positions that are in direct contradiction with my own values: generally focused on the broad topic of tolerance and inclusion. This trend towards

generally, respect for the broad scope of tolerance and inclusion. The Board's intolerance runs directly counter to my personal values and reveals a basic incompatibility for my continued service in D49 under the current Board leadership.

Second, the challenges of this basic incompatibility are exacerbated by the Board's lack of disciplined adherence to process and procedures, the Board's lack of trust in executive leadership, the Board's lack of decorum and professionalism, and my overall sense of Board "management by emergency or by subject-matter-preference" methodology. In my opinion, a large number of examples reveal to me that the Board's leadership has often been emotionally reactive as opposed to strategic, knee jerk as opposed to deliberate, responsive to specific interest groups as opposed to weighing all facts fairly, and undermining trust in the executive leadership of the district. From my perspective, there has been a lack of change in a positive direction by this Board over the last six months. The continued movement in the direction listed above brought me to the conclusion that I cannot, in good faith, remain an employee of this body as it is currently operating.

I depart from the district deeply appreciative of the opportunity to work with all of you and to grow in my position, as I have learned from all levels of education and support staff over the last five years (to include previous Board directors). I am confident in the unfailingly dedicated performance of the Operations Office personnel, and I will always remain deeply proud to have worked with teammates of their caliber. In coordination with the Business and Education Offices, they have built and maintained schools, increased security readiness, improved the district's technological backbone, set the conditions for long term growth in transportation, fed thousands of hungry families during a pandemic, emplaced processes for making informed strategic decisions, grown capacity in all departments, and many other achievements. Much remains to be done, and I am completely confident that the Operations leaders and teammates, working with and alongside each of you, will continue to deliver unfailing support to our students and staff through this period of transition and for the years ahead.

With great admiration,

Pedro Almeida
Chief Operations Officer
School District 49

