

December 18, 1974

CC: GINNY, SPENCE
JEAN, SALLY
MASTERSON
12/23

TO: Dr. Ruth Scott
Assistant Hospital Superintendent M.R. Services

FROM: Mr. Joseph C. McKenna *J.C.M.*
Supervisor of Special Education Classes
Intermediate Unit I

SUBJECT: Food on Pine Lodge

On Thursday, December 12, 1974, I was on Pine Lodge discussing another situation with the lodge nurse when an attendant from Pine III came in complaining about the food. She stated at that time that ample food was not available for her unit.

Mrs. Buddemeyer and myself went to the cafeteria area along with the attendant to investigate the problem. On arrival I observed one of our own classes in the dining hall. The students were uncontrollable, jumping up and down, attempting to steal food from others plates, and even running to the disposal window attempting to reach in and retrieve food from the garbage. Mr. Krivacek, the teacher, and his aides were having a terrible time attempting to control the students.

Mr. Krivacek explained to me that he had requested seconds but had been denied in that he was informed there was not enough food available. I questioned him on the size of the original serving and was informed that it was quite sparse.

I then went to the serving line and requested to know what the size of a serving of meat was. I was informed by the girl doing the serving that it was two ounces. I then requested she place a serving on a plate for me. She did this and it proved to be a very small amount of something that looked like corned beef and cabbage. I was then told that they were completely out of vegetables so they could not demonstrate the portion size to me but they could provide a large portion of lettuce. I stated that I had observed some students receiving cut up bologna and why couldn't that be given. The response was only two to three pounds of it had been provided for seconds to Pine II.

At that point I questioned both my teacher and the attendant from Pine III. My teacher informed me that they had been having difficulty all week in obtaining ample food for his students, from Pine II. The attendant from Pine III stated that her unit had lost an average of from six to eleven pounds per individual since being transferred from Spruce to Pine last Nov. 18, 1974.

I then went back to the nursing office and questioned them about this matter. A medical request was produced which was requesting supplemental portions for quite a few residents of Pine III due to extreme weight losses over that period.

A call was then placed by myself to your office in an attempt to involve you immediately into the problem. I was informed that you were not there so I requested to speak to Mr. Hiltner. Upon contacting Mr. Hiltner, I requested him to come to Pine to observe the situation immediately.

Mr. Hiltner and Mr. Levinson arrived on Pine and questioned both nursing and the dietician on duty. Each defended his own position and Mr. Hiltner determined that it was a communications problem which he wanted resolved. I then requested my teachers from Pine II to prepare a list of students they felt needed seconds each day and to give it to the lodge nurse. I then requested the lodge nurse to check that list before submitting it to insure that there were no individual medical problems prohibiting certain individuals from receiving seconds.

I followed up my observation in the Pine Cafeteria with others on Friday December 13, and Monday December 16, 1974. In each of these instances seconds were provided but I feel compelled to make several other observations.

1. It would seem to me that it would be far better to prepare more food than needed and if need be throw it out than to have students who act like they are half starved. This is especially true on a hyperactive lodge such as Pine. A person who is constantly hungry cannot be trained or educated and will elicit these hyperactive behaviors to a far greater degree than when he is well fed and content.

2. I am sure that the meals provided are well balanced for the nutritional needs of the students. However, I would not care to eat the bland unappetizing dishes that I observed on those three days nor would I permit my own child. The serving of corned beef and cabbage I observed on Thursday appeared to be mostly cabbage and I never observed the vegetable. The serving of fish sticks on Friday was probably the best of the three. The serving of group hamburger on Monday was terrible and reminded me of the way we prepare child meat. The macaroni was starchy and cold and stuck together with nothing on it.

Granted there are problems in this and other institutions which will take time to resolve, but I don't feel this should be one of them. This is a problem that should and must be dealt with immediately.

JCM/mre