

July 29, 2019

Tracy Glynn
NB Media Co-op

Dear Ms. Glynn:

RE: Termination of Rod Cumberland

We are writing this letter to you as a result of recent comments made by various political leaders and media stories relating to the termination of Rod Cumberland. While we generally do not comment on personnel issues, because of the rhetoric that has been circulating in the public realm, which contains inaccurate and untruthful information, we have been left with no choice but to comment on this issue in order to clarify the facts relating to this matter.

On June 20, 2019, Mr. Cumberland was terminated, for cause, from his employment with the Maritime College of Forest Technology ("MCFT"). There were eight specific reasons for Mr. Cumberland's termination, which are as follows:

- Preventing students who are enrolled in his classes from attending class because they were late;
- Intentionally adjusting the clock in his classroom ahead by a few minutes to give the illusion that students were late arriving to class;
- Physically removing hats from the heads of students, confiscating said hats and requiring that students apologize to him, in front of the class, in order to regain possession of their hat;
- Making inappropriate and offensive comments in the classroom;
- Undermining the content of the seminar on the Science of Vegetation Management, and actively discouraging students from attending the seminar, despite the fact that the seminar was vetted and approved by the MCFT;
- Engaging in communication and a course of conduct, both at MCFT and in the community at large, that constitutes harassment and has caused embarrassment and damage to reputation of MCFT;

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- Making disparaging remarks, both at MCFT and in the community at large, about its Executive Director, the management of MCFT and its instructors; and
- Failing to recognize, and adhere to the instructions, provided to him by his immediate supervisor, the Academic Chair.

The behavior of Mr. Cumberland was unacceptable. It constituted violations of the Faculty and Staff Policies including, but not limited to, the policies concerning Student Discipline and Workplace Harassment. As highlighted by the recent changes that were made earlier this year to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act – General Regulations*, issues of harassment and bullying in the workplace, and in institutions, is a serious matter for which there are serious consequences.

There are many different forms of harassment, one of which is abuse of authority. Abuse of authority is where an individual improperly uses the power and authority inherent in a position to endanger a person's job/studies, undermine the performance of that job/studies, threaten the person's economic livelihood, or in any way interfere with or influence a person's professional or academic career. It is the exercise of authority in a manner which serves no legitimate work purpose and ought reasonably to be known to be inappropriate.

Mr. Cumberland's position as an instructor of MCFT is one that requires a high level of trust and autonomy. Instructors are in a position of authority over students and have a great deal of autonomy in how they carry out their duties and manage their classroom. Mr. Cumberland abused his authority and his position within MCFT. As an institution, we have a responsibility to protect our students from abuses of authority, and other forms of harassment. This is a responsibility we take very seriously. MCFT is committed to providing a safe, respectful and professional learning environment for all students and staff.

Although we have articulated this on a number of occasions, it bears repeating that Mr. Cumberland was not terminated as a result of his position on glyphosate. In fact, Mr. Cumberland has spoken on the issue of glyphosate throughout the entire tenure of his employment with MCFT and he has never been subject to any discipline because of his position on glyphosate. We are an academic institution that values and encourages open dialogue and discourse.

We also wish to confirm that the Board of Directors of MCFT did not vote on the decision to terminate Mr. Cumberland. MCFT's Board of Directors is not involved in daily operations or personnel issues, such as terminations of staff. Those matters are dealt with by the Executive Director.

While it is true that a Board member, Andrew Fedora, did apply for one of two recently advertised vacancies at the MCFT, Mr. Fedora was not being interviewed for Mr. Cumberland's

former position and, further, has since made the decision to withdraw himself from the competition.

With respect to Gerald Redmond, Mr. Redmond retired from his employment with MCFT in May of 2017. Since that time, he has not been employed by MCFT. He was, for a brief period of time, engaged as independent contractor to provide some training. MCFT no longer requires his services.

Furthermore, Mr. Redmond recently disclosed confidential information belonging to MCFT which he obtained during his employment with MCFT as Executive Director. This is a serious breach of his ongoing confidentiality obligations. The confidential information he disclosed was not contained in his comments to the media.

I trust that this information is helpful to you. However, if you have any additional questions, I would be happy to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Marshall".

Tim Marshall
Executive Director
Maritime College of Forest Technology