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11 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
12 CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

13 ELIEZER WILLIAMS, et al.,) Case No. 312 236
14)
15 Plaintiffs,) Hearing Date: August 25, 2003
16)
17 vs.) Time: 3:30 p.m.
18)
19 STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DELAINE) Department: 16
20 EASTIN, State Superintendent)
21 Of Public Instruction, STATE) Judge: Hon. Peter J. Busch
22 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, STATE)
23 BOARD OF EDUCATION,)
24)
25 Defendants.)
26)
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28)
AND RELATED CROSS-ACTION.)
_____)

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I, Frank Sifuentes, declare as follows:

1. I am the principal of Bunche Middle School in the Compton Unified School District in Compton, California. I have been the principal at Bunche for the past seven years. Prior to that, I was the Assistant Principal at Whaley Middle School in Compton for one year. I also served as Assistant Principal at all three of the comprehensive high schools in Compton Unified. I began my career as a middle school teacher in the district (I was a classroom teacher for three years). I have been an educator since 1985. I hold a teaching credential in Social Science and a Professional Administrative credential. I also have a Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

2. I have extensive knowledge of the students, teachers, and facilities at Bunche Middle School, and am familiar with the curriculum and the educational opportunities that are provided to Bunche students. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this declaration; and if called as a witness I would and could testify competently thereto.

3. I am familiar with the Bunche Middle School's Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration ("CSR D") Action Plan, which was completed in early 2001. In fact, I was personally involved with completing the Action Plan in conjunction with Compton Unified School District staff and as part of our application to participate in the CSR D program. Bunche was selected to be CSR D school beginning in the 2001-2002 school

1 year. At that time, Bunche was already participating in the
2 Immediate Intervention/ Underperforming Schools Program
3 ("II/USP"). Bunche became an II/USP school beginning in the
4 2000-2001 school year.

5
6 4. As part of both reform plans, Bunche has focused
7 considerable effort and resources on aligning curriculum and
8 instruction to state standards. I believe that in the three
9 years that Bunche has participated in the II/USP program and in
10 the two years since it has participated in the Comprehensive
11 School Reform Program, we have achieved many of the goals that we
12 set out to meet.

13
14 5. I am aware that the plaintiffs in this case have
15 cited page 7 of Bunche's CSRD Action Plan, which they identified
16 as DOE 45153, in a submission to this court. Page DOE 45153
17 contains the statements that "Reading texts and related materials
18 are not aligned to the California English-Language Arts (ELA)
19 content standards," and that "Language texts and related
20 materials are not aligned to the California English-Language Arts
21 (ELA) content standards." In my opinion, the current district-
22 adopted reading and language arts textbooks are not aligned with
23 state standards. Nevertheless, students at Bunche have access to
24 other standards-aligned instructional materials in language arts.
25 Through the Comprehensive School Reform program, we have
26 developed standards-aligned curriculum maps for teachers to use
27 to drive instruction. We are also currently piloting a new
28 standards-aligned textbook series for reading and language arts

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1 published by Holt Reinhardt. We are currently using this book as
2 a supplemental learning tool as adoption of the book has not yet
3 been board approved. In addition, there are a variety of other
4 standards-aligned supplemental materials in language arts
5 available to Bunche students.

6
7 6. We also provide enough textbooks so that every
8 student at Bunche has access to his or her own copy of the most
9 recently adopted textbook in each core area; at the same time, we
10 maintain a class set for classroom instruction.

11
12 7. In my opinion, the education of students at Bunche
13 does not suffer because of any lack of standards-aligned
14 textbooks in Reading or Language Arts. Textbooks do not drive
15 instruction, curriculum and standards do. Textbooks are merely a
16 tool, like technology or other tools, to get standards and
17 curriculum across to students. As a result of the CSRD reform
18 program, my staff is getting standards and curriculum across to
19 students in a variety of effective ways. Developing standards-
20 based curriculum maps was a key part of this process and has
21 allowed my staff to all be on the same page, no matter what
22 instructional tools they decide to use.

23
24 8. The reform program has also given my staff more
25 opportunities to exercise leadership, which, in my opinion, is
26 also critical to obtain success. At Bunche, we have a Teaching,
27 Learning and Assessment Team ("TLAC") and a Governance Leadership
28 Team ("GLT"), which provides advice on curriculum issues and

1 plans weekly and monthly events to support the reform program.
2 We also have a Technology Committee that advises the school on
3 how technology can be used as a tool to improve the quality of
4 instruction. These forums for school-level leadership are
5 extremely important to the reform plan. It is a crucial part of
6 the reform to focus all stakeholders, including staff, parents,
7 and students, so that we can all move in the same direction and
8 work to improve the whole program of the school.

9
10 9. My staff has received assistance in aligning
11 instruction to standards and in exercising leadership at the
12 school through the extensive professional development that has
13 been available to them through the reform effort. Staff receives
14 weekly professional development – every Monday we have a
15 shortened day for this purpose. There are also other
16 opportunities available, such as those available through the
17 district, the Urban Learning Center ("ULC"), the Los Angeles
18 County Office of Education ("LACOE"), and the University of
19 California at Irvine, among others. These professional
20 development opportunities give my staff access both to the
21 research models on which the reform effort at Bunche is based and
22 to new strategies for instruction.

23
24 10. Page DOE 45153, which the plaintiffs cite, also
25 includes the statement: "Individual classrooms have an
26 insufficient variety and amount of reading materials." This is
27 not accurate. At Bunche, we have classroom sets of literature
28 materials and a comprehensive library. Students and teachers use

1 the library on a library visitation schedule. The library is
2 well-stocked and includes such tools as the Accelerated Reader
3 program. The Accelerated Reader program, which is primarily
4 housed in the library, requires students to read one to two books
5 per week and then to take computer-based exams to test their
6 comprehension and reading level. This program has been
7 accessible to students for some time as we piloted it five (5)
8 years ago. We have purchased thousands of reading books for the
9 Accelerated Reader program. Some reading teachers have even gone
10 so far as to bring the Accelerated Reader program into the
11 classroom. These teachers have the books, the computers, and the
12 software for the program all available right in the classroom.
13 Many teachers also have classroom libraries.

14
15 11. Not only have reading materials been available at
16 Bunche since the CSRD action plan was drafted, but we have also
17 made great strides, through the Comprehensive School Reform
18 effort, at encouraging teachers to make core novels (from the
19 state-recommended list of novels) a part of their instruction.
20 Teachers have really bought into this part of the reform effort
21 and are using core novels in their classes.

22
23 12. DOE 45153 also contains the statement, "There is
24 insufficient use of technology (word processing) in the
25 classroom." Currently, this statement is not accurate about
26 Bunche. In fact, we have done an outstanding job of integrating
27 technology into the classroom. We also have a wonderful,
28 standards-based technology plan. As a result, technology is

1 becoming a more useful tool to improve teaching and learning at
2 Bunche. In addition to word processing, students do project-
3 based assignments on computers and significant amounts of online
4 research. Each classroom has a minimum of three computers, all
5 of which are wired to the Internet. These computers are equipped
6 with software that is aligned with student objectives.

7
8 13. In addition to the technology that is available in
9 their classrooms, Bunche students also have access to a very nice
10 computer lab with enough computers to accommodate an entire
11 class. These computers are also wired to the Internet. A full-
12 time computer lab assistant staffs the lab.

13
14 14. Bunche has put these technology programs in place
15 with the help of a technology literacy grant and a High Priority
16 Schools Grant ("HPSG"), both of which we received last year. One
17 of the two main goals of the HPSG reform is to improve the
18 integration of technology in instruction. These grants allowed
19 us to purchase 65 new computers last year.

20
21 15. In my opinion, participating in the II/USP, CSRD,
22 and HPSG reform programs has helped us to improve the quality of
23 education at Bunche and has helped Bunche students be more
24 successful. Since Bunche became involved with these reform
25 programs, we have enjoyed steady improvement in our Academic
26 Performance Index ("API") score, from 420 in 2000 to 529 in 2002,
27 exceeding our growth targets each year.

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1 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of
2 California that the foregoing is true and correct.

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Executed this 71 day of July 2003, at Compton,
California.

Frank Sifuentes
Frank Sifuentes