

1 **Declaration of Nicolas Rodriguez**

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3 I, Nicolas Rodriguez, hereby declare:

4 1. I make this declaration based on my own personal knowledge and if called to testify
5 I could and would do so competently as follows:

6 2. I am a native of the city of Santa Paula and I have taught math at Santa Paula High
7 School for two years and will begin my third year there in the fall of 2001.

8 3. At Santa Paula High a lot of students do not receive adequate textbooks. For my last
9 year, first period algebra class, during the 2000-2001 school year, my students went without
10 textbooks for half of the year. For the first term my students had books, but the books were below
11 their learning level. For the second term I found a better book for them, but there was not a class set
12 available for their use. I had to make copies for each student, so it took me about one hour to one
13 hour and one half daily to make copies. [REDACTED], but I had to make
14 copies from the book for my students so that they would be able to learn. If my students would have
15 had books, they as well as I would have been more productive. If they had books they would be able
16 to look up anything throughout the book, and I would have spent the one hour and one half doing
17 other, more productive things. The books that my students used in my algebra class were not in good
18 condition. Most of the books were torn, had missing pages, or had the binding coming apart. I
19 remember times when I gave my students assignments and a couple of students told me that they
20 couldn't do the homework because their books were missing the assigned pages, so I told them to
21 turn them in at a later date. The condition of the books not only had a direct impact on the students
22 because they can't do their homework due to missing pages; the condition of the books also has a
23 psychological impact on their academic performance. The books are part of the learning experience
24 and damaged books are a distraction to their learning. The condition of the books affects the
25 students' productivity.

26 4. There is also a lack of instructional materials at Santa Paula High School. I mostly
27 teach English language learners, for whom it is especially important to have instructional materials
28 other than books. Since we can not speak any Spanish with the students, due to the changes in

1 policies after the passage of proposition 227, it is necessary to have manipulatives, algebra tiles,
2 visuals, and other learning tools. With these learning tools the students can make sense of abstract
3 concepts by having concrete examples and the students learn from using all of their senses. In the
4 past two years, I have spent over \$600 out of my own money for basic materials such as staplers,
5 overhead transparencies, and graphing paper. I feel that the school does not receive enough funds
6 so that teachers can purchase the necessary instructional materials. Each teacher is allotted less than
7 \$100 for materials, but that is not nearly enough money to buy basic supplies like paper as well as
8 crucial instructional tools like manipulatives.

9 6. There are also not enough trained teachers to teach English language learners at Santa
10 Paula High. There are very few people that understand bilingual education and know how to teach
11 English language learners, so students are suffering in their academics. Very few teachers at Santa
12 Paula High are trained to teach this population; they are not biculturally and bilingually trained so
13 the students do not understand the teachers. I get very frustrated because I see that many times my
14 students get frustrated when I'm teaching in English. I see the difference in their eyes when I clarify
15 something in Spanish that they couldn't understand in English; because they understand the
16 instructions or concepts, their eyes light up and then they are able to confidently do the work. Part
17 of this problem at Santa Paula High is that a lot of the teachers who are teaching this population are
18 not certified or trained. In my opinion, about 20-25% of the students at Santa Paula High would
19 greatly benefit from having some instruction in Spanish.

20 7. Another problem at Santa Paula High School is that English language learners are
21 limited in the courses available to them. The highest math course that has been offered to English
22 language learners has been algebra. I had several students whom I felt were ready to take geometry,
23 which is the next level class after algebra. Since geometry is only offered in the mainstream courses,
24 the students who wanted to pursue this higher-level math had to switch into a class with fluent
25 English speaking students. A lot of the ELL students stayed in the geometry class for the first couple
26 of weeks, but then they felt intimidated by the fact that they could not understand all of the
27 instruction and discussions that other students could, so they transferred out of the geometry class.
28 I know that if the students would have had an ELL geometry class, they would have succeeded.

1 There are not enough teachers at Santa Paula High to teach this ELL population, so consequently
2 there are not enough courses available to them.

3 7. This district pays the lowest salary to teachers in all of Ventura County, so we do not
4 attract trained and competitive teachers. Because the school can not attract well-qualified teachers,
5 there is a lack of competent teachers that do not have the training necessary to teach in their specific
6 subject areas. Trained teachers have many skills and tools that are important for teaching. In
7 particular, credentialed teachers have training in classroom management, children's psychological
8 development, teaching methods, and multicultural dynamics, all of which are crucial to a child's
9 learning development. Also, when a teacher has training in the specific subject area that she is
10 teaching, she is not only knowledgeable of the subject, but she also has teaching techniques specific
11 to that subject. Not having trained and qualified teachers in a specific subject has a real negative
12 effect on a child's education.

13 8. Another distraction that affects the learning environment at my school is the lack of
14 air conditioning in some classrooms. I've had classes in which it got very hot because there was no
15 air conditioning. For about two months out of the school year, some classes got so hot that it felt as
16 if we were outside in the heat. My students got distracted and started complaining about the heat.
17 Their concentration level decreased; this was another distraction for them that affected their learning.
18 I even got more tired while teaching and I would also sweat. I also noticed that some of my students
19 would lower their heads on the desks in order to cool down.

20 9. There are not enough open bathrooms for students. I think we just don't have enough
21 resources to maintain all of the bathrooms, so there is only one bathroom open for the students. I
22 believe this is a problem, especially for the girls, who always have to wait in lines. There are plenty
23 of clean and well-stocked bathrooms for the staff, but this is not true for the students. Since the open
24 bathroom is on one side of campus, it is not easily accessible to students that have class on the
25 opposite side of campus; they have to go uphill and downhill, so it takes them an average of eight
26 minutes to go the bathroom and out of their instructional time.

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I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California and the United States
that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 23 day of July, 2001 in Santa Paula,
California.



Nicolas Rodriguez

7/23/01