

 I, SHANE SAFIR, hereby declare:

- I make this declaration based on my own personal knowledge, and if called to testify I could and would do so competently as follows:
- 2. I teach social studies at Balboa High School in San Francisco, where I have been teaching for three years.
- Balboa is infested with mice. My class and I see mice run through my room during class time at least once a month, and we also find mice droppings almost every day. I clean up the mice droppings in my room myself because no one else does it for me. For three years, I have complained to the school administration about the mice problem. Finally last spring externinators came and stuffed holes in my room to block mice from coming in. The hole blocking has helped, but it has not completely fixed the problem. The exterminators didn't spray anything, so mice still are in the school, even though they are less frequently in my classroom. I also see mice droppings in the teacher's lounge, so I know we have mice elsewhere in the school.
- 4. The most devastating problems at the school for the kids are the really dramatic teacher turnover and the teacher vacancies. About 30 to 40 percent of the teachers at the school leave each year. Last May, eight juniors and seniors worked on a project with another teacher to identify how many teachers had left while the kids were in school, and those students named 54 teachers who had left Balboa during the three or four years the students had been at the school. The school only has 60 or so teachers on staff, so having 54 teachers leave in three or four years is significant.
- 5. Balboa often takes months to fill teacher vacancies. During this last school year, the driver education teacher position was vacant for at least half the year, a math class had a teacher vacancy for months during the year, and one Spanish class had no permanent teacher from October or November until the end of the school year. There may have been other vacant teacher positions as well. Students in classes with no permanent teacher have a string of substitute teachers who stay very short periods of time.

6. The Spanish class without a permanent teacher is located near my classroom, and there would be times when I'd walk by at 8:45 or 9:00 and see no teacher at all-not even a substitute-in the room, even though class started at 8:00. I think the school has a responsibility to provide an adult in every room. If the school cannot find a substitute when a teacher is absent or when a teaching position has not yet been filled, then the principal or some other administrator should stand in the classroom with the students just to be sure an adult is in the room

- 7. For weeks during the school year, students have to stand or sit on counters or the floor because their classrooms do not have enough seats for all the students. Eventually the school reassigns students to different classrooms to alleviate the overcrowding, but students' schedules are disrupted from the reassignment and the students are not learning the way they should during the times when they do not have seats in class.
- 8. The math department does not have enough textbooks for all the students, so students often have to share books in class. And students cannot take home math books for homework.
- 9. The student bathrooms are disgusting. The toilets do not all have seats, several of the stalls are missing doors, and the bathrooms have lots of graffiti. Often, the bathrooms are missing toilet paper. In the girls' bathrooms, there are no feminine napkins or tampons in the dispensers.
- 10. Ceiling tiles are missing in almost every classroom in the school. The kids tell me they worry tiles will fall on them during class.
- 11. The school science labs are a joke. Students don't do labs in science class because we simply do not have enough materials. Chemistry and biology should be dynamic, experiential classes during which students can see their lessons come alive through their labs. Instead our students just do book work because the school doesn't have material to offer them labs.
- 12. About half the window shades in my classroom are broken, so I cannot pull them down when we show history movies. When I try to show educational movies anyway, there is so much light in the room that the kids have a hard time seeing the movies.
- 13. We teachers have a hard time making all the copies we need for our students' homework and in-class lessons because we only have one large copier for about 60 or so teachers. That machine breaks down a lot because we use it so much, and we have only one small backup copy

machine. That small machine breaks down a lot also, and anyway the machine is too small to handle large copy jobs.

- 14. The school has only three guidance counselors for about 1200 to 1400 kids. One of the counselors works only with the 300 or 400 bilingual kids, so that means the school has only two counselors for the other 900 to 1000 kids. The guidance counselors are supposed to program classes for students and make sure students take the classes they need to graduate and to get in to college. The counselors are incredibly overworked with so many students to oversee. Because the counselors are so overworked, students end up placed in the wrong classes for weeks at a time before their course schedules can be corrected.
- 15. The school has no master calendar, so it's hard to plan lessons. For example, we teachers will learn two days before a school rally that the rally is scheduled, meaning that on the day of the rally our students have only half their class time. I take my teaching really seriously, and I don't like to lose class time with my students. Having so little notice for when I will lose class time makes it hard for me to plan my lessons for the students.
- challenge students. I have tried to have a few of my classes certified as honors classes, which means that I have had classes full of kids stating that they wanted to do extra work for honors credit. But the school district keeps thwarting my efforts to certify the classes as honors classes. One district official said that the honors work is too accelerated for our student population, which is comprised mostly of students of color. I took that statement to be racist. In any event, the district's position does not help kids get honors course work.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on June 22, 2000 at Los Gatos, California.

Shane Safir

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