

1 **Declaration of Valerie B. Shaw**

2 I, Valerie B. Shaw, hereby declare:

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

5 2. I taught at Crenshaw High School in Los Angeles from August 1999 through July  
6 2000, where I taught English during the school year and U.S. History 1 and U.S. History 2 during  
7 summer school. I had an emergency teaching credential while I taught.

8 3. For my four tenth-grade English classes at Crenshaw, I had only one class set of  
9 approximately 40 books for a total of over 150 students to share. I could not send the kids home  
10 with books for homework because I simply did not have enough books for all my students. In  
11 addition, I lost about one third of my class set of books by the time the school year ended because  
12 many kids took the books home to read in spite of the rule that the books had to stay in the  
13 classroom. I couldn't blame the kids for wanting to take the books home--if I were in the middle  
14 of reading a story when a class period ended, I would want to take the book home to finish the  
15 story, too. My kids wanted to read, and they deserved to have books to feed that hunger to read.

16 4. I complained through all the appropriate channels at Crenshaw about my lack of  
17 books for my students. I went to my department chair, to the person who worked in the book  
18 room, and to the Title I coordinator to ask for more books. They all told me that it was not even  
19 realistic to hope to get books for my kids. I learned from talking to other teachers as well that  
20 books just were not available. None of the teachers I know of had enough books for all their  
21 students while I was there. The book problem was a joke among us; the other teachers and I  
22 laughed at the idea that you could have books for your students.

23 5. Because I didn't have books to send home with the kids for homework, I had to be  
24 creative to design my own homework assignments. I did a lot of photocopying so I could send  
25 home an act of a play or a short story for my students to read. In order to make those copies,  
26 though, I had to get to school at least 45 minutes early so I could use one of the only three or four  
27 working copiers on campus. I also used current events to make drama concepts concrete for the  
28 students, so I taught them about foreshadowing and story climax by asking them to follow and

1 write about the Elian Gonzalez story in the news, for example. I also would ask the students to  
2 take a character we were reading about—for example a character from a Shakespeare play—and  
3 pretend they became that character and write about what they would do as that character in a  
4 particular situation.

5         6.       Because I taught on an emergency teaching credential, I had to attend district-run  
6 pre-internship classes for teachers. These classes were totally irrelevant; they did not deal with  
7 any of the issues we dealt with in our classrooms. The school assigned a teacher to mentor me,  
8 but she visited my classroom no more than once a month, and then only for about ten minutes  
9 each time. Real training and real mentoring would have helped me a lot. By the end of the 1999-  
10 2000 school year, I had become an excellent teacher and I knew I was reaching my kids. But I  
11 could have achieved that same level of excellence much earlier in the school year if I had had  
12 effective training from the district or mentorship from an experienced teacher who visited my  
13 classroom more often than for 10 minutes one time each month.

14         7.       Crenshaw did not have any bathrooms in the bungalow area, where I taught. For  
15 the school not to have built a bathroom along with the bungalows makes no sense at all. We had  
16 11 bungalows serving 30 to 40 kids per bungalow class, and no bathrooms in the area. If one of  
17 my students needed to go to the bathroom during class time out on the bungalows, the student  
18 had to leave the bungalow area and go all the way to the main campus--I was lucky if I saw that  
19 student again for the rest of the class period because the main campus was so far away.

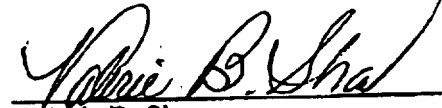
20         8.       Cleanliness was a big issue in the bungalows because trash was everywhere.  
21 Teachers had to purchase or borrow brooms and/or cleaning supplies to keep their rooms clean in  
22 the bungalows. The bungalows were visited by the janitors just to pick up the trash cans; the  
23 janitors did not clean the floors or mop or anything else. I felt so horrible teaching all day and  
24 then mopping my classroom floor at night before having to go home and correct papers at  
25 midnight. That is a humiliating experience for a professional. After I made repeated requests to  
26 the head of maintenance and finally to Vice Principal Cannon, the bungalows were cleaned  
27 approximately twice during the year. The janitors told me their schedule allowed them only eight  
28 minutes to clean each room on the main campus, so they did not have enough time to clean the

1 bungalows, too.

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3 I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California and the United  
4 States that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 07 day of June, 2001 in Los Angeles,  
5 California.

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Valerie B. Shaw

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