



1 Many parents and students, including myself, complained to the principal about the constant change  
2 in teachers, and the principal said she was doing the best she could to try to find a replacement.  
3 Having all those substitutes made it difficult to learn. It also caused problems for the few seniors in  
4 the class, who needed to pass the class to fulfill their foreign language requirements. Each new  
5 substitute would misplace or lose work that we had done, so some of these seniors, even those who  
6 had been getting "A"s in the beginning of the year, got incomplete grades for the class. I think they  
7 finally got their grades resolved at the end of the year, but I am not sure.

8         4.       A lot of teachers leave Balboa. Nine or ten of the teachers I have had in the past three  
9 years have left the school. I keep in touch with some of these teachers and they tell me that some  
10 of the teachers left the school because the job would get too stressful, the salaries were not high  
11 enough, and the administration was not doing enough to improve the school.

12         5.       Last year, in my Advanced Algebra class, we did not have enough textbooks for each  
13 student. The textbooks we did have were in poor condition; pages were missing from some, and the  
14 front cover had been ripped off of others. In the beginning of the school year, we shared one class  
15 set of books with four other classes, so no one was allowed to take the books home to do homework.  
16 When our class was switched to a long-term substitute teacher later in the year, we did not even have  
17 a full set of books for the class. Two or three students would have to share one book in class. Every  
18 week we kept asking the teacher why we still did not have any books, and every week he would  
19 answer that he was trying to get us more books. The students who did not have books had to copy  
20 homework problems off the board or would get photocopied packets of problems to do. When we  
21 got a third teacher for Advanced Algebra, he was surprised that we did not have enough books. He  
22 was able to find books for some students, but three or four students did not have books throughout  
23 the entire year. The lack of textbooks affected students because they had to rely on photocopied  
24 handouts, which were sometimes of poor quality. Other times, the copy machine would break down

1 so they would not get copies at all. Students would complain often about not having books, and I  
2 think it really affected their learning.

3         6.       The facilities at Balboa are horrible. Most of the time, the bathrooms do not have  
4 enough soap, paper towels, or toilet paper. The floors are not mopped even though there is often  
5 urine and mud on the floor. It smells awful in the bathrooms, and there is graffiti on the bathroom  
6 walls. The bathrooms are so filthy that most students, including myself, refuse to use them unless  
7 they absolutely have to. Many students and teachers have complained about the bathrooms to the  
8 principal, but her response has been that it is the students' responsibility to keep the bathrooms  
9 clean. I do not think that is right, though. I think the school should fix the bathrooms and at least  
10 give us a chance to keep them clean. The bathrooms on the second and third floors are locked  
11 during most of the day, so anyone who wants to use the bathroom during classtime must have the  
12 teacher ask the security guard to unlock it.

13         7.       Balboa is overcrowded. In my freshman and sophomore Spanish classes, there were  
14 between 35 and 40 students. This really slowed the learning process for the students in our class.  
15 We learned much less in those Spanish classes than students in other, smaller Spanish classes at the  
16 school learned. When a class is that large, it is much harder to concentrate because the class is  
17 noisier. In addition to Spanish, my freshman year, the JROTC class at the school had between 40  
18 and 45 students. Some students had to stand in the back of the classroom at the beginning of the  
19 year. The effects of the overcrowding are felt in other ways as well. The cafeteria is packed at  
20 lunchtime, so some students eat in the quad or on the football field instead.

21         8.       Twice since I've been at Balboa I have seen mice. In my World Literature class in  
22 tenth grade, I saw a mouse run across the room. Last year, in the same classroom, a different teacher  
23 saw a dead mouse when she was moving boxes in the back of the room. I also heard that someone  
24 saw a mouse in the gym last year.

