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Declaration of Archie Richardson

- I. Archie Richardson, 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 am a second grade teacher at Edison-Brentwood Academy. I have been teaching at the school from 1999 to 2001. I am currently working to obtain my full credential.
- 3. Each year of the two years I have taught at Edison-Brentwood, one third of the teachers at the school leave at the end of each year. That means approximately twelve out of 30 teachers leave per year. The teachers do not get paid enough to live in the East Palo Alto area. and thus many of them must leave and find other work. They just cannot afford to stay here. The housing costs are just way too high. The state should provide cost of living determined salaries -- salaries determined by local housing costs.
- At Edison-Brentwood a large portion of the teachers have emergency credentials. These teachers have no experience in the classroom, and so when they begin teaching they are completely overwhelmed. I know this because I have spoken with them, I have seen them in the classroom, and I have watched them leave the school after only teaching for one year. The teachers who have not had prior classroom experience many times don't know what it takes to make it work for children in the classroom. These teachers need to be provided with better training so that they are better equipped to work with the students in this community. This is another reason why the teacher turnover is so high at the school. Many of the teachers with emergency credentials don't have enough training to be able to teach the children properly.
- I believe that the best way to attract experienced teachers is for the state to pay them more than their counterparts are paid in the suburbs. It is hard work to teach in a school like Edison-Brentwood where many of the children need additional help because English is their second language or they may come from a home where their parents are not involved in their lives. Teachers are the key to making it work in a school like Edison-Brentwood, and thus we need help from the state to attract experienced teachers and to retain them. Additionally, credentialing should be paid for by the state because it is a very expensive process.

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 <u>/o</u> day of July, 2001 in East Palo Alto, California.

Archie Richardson