

1 **Declaration of Angeles Gonzalez**

2 I, Angeles Gonzalez, 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 am the mother of Jose Cardenas, who attended Fremont High School (Fremont)
6 in Oakland during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. During the 2000-2001 school
7 year I was also a staff member at Fremont. I started working at Fremont because I was extremely
8 worried about the conditions at the school. Every day my son Jose would tell me stories about
9 how terrible the school was. I decided the only way that I could help was to actually be
10 physically present at the school every day. In my position as an Intermediate Typist Clerk I sat in
11 the front office every day. Parents often came to Fremont really upset. I know this because when
12 they would come into the front office of the school they would speak to me in Spanish and tell
13 me their many concerns. Parents would ask me why the children did not have books, why there
14 were so many substitutes instead of teachers, why their children were standing up in class, and
15 why the school was so dirty. Parents came into the office to try and transfer their students out of
16 Fremont because the conditions are just so bad. Unfortunately, there is nowhere else for the
17 students to transfer to because the other public schools in Oakland are so packed. Although I
18 have now pulled my son out of Fremont and put him in a good public school, I know that the
19 horrible conditions at Fremont still exist because I speak often with my neighbors whose children
20 still have to attend Fremont, as well as other students who are suffering at the school.

21 3. On April 22, 2000, sixteen teachers were absent from Fremont. I know this
22 because I worked at the school as an Intermediate Typist Clerk, and I did the substitute calling in
23 the morning. Only two substitutes actually showed up at the school on April 22 and so the
24 fourteen other classes that did not have teachers were put together in the cafeteria with an
25 administrator. Basically, in a situation like that the students are just being babysat. Many
26 teachers at Fremont are often absent, and there are not enough substitutes to actually take over
27 the classes. It was not always clear to me when I worked at Fremont what would happen to
28 students who had no adult standing in front of their classes.

1 4. Fremont is very overcrowded. Several of the classes are held in the cafeteria.
2 With so many students in the cafeteria it is often very noisy and hard for them to concentrate.

3 5. Fremont is often filthy, and it upsets me that the students have to go to a school
4 where trash, dirt, and grime are everywhere.

5 6. It is very difficult for teachers to make copies at the school. Many of the teachers
6 do not have enough books for their students to use so being able to make copies is very
7 important. Teachers will come to ask me if they can please make copies on the machine that I
8 am near because they have no paper or the copy machine that the teachers are allowed to use has
9 broken down.

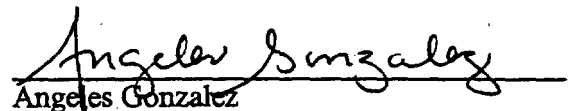
10 7. Before I began working at Fremont, I often called the school to try to get in touch
11 with an administrator to ask why the school was such a mess. However, when I called the school
12 no one answered the phone.

13 8. I came from Mexico and my school was beautiful. My son was born in the United
14 States, a rich country, and the school he attends is terrible – much worse than in Mexico. I just
15 don't understand how that can be the case. I came to the United States so my son could have
16 better opportunities, but how can that happen when he cannot get a decent, basic education?

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18 I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California and the United
19 States that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 28 day of Sep., 2001 in
20 Oakland, California.

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Angeles Gonzalez

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