

1 **Declaration of Il Clark**

2 I, Il Clark, 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 have taught English and Language development at John Muir Middle School in
6 Los Angeles since October of 1999. Before that, I taught in the Compton Unified School District
7 for three years.

8 3. I have been the UTLA Chapter Chair at John Muir Middle School since 1999. In
9 my role as Chapter Chair, I had heard other teachers in the math, ESL, and Spanish departments
10 complaining about not having any books. At least three or four teachers that I know of
11 complained about having either no books or not enough books. One of the problems with
12 textbooks is that the school used to have a full-time textbook coordinator, but the administration
13 made the position a part-time position later in the 2000-2001 school year, due to school cutbacks
14 and lack of funds. There's no enforceable system in place that effectively addresses
15 responsibility for the textbooks, and how to get them back if students don't return them at the end
16 of the semester.

17 4. During the 1999 -2000 school year, I taught seventh and eighth grade
18 English/Language development. In my eighth grade classes, I only had one set of books for 4
19 classes. I had 40 eighth grade books for approximately 150 eighth graders. They were basic
20 literature books, brand new, but the kids couldn't take them home. I only had one set for all of
21 the periods. I would have liked for the students to take their books home because they could
22 have read more. As it was, they were limited to classroom time. I could not assign homework
23 that would have required the students to use the books. In my seventh grade class I had books for
24 all the students but they could not take them home. The school was implementing a bar coding
25 system to track the books, and my class set of books had not been bar coded yet. The books were
26 not bar coded for the entire school year and the students were not able to take the books home all
27 year.

28 5. Oftentimes, teachers have to make copies from books and workbooks. During my

1 entire tenure at John Muir I never had enough workbooks for my students to use. I end up using
2 one workbook and I make copies for my students to do their homework, assignments, and testing.
3 The workbooks should come along with the textbooks. Each student should have his/her own
4 workbook. Towards the end of the school year, when paper is hard to find at John Muir, I have
5 to buy my own paper to make copies. Teachers are allocated 400 copies per a semester. As a
6 chapter chair, union steward for the school, I get an extra copy code because I have to copy
7 newsletters and announcements for the teachers. If I had just one code like the other teachers, I
8 don't think that it would have been enough. Other teachers have asked me to loan them copy
9 credits. But teachers shouldn't have to make these copies in the first place. The kids should have
10 their own workbook themselves.

11 6. It is always a challenge to get supplies at John Muir. There are over 10 different
12 ways of getting supplies at school. Some work and some don't. Sometimes we order supplies
13 from the title I coordinator or other administration, but they either don't come, they arrive late, or
14 the vendor calls back after you needed the supplies and says that he can't honor the request for
15 some reason or other. I have spent over \$500.00 of my own money in paper and other supplies
16 during my time at John Muir Middle School because it is the surest and quickest way to get
17 supplies. I spent an additional \$2,600.00 to buy a computer and a printer for my classroom.

18 7. Because this year I teach Intensive Academic Support ("IAS"), I have 5
19 computers in my classroom. Because of my position as a Chapter Chair, I know that many
20 teachers do not have computers in their classrooms. The school is now discussing solutions so
21 that each teacher can have at least one computer in their class. Installing servers and wiring up
22 the school began approximately 8 months ago and the job is still ongoing. As of right now, the
23 school does not have internet capability. How can we even hope to compete with schools that
24 have had internet connection for years?

25 8. John Muir Middle School is terribly overcrowded. Right now, we are busing over
26 200 students far out to the Valley. They come to John Muir early around 6:30 am to take the bus
27 and they come back around 4:30 pm. There are almost 2000 students attending the school right
28 now. I was told by my administration that if a school buses out over 200 students and has roving

1 teachers for 2 years, it is supposed to become a year-round school. We have had these conditions
2 at John Muir for the past 2 years and we should be on a year-round schedule next year.

3 9. During the 1999-2000 school year, my eighth grade English classes were terribly
4 overcrowded. In one of my classes, I had 37 students when LAUSD mandates (district memo
5 66) that regular eighth grade English classes have 20 students only. According to the district,
6 the same rule applies to advanced ESL and beginning ESL classes. I complained about this but
7 the administration said that they couldn't do anything about the size of the class. They told me
8 that since it was a magnet class, there could be more students in there. I had to scrounge for
9 desks and chairs for all my students to sit. It was really cramped and tight. The students had no
10 place to move the chairs if we wanted them to get into groups. It was hard to go up and down the
11 rows because you had to be careful not to knock over books or place your backside in the
12 students' face. It also might have been a fire hazard, in that most classrooms have two exits, and
13 we had only one. Also, we were on the second floor, so the window wasn't really an option to
14 exit in case of emergency. It was my first year at John Muir and it was baptism by fire. The
15 overcrowding created more discipline problems and really affected learning. I couldn't really
16 give any individual attention to my students unless they stayed after school.

17 10. During my first and second year at Muir, there were a couple of teachers who had
18 classes that took place in rooms that weren't really meant to be classrooms. In the spring of 2001,
19 one special education class, Mr. Brick's class, took place in the weight room and it didn't seem to
20 be conducive to optimum learning. Another class, Mr. Oxman's class, took place in another
21 room that was even smaller than the weight room, on the other side of the gym. I don't know if
22 this has happened in previous years before I came to John Muir.

23 11. There were five or six teachers in the 2000-2001 year who were traveling or
24 roving teachers. That meant that they never had their own classroom; they had to use a room
25 when another teacher had an off period. The roving teachers have to transport all their materials.
26 They can't really display students' work because they don't have their own bulletin board.

27 12. We have a high teacher turnover at John Muir Middle School, over 20 percent.
28 We have a total of about 80 teachers at the school. This year we had to hire 18 new teachers. It

1 has been the same since I started at John Muir. Even with the new teachers, we do not start the
2 school year with a complete staff. We have substitute teachers for weeks to teach some classes.
3 Parents have complained about this last year and the year before that. We still have some
4 openings for new teachers this year, even though the school year started almost 4 weeks ago. We
5 had the same problem at the school last year and the year before that. During the past two years,
6 some long term substitutes stayed all semester, regardless if they were qualified to teach that
7 class or not. In addition to the substitute problem, we have about 50% of uncredentialed
8 teachers, probably even more.

9 13. Before we went to a double lunch schedule in the year 2000-2001, the lunch area
10 was terribly overcrowded. We had over two thousand students in the same lunch area. The
11 problem is that some students didn't have much time between nutrition and lunch. They go to
12 nutrition, then class, and then lunch. The lunch areas are still crowded, but they are better than
13 before.

14 14. The first year that I was there, in 1999, I noticed that there were rats that were
15 living outside of the bungalows. There are auditorium chairs just piled up and very junky
16 looking outside of the bungalows and they were a haven for rats. I know there were rats because
17 I saw many rat droppings in my bungalow classroom. One of the windows has louver windows
18 that open directly outside and that still don't close properly. Rats were able to come inside the
19 classroom. I complained to the plant manager to remove the chairs, but as of today, they haven't
20 been removed. I guess the chairs keep kids from writing on the buildings, but I'd still rather see
21 them moved. I haven't seen any rat droppings this year, so I think that the plant manager might
22 have addressed the problem by putting rat poison outside, but I'm not sure.

23 15. The outdoor flooring outside of the main building is really cracked, discolored,
24 and ugly. I feel that you can really judge a business by its floor. They could put in something
25 nice and make it look pretty. There are trees in the quad area but not beyond that. Besides,
26 they're really sad looking trees. We really need some greenery to make the school more
27 welcoming and attractive to the students. A school should be a welcoming place for the students
28 to come and learn.

1 16. Last year, based on what the kids told me, I know that there were restroom
2 problems. The restrooms are dirty, they are not always open for the students to use and
3 sometimes they lack supplies. I have personally seen lines to the restrooms. I personally have
4 never used the kids' bathrooms because I know from the kids that they're dirty. I know that
5 when the new principal came towards the end of the 2000-2001 school year, he wanted to open
6 up more restrooms to alleviate the problem. I don't know if they did or not.

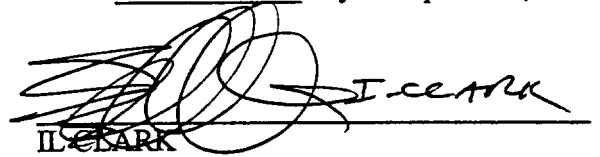
7 17. In 1999-2000, my first year in the main building, in room 218, there were pools of
8 water on the floor from a huge rain leak, which buckled the wood floors. One kid even tripped
9 once because the floor was up so high. I told the administration when it first started leaking, in
10 the fall or winter of 1999-2000. Water was leaking from the ceiling corners and along the walls
11 onto the floor. I had big trash cans filled with water under the leaks. It took about a month to be
12 fixed. Two or three times, we had to go to the cafeteria because it was too wet in my classroom.
13 Although the school finally fixed the leaks, I don't think they fixed the floor.

14 18. We have a combination air conditioning / heating unit, so when you change from
15 hot to cold or from cold to hot, you have to call the plant manager. He has to change it, and
16 sometimes it takes a few days. The drawback is that sometimes by the time you get the heater
17 on, you don't need it anymore, and / or vice versa. It is sometimes uncomfortable for the students
18 in the class.

19 19. The school's administration and Dr: Miller, an administrator for District G., have
20 asked repeatedly over a number of years to get the school painted, inside and outside. Finally,
21 last year, the outside of the main building was painted. The painting of the outside of the school
22 was completed over the school year and the summer. The painting of the walls inside the
23 classrooms took place during the school year, in the spring of 2001, over the summer, and was
24 still going on in some classrooms at the beginning of this year. It was highly disruptive and
25 should have been completed during vacation time or during the summer. Many teachers had to
26 take their classes to the cafeteria, the auditorium or the library because painting was going on
27 inside their classrooms. To my knowledge, each class took about a week to complete so the
28 students did not have access to their classrooms for the entire duration of the painting process.

1 20. From 1996 to 1999, I taught in the Compton Unified School District. In the 1996-
2 1997 school year, I was a substitute teacher. As a substitute teacher in many schools, I witnessed
3 a wide variety of highly problematic situations, ranging from classrooms with constant leaking
4 problems, graffiti, no supplies at all, and no textbooks. In the 1997-1998 school year, I taught
5 English/language development at Compton High School. I did not have any books at all for my
6 students to use. I made copies of short stories and plays for the students to read.

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8 I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California and the United
9 States that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 27 day of September,
10 2001 in Los Angeles, California.

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