

1 **Declaration of Rafael Velasquez**

2 I, Rafael Velasquez, 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 a tenth grade student at Locke High School in Los Angeles, and I have been a
6 student at Locke this one year only. I went to Gardena High School last year for ninth grade.

7 3. I have not been able to take textbooks home in any of the classes I have had since
8 coming to Locke, because there are not enough books. In my English class this year we do not
9 have any books at all. My teacher has been calling to try and get us books, but the books haven't
10 arrived. This week is my last week of class. In my world history class we have books, but they
11 are really messed up – many of the pages are torn up or missing. The books are so bad that our
12 teacher doesn't really use them much except to go over vocabulary. When my teacher tells the
13 class to turn to a page, and that page is missing from the book then I have to share with someone
14 else or wait until they have finished before I can complete my assignment. It shouldn't be like
15 this. In my reading for pleasure class we only read one novel for the entire semester, because that
16 was the only book that we had with enough copies for the students to use. The rest of the time
17 my teacher made photocopies from parts of different books for us to read. This made me very
18 upset, because in a reading for pleasure class we should have textbooks or be able to read a
19 variety of novels, not just one. In my fifth period math class, there are not enough books for
20 everyone, and we can't take our books home. Sometimes we have to share or wait for another
21 student to finish his or her work before we can use a math book. This really makes it difficult to
22 learn, because if I don't finish my assignment in class then I don't have a book to look at when I
23 get home. Sometimes it is difficult to remember what I need to finish the assignment. If the
24 assignment is due the next day, then I just have to turn it in late. This is very different from the
25 high school I was at before, Gardena High School. At Gardena they let me and all the other
26 students take home their books to finish our class or homework assignments.

27 4. In my English B class this semester we had three different teachers, and rotating
28 substitutes each time one teacher left and another teacher arrived. The first two teachers taught

1 us for about two months each. We finally got what was supposed to be our permanent teacher in
2 May. We didn't have books in that class either, so we didn't learn very much. It makes me very
3 mad, because we are not educated at all. We need teachers in our classrooms who can teach us
4 what we need to learn to do well, and who will stay for the entire semester or year. Also, I don't
5 feel that I get the grade I deserve, because I don't have a permanent teacher who knows me and
6 knows what I am capable of doing.

7 5. At the beginning of each semester it is really crazy at Locke, because it is so
8 overcrowded. There are very few counselors, and so it is really hard to get classes, and it is hard
9 to get the classes you need to take. During about the first two months of my reading for pleasure
10 class, it was so overcrowded that we used to sit on the counters or on high stools without a table
11 or desk in front of us. When students had to write in class, they would write on top of folders,
12 and so the assignments would get messy.

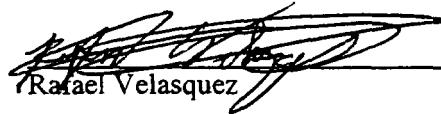
13 6. The lack of counselors is a big problem. Sometimes students can't graduate,
14 because they can't get an appointment to see a counselor and don't know what the requirements
15 are, or they are assigned to the wrong classes, and they don't have the credits they need. I think
16 that we have one counselor for both the eleventh and twelfth grade.

17 7. I have seen roaches in the hallways, and rats in the bushes. There are rat
18 droppings in my art teacher's class.

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20 I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California and the United
21 States that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 18th day of June, 2001 in Los
22 Angeles, California.

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Rafael Velasquez

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