

Declaration of Zeus Cubias

- I, Zeus Cubias, hereby declare:
- 1. 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 have been a math teacher at Locke High School (Locke) in Los Angeles for four years from 1997-2001. During the 2000-2001 school year I was also the Chair of the math department.
- the end of the year but for teachers who leave during or at the beginning of the school year. This really affects students' learning. In the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school year in the math department we lost a total of six teachers. At the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year we were unable to fill three of the vacant teacher positions. So for ten classes of students this meant that for about two to three weeks those students had day to day substitutes. However, in one instance, I and other teachers complained to the administration because we were really concerned about the students in those classes not learning, and they agreed to allow teachers to take over five classes as auxiliaries. Three math teachers and two science teachers taught five of the math classes. I was paid extra, and I believe the other teachers were paid extra also. For the second vacant position we were fortunate to find a long term substitute who eventually stayed on for the full school year. The final teacher vacancy in the math department was filled several weeks after the school year started, but during those first few weeks the students had rotating substitutes.
- 4. When I took over a discrete math class during one of my free periods during the 2000-2001 school year because of teacher vacancies, I was not given any instructional materials to use. The discrete math classes had just been created by the administration and it was not communicated to the teachers what the curriculum for that class was supposed to be or what materials the teachers were supposed to use. This meant that I entered a classroom that I was not supposed to be teaching with no materials and no idea about what the students' were supposed to be taught. As a result, the students' education really suffered. In addition, I was teaching this class on top of my regular schedule and so I did not have enough time to prepare outside

6

12 13

15 16

14

17 18

19 20

21 22

23

24 25

26

27 28 materials to fill the gaps. The administration found another teacher to fill the vacancy second semester, but the students in that class could not have learned as much as they should have because they had two different teachers, no books, and a bunch of substitute teachers.

- 5. Too many of the teachers at Lock do not have their full credentials. Approximately 40 to 47 percent of the teachers at Locke do not have their full credentials. This really affects students learning because teachers who have no prior classroom experience often have a difficult time managing the classroom and creating a year-long learning plan. Additionally, the district does not give emergency credentialed teachers sufficient training before they begin teaching. I have been told by new teachers that the district provides only a crash course and that when the teachers enter the classroom they feel unprepared and they really struggle. Also, when I have observed several emergency credentialed teachers, I have found that they often do not know how to create an effective lesson plan or how to manage the classroom. Additionally, when new teachers arrive at Locke, the administrations at the district and school levels do not provide them with sufficient support. For example, many of the new teachers do not have mentors or if they have been assigned mentors they do not know who they are or have not been contacted by them. Additionally, new teachers are not given sufficient information about where to get supplies, instructional materials, and other basic tools to teach the children. This can result in chaos. As a result, sometimes emergency credentialed or first-time teachers get so frustrated that they do not return to the school after their first year.
- 6. The district must change its policies with regards to teacher placement. When L a fully credentialed teacher, went to the district to submit my application and told the administrator there I wanted to work at Locke she attempted to discourage me from going to teach at that school and said that I should teach at a valley school. I have heard from another teacher at Locke who was a graduate of Stanford that she was also encouraged to teach at a valley school. The administrators at the district should place the teachers who are most qualified at the schools that need the most help, not the schools that need the least help.
- 7. Locke has a huge textbook problem. For the last few years, as a result of the poor to nonexistent book tracking system at Locke High School, the math classes have not had enough

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

8. At Locke many of the books are in poor condition. I have seen books with many of the pages missing, and during the 2000-2001 school year I saw that the students in the U.S.

 History classes were using the exact same American Pageant book that I used when I went to the school 12 years ago. When I went to Locke, the American Pageant books were out of date. This year (2001-2002), for the first time, I saw students carrying new American Pageant books. Also, during my first year of teaching (the 1997-1998 school year), I found in my stack of math books the geometry book that my younger brother had used when he was a student at Locke. That means that some of the geometry books in my class are at least 13 years old if not older.

- 9. The coaches at Locke are not given basic materials, such as soccerballs and softballs, to coach their teams, but yet they are asked to teach students how to play these sports. This is wrong. During the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, and 2000-2001 school years I coached girls soccer, which many of the students take instead of taking P.E. For the first two years that I coached soccer the coaches donated items such as balls and shin guards to our team so that we would have basic supplies. Because the administration did not provide our team with any money, the students had to pay for their own uniforms if they wanted to play. During the 2000-2001 school year, I was finally given a \$600 budget and so now my team members don't have to buy their uniforms. However, I still purchase soccer balls and other equipment for the team.
- 10. At the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year, practically all of the classes in the bungalow area where I taught were not stocked with enough desks for all of the students in the classrooms. Again, as a result of mismanagement, desks were missing, had been stored away and not taken out, or were not purchased. I spent most of the first month of school searching for desks for my students and the students of the teachers in other classes. I personally aided 9 teachers in the math department and 2 teachers from other departments with obtaining enough desks for their classroom. I also saw other teachers hustling to find desks for students. For the students the desk shortage meant that many students had to stand in the back of the classroom or had to sit on chairs without desktops to write on. In some of the classes I went into there were only 15 desks and the average class size at Locke is between 30 and 35. I know that the teachers I helped had enough desks for their students by about one month into the school year, but I am not certain about what happened in the other classes. It is extremely hard to teach when you don't have the very basics for your students. Trying to teach a class where students are standing or

- 11. At the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year, the math department lacked the basic supplies that teachers needed to teach because of poor planning and mismanagement. The school lost teachers' overheads and as of the month of September of 2001 these overheads have not been replaced. Teachers came into classes that did not have chalk, markers, or paper. The math department did not have the supplies it needed. As a result, I spent approximately \$300 out of my own pocket to supply the math department in the short term while a new order was placed. The new supplies did not arrive until the following semester.
- 12. There are not enough teachers at Locke who speak Spanish. I know of students who speak only Spanish who are in classes with teachers who speak only English. For example, currently, the 2001-2002 school year, there are only two bilingual math teachers and a significant number of students at Locke who are ESL. In one of the geometry classes, there are several children who do not speak English and we are working on trying to get these students transferred into my class because I speak Spanish. It is horrible, that students are sitting in classes where they cannot understand what is happening. These children are being deprived of a basic education.
- least one teacher vacancy in every department at Locke. This means that during the school year students in classes without a permanent teacher will have rotating substitutes throughout the year. Sometimes these students will have a security guard standing in front of their class for the day or more. Other times a substitute may not show up at all and so the students will just stand outside of their classroom without an adult there to supervise them. When this happens often students will, on their own initiative, disperse to other teachers' classes where they know the teacher or where they have friends. I have had a student come into my class once every other week because no substitute showed up for the class that the student was supposed to be in. I have had personal experiences where a substitute has confirmed that he or she would be coming to teach my class on a day when I had to be absent, and the next day I would find out that the substitute did not show up. Teachers in the cafeteria often talk about the substitute shortage and how substitutes

- 14. When students have rotating substitutes for a semester or a year, as they often do at Locke, the situation is made worse because the administration does not step in to provide a lesson plan to those substitutes and so often the students will do little to nothing in class. For example, instead of sending the substitutes teaching classes with vacancies to the math department chair or someone else who might be able to provide a lesson plan for them, the administration sends the substitutes straight to the classroom. The administrators have direct contact with the substitutes when they enter the building and there is no system that I know of set up to ensure that these substitutes have the appropriate materials or lesson plans.
- 15. On most days, the administrators at Locke High School keep all of the bathrooms, except one bathroom for the girls and one bathroom for the boys, locked for the entire school day. There are lines to use the available bathroom and many students just opt to hold it for the day. It is terrible. The conditions at the school are like a prison.
- 16. When you have a teacher shortage, like we do at Locke, and you couple that with poor management the result is often overcrowded classrooms. An example of the overcrowding problem at Locke is that there are at least two teachers I know of who have to travel to different classrooms throughout the day because there are no available classrooms for those teachers to teach in. The teachers who have to travel all over the school have a difficult time teaching because they must set up their materials when they get to a new classroom, they must cart their books around the school, and they are not able to get settled and to create a space for learning for the students.
- 17. I am concerned that there are not enough counselors at Locke. All too often children are placed in the wrong classes and are not given the classes they need to graduate. For example, I know of students in my department who have flunked Algebra 1A but are placed in Algebra 1B the following semester. It takes about three weeks for those students to be moved back to Algebra 1A, but by that time they are behind again. Additionally, I know of students who have passed a class such as geometry, but the very next year the counselors put those students back in the very same class.

- 18. There are not enough computers at Locke. Most of the classrooms at Locke do not have computers that the students can use. I have one computer in my class and I allow students to use it to type their papers. There are technically three computer labs at the school, but two are used only for computer and typing classes. The last lab is only accessible to a small number of students -- students can only use it by request. It is horrible that students are not given the materials that are really required to be productive citizens in this computer age. Additionally, there are teachers at Locke who require students to type their assignments. However, many students at Locke do not have access to a computer and so they are at a great disadvantage.
- 19. The terrible conditions at Lockeare a clear result of the way this school is being managed on all levels. The administration is inefficient and poor. Many times supplies, materials, and other essential items do not reach the students or the teachers because of mismanagement. Things must change at Locke so that the children at the school receive the education they deserve.

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 28th day of August, 2001 in Los Angeles,

California.

eus Cubias