

April 28, 2006

Dear Parents / Legal Guardians of San Leandro Unified School District:

Efforts to reform immigration laws promise to be an important issue in 2006. You may already have information about "The Great May 1, 2006 Boycott." This is an organized nation-wide boycott of schools and workplaces on Monday, May 1. As you make your decision on whether you and your child will or will not participate, we would like to provide you with information that may assist you in making an informed decision.

While we do not want to tread upon students' expressive rights, the pressing role of schools and school districts is to provide an educational program in a safe learning environment free of disruptions and distractions. Parents and students share in the responsibility of minimizing disruptions to the educational programs. Compulsory education requires that students ages 6-18 attend school. We want our students in school on May 1. Please consider the following district regulations regarding student attendance and discipline.

If a student comes to school, we are encouraging our teachers to seize this teachable moment and provide students with activities and opportunities to study and discuss immigration in our state and country. We are also encouraging teachers to provide opportunities for students to exercise the hard-fought rights of free speech and expression in ways that will not harm or disrupt their education.

If a student does not come to school, the student's attendance record will be marked with an unexcused absence unless the student's parent/legal guardian provides the school with a valid written excuse. Valid excuses are for illness, medical or dental appointments and funerals only. Unexcused absences on this day will be handled in accordance with the district's attendance policy and may result in disciplinary action.

If a student comes to school and leaves the campus or incites others to leave, the student will receive a cut for each period she/he is not in class and will be counted as an unexcused absence and may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension. Most importantly, the school and school district staff cannot guarantee the safety and security of student demonstrators. Parents should be aware that if their child participates in the demonstrations, they could be cited by local law enforcement for violation of local truancy or applicable loitering ordinances.

While we are anticipating peaceful demonstrations of free speech, disciplinary action will be taken with students who commit offenses of the Educational Code. Please refer to the San Leandro Parent Handbook for actions that result in suspension and expulsion.

We hope that you will consider your choices carefully and choose an appropriate expression regarding your beliefs about the immigration laws. If you have any questions, please contact your school principal.

Sincerely,
Cindy M. Cathey
Assistant Superintendent
Educational Services