

June 28, 2006

Assistant Superintendent Cindy Cathey  
San Leandro Unified School District  
14735 Juniper St.  
San Leandro, CA. 94579-1222

Dear Ms. Cathey,

Last May I contacted you to express my concerns, and those of the San Leandro Community Action Network (SLCAN) about the letter that had been sent to parents of students in the San Leandro schools advising them of the potential penalties their children would face if they were to be absent from schools to attend the May 1st Immigration protests. At that time, we discussed how the language in the letter communicated an implied threat of dire consequences, including suspension, expulsion and criminal citation, if the children were to be absent to attend the marches. We discussed how those implied threats constituted an inaccurate characterization of local and state law, and how they were particularly inappropriate when levied against an immigrant community already fearful of government institutions. These concerns were also discussed by other SLCAN members with individual School Board trustees and were brought up at the May 16th School Board Meeting.

We were relieved to find out that the tone of the letter did not reflect the intentions of the administration or the board of the San Leandro Unified School District. We understand that the letter was composed quickly to respond to exigent inquiries from parents, and that the administration had no time to consult with people from the Latino or immigrant communities before sending the letter. We further understand that this was an anomaly and that in the future all efforts will be made to consult with representatives of these communities on matters that concern them. The San Leandro Community Action Network, and I personally, have offered our help on these matters.

We look forward to working with you on creating a more inclusive and culturally sensitive community within the San Leandro Unified School District.

Sincerely,

Margarita Lacabe  
Coordinator  
San Leandro Community Action Network