

## **ACLU/SC FILES LAWSUIT OVER POLICE ROUNDUP OF LATINO STUDENTS AT GLENDALE'S HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL**

(Glendale)— The ACLU of Southern California and the law firm Traber & Voorhees today sued the City of Glendale and the County of Los Angeles and individual officers from the Glendale Police Department (GPD), the Los Angeles Police Department the Los Angeles County Probation Department, and administrators at Hoover High School for racial profiling and unlawful search and seizure.

The lawsuit is based on a roundup of Latino students conducted last year at Hoover High School in Glendale. On September 24, 2010, school administrators , working with police and school-based probation officers, rounded up fifty-six Latino students during their lunch period, herded them into classrooms, interrogated them, and forced them to pose for mock mug shots. The students were targeted even though the police had no evidence that they were violating any laws or breaking school rules.

“I was shocked and scared when I saw the police, especially because I knew I hadn’t done anything wrong,” said one of the plaintiffs, a sixteen-year-old girl named as Ashley Flores in the lawsuit. “It was the first encounter I’ve had with police. I’ve never been in trouble and have nothing to do with gangs.”

The students, all Latino, were eating lunch when school administrators ordered them into two classrooms, where armed GPD and LAPD officers were waiting for them. Police told the students that they could not leave until they provided information. When some protested that they had done nothing wrong, officers ordered them to “sit down and shut up,” and threatened to go to their homes at 6 a.m. to collect the information if they did not cooperate. The officers told students that their personal information would be kept in a file to identify them if they ever got in trouble. The students were detained between 30 and 90 minutes, causing some to miss their fifth-period classes.

“The police officers, school officials, and probation officers involved in this roundup targeted these students solely because they are Latino,” said David Sapp, a staff attorney at the ACLU of Southern California. “They acted as though being a Latino teenager is all the justification they needed to detain and threaten these students, which is a textbook case of racial profiling.”

One student who was eating lunch with the others, who does not appear Latino, was not detained in the classrooms. Additionally, after the incident, Defendant Michael Rock, a captain in GPD who authorized the roundup, acknowledged that the students’ ethnicity was central in determining which students were detained, adding that GPD had planned to conduct a similar operation targeting Armenian students.

Following the incident, parents met with Glendale Unified School District administrators and supervising officers within GPD and LAPD. Although they repeatedly sought confirmation that all information collected during the operation was destroyed, those requests were refused.

“They refused to apologize for what they did or to guarantee that this information would not be used against our children, so we have no choice but to go to court to make sure the information has been destroyed and that this never happens again,” said Christine Clavesilla, the mother of one of the plaintiffs.

“Parents trust that schools officials will try to keep their kids safe, not invite police in to terrorize them because of the color of their skin,” said Bert Voorhees of Traber & Voorhees. “This suit will make sure Glendale schools are safe and supportive places for all people.”

The lawsuit, which seeks class-action status, was filed in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California. It asks that the court order the defendants to destroy any information collected on the high school students, and also seeks compensatory and punitive damages.