

A School Principal Speaks Out Against 187

Ernie McCray

Despite the passage of Proposition 187, my disposition remains the same. I will not, in any way, play a role in willfully hurting another person.

I have sat at the back of the bus. I've had someone tell me to get my "black ass" out of a hotel when there were plenty of rooms available. I've skated at the rink on special "Negro" days.

I know the hurt and humiliation that come with being mistreated. So, needless to say, there is no way on God's green earth that I could ever treat fellow human beings with such disrespect that I would ask them to prove to me their right to be in this corner of the world.

Who are we to make such demands? There is nothing in my DNA that will allow me to, without sensible reason, stand in the way of other citizens of the world who, as I do every day, struggle to house and feed themselves and their families and to live in dignity.

And if I were to play the game, what am I, as a school principal, to say to a family with whom I've bonded, who happens to be here illegally? Am I to smile and say something like, "So long, it's been good to know you"?

Am I to look a little child in the face and say: "I really appreciate how you've improved in your school work and how you've been such a good citizen, but I'm going to have to turn you in. It's nothing personal, you understand. Just remember those high fives we used to give each other and all the wonderful conversations we used to have, and if you're ever in Guadalajara, I'd like you to say hello to some friends of mine."

A parent has already asked me, "What are the children supposed to think if their principal breaks the law?" I told him I feel that the law is immoral, and I would have no problem [not enforcing it]...