

12-10-08

I teach at Mandela High School, located directly on a major diesel truck route. The effects of poor air quality are evident to me when I see the high number of absences due to respiratory illnesses. High levels of particulate matter and nitrogen oxide compounds from passing diesel trucks contaminates the air and increases ozone ground levels. The health effects of this air pollution include asthma, increased respiratory problems, and even cancer. Because of the socioeconomic level of my students, many have no choice in where they live. This environmental racism leaves my predominately poor minority students at risk for grave health problems. At risk students are being subjected to further dangers by simply breathing.

Fortunately, there is a simple fix for this problem. Requiring all trucks to filter their exhaust will dramatically increase air quality at a very small financial investment. Please mandate these measures for the health and well being of my students.

Alix Hardy