



# MALDEF

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

## STUDENTS - KNOW YOUR RIGHTS ON APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) urges both students and school administrators to make informed decisions regarding their participation in the marches and other events scheduled for April 10, 2006.

MALDEF is aware that students plan to participate in peaceful marches on April 10 throughout the United States to support fair and just immigration reform. MALDEF believes it is vital that all parties understand their respective rights and responsibilities.

### Students:

- You have a constitutional right to free speech but remember that you are still subject to school rules.
- You must remember to avoid disrupting class. Check your student handbook (most are available online) to get a better idea of your school's standards and expectations.
- Cool and calm behavior that does not disrupt the education of those choosing to remain in their classrooms is the best way to make your point and avoid punishment based on disruptive behavior.
- If you are faced with any kind of suspension, expulsion, or referral to an alternative center, you have the right to a hearing. In that hearing, administrators must tell you what you are charged with, and give you the opportunity to tell your side of the story. Your parents/guardians and lawyer can attend this meeting.
- Tell your parents/guardians about your plans. Talk to them about how they can participate on April 10, including taking you out of class to participate in the day's events.
- If you are punished more than students who may have broken the same rules, but under different circumstances (e.g., "Senior Skip Day"), this may be a violation of your right to free speech.
- Be aware of the risks involved. Sometimes events can take unexpected turns, and you may be stopped and questioned by law enforcement even if you join a peaceful march.

*Founded in 1968, MALDEF, the nation's premier Latino civil rights organization, promotes and protects the rights of Latinos through advocacy, community education and outreach, leadership development, higher education scholarships and when necessary, through the legal system.*

**Disclaimer: This document does not contain legal advice. Those seeking legal advice should contact an attorney to discuss their individual issues.**