

# Immigration Response Protocol

*Our schools are and will always remain safe places where every child—regardless of immigration status—is welcomed, valued, affirmed, validated, respected, and loved.*

*Dr. Thomas Taylor, Superintendent, December 2024*

**PURPOSE:** To establish clear procedures for school officials to follow when interacting with ICE agents or any other non-local law enforcement agent, aiming to protect student rights and ensure appropriate legal responses.

## UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES:

- » **Student Safety and Well-being:** The primary focus is on protecting the safety and well-being of students.
- » **Legal Compliance:** The protocol emphasizes the importance of adhering to legal requirements and seeking guidance from legal counsel. School-based staff should immediately contact the Office of the General Counsel (240) 740-5600.
- » **Transparency and Communication:** Clear communication channels are established between school officials, legal counsel, security personnel, and parents/guardians.

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDANCE:

Step-by-step guidance on what a school principal/designee should do if an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer approaches a school “for any reason.”

1. Meet the ICE officer or any other non-local law enforcement agent at the school entrance, where all visitors are screened for entry.
2. At the entrance, request the ICE officer’s or non- local law enforcement officer’s name and ID, the phone number of the officer’s supervisor, and the reason for the visit during school hours.
3. Obtain any documentation from the officer (e.g., subpoena; search warrant; arrest warrant).
4. Advise the officer that you, the school official, are required by district protocols to notify and obtain guidance from the office of the general counsel. School-based staff should immediately contact the Office of the **General Counsel (240) 740-5600**.
5. Advise the officer to wait outside the school building while you obtain guidance from the Office of the General Counsel.
6. Notify the Office of the General Counsel and provide them with the details and documentation obtained from the officer.
7. Wait while legal counsel reviews the materials provided. Do not take action until you obtain clear instructions from district legal counsel.
8. Contact the parents or guardians of the student(s) in question immediately after consulting with district legal counsel. **When contacting parents or guardians, use their preferred language of communication whenever possible. To facilitate this, schools have access to valuable resources such as the Language Line and translation tools within the Remind App.**
9. Ensure the school security person notifies their supervisor(s), as appropriate. If the ICE officer or non- local law enforcement officer fails to comply with instructions, do not physically attempt to interfere with any enforcement action. In these situations, obtain as much information as possible from the officer and notify the legal counsel and security supervisors.

# Staff DOs and DON'Ts

As a reminder, MCPS Schools are and will always remain safe places where every child—regardless of immigration status—is welcomed, valued, affirmed, validated, respected, and loved. Please ensure you and your schools follow the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#), [MCPS BOE Policy BBB](#), [Ethics](#), [MCPS Regulation GCA-RA](#), [Employee Conflict of Interest](#), and the [Ethical Conduct in the Work Environment in MCPS Employee Code of Conduct](#).

## DOs

### Create a Welcoming & Inclusive Environment:

- » Use inclusive language that avoids terms like “illegal” or “illegal immigrant.”
- » Ensure all students feel safe and respected, regardless of their immigration status.
- » Celebrate diversity and create a culturally responsive learning environment.

### Protect Student Privacy:

- » Understand and adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which protects student records.
- » Maintain confidentiality regarding any information about a student’s immigration status.

### Provide Accurate Information:

- » Share accurate and reliable information about student rights and resources related to immigration.
- » Partner with community organizations that can provide support and guidance to immigrant families.

### Advocate for Student Rights:

- » Support policies that protect the rights of all students, regardless of their immigration status.
- » Advocate for equitable access to education and resources for all students.

### Build Trust with Immigrant Families:

- » Communicate openly and respectfully with immigrant families.
- » Be aware of the potential impact of immigration policies on families and students.
- » Create safe spaces for families to share their concerns and seek support.

## DON'Ts

### Don't Share Sensitive Information:

- » Do not share student immigration information with unauthorized individuals.

### Don't Use Discriminatory Language:

- » Avoid using dehumanizing or discriminatory language.
- » Refrain from speculation or gossip about a student’s immigration status.

### Don't Engage in Inappropriate Behavior:

- » Avoid discrimination based on immigration status.
- » Do not engage in fear-mongering or misinformation.
- » Avoid involvement in immigration enforcement.
- » Do not make false promises.
- » Do not make assumptions about student/family status.



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