


TO: Local Education Agency Superintendents

FROM: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools 

DATE: January 30, 2025

SUBJECT: Immigration Enforcement in Schools

Immigration Enforcement in Schools - Standing Weekly Item

Starting this week, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will include a standing item in the Weekly Superintendents' Transmittal titled "Immigration Enforcement in Schools." This recurring section will provide essential updates, guidance, and resources to help districts maintain compliance with federal laws and foster safe environments for all students. This week's update focuses on reinforcing awareness of student rights under *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) and ensuring compliance with enrollment policies that do not require immigration status.

Student Rights Under *Plyler v. Doe* (1982)

The U.S. Supreme Court decision *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) affirms that schools cannot deny students a free public education based on their undocumented or non-citizen status or that of their parents/guardians. This foundational, legal precedent ensures access to education for all students, regardless of immigration status.

Registration Guidelines for Schools

Local education agencies/schools may not require students or parents to provide their immigration status or social security number as a condition of enrollment. Schools are required to adhere to enrollment practices that uphold student rights under federal law.

Resources for Superintendents and Staff

To further support your staff in implementing these policies, the following resources are recommended:

1. [American School Counselor Association \(March 2024\): Equity in Education: Challenges Facing Undocumented Students](#)
2. [National Association of Secondary School Principals \(Undated\): Undocumented Students](#)
3. [SchoolHouse Connection \(June 2023\): Immigrant Students: How Schools Can Help](#)

Questions about immigration enforcement in schools may be directed to Dr. Teresa Timmons-Parrott, Director of Multilingual Education and World Languages, at teresa.timmons-parrott@maryland.gov.