

Florida PTA Position Statement

Protection of Students from Harmful Immigration Enforcement Actions

Florida PTA remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that every child has access to a safe, supportive, and equitable learning environment. Public schools are institutions of learning and are not collection points therefore public schools should not be placed in the position of determining the legal status of immigrant children nor be required to enforce immigration laws. Furthermore, school districts should not voluntarily report undocumented students to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or other immigration authorities because such actions may constitute a denial of access to education under *Plyler*.

We recognize that local school boards are vested with a moral and legal obligation to educate all children, but cannot override state or federal law.

However, we firmly believe that policies can and should be implemented to safeguard students and ensure that due process, parental rights, and educational continuity are prioritized. School districts have a responsibility to use every legal mechanism available to protect all students from unnecessary harm and trauma regardless of their immigration status.

1. Require Official Identification and Documentation – School districts should mandate that federal immigration enforcement agents present valid ID and judicial warrants before being granted access to school premises or potential interviewees.
2. Limit Authorized Contacts – Schools should designate specific, trained administrators as the only authorized points of contact for federal immigration enforcement. This ensures compliance with legal requirements while preventing unnecessary access to students that would otherwise disrupt the learning environment.
3. Parental Notification – PTA recommends that parents or guardians be notified before any student is approached or detained by immigration authorities. (Florida law does not require/mandate parental notification to question a minor.)
4. Protect Student Records – School districts must strictly enforce compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), ensuring that immigration enforcement agencies cannot access student records without proper legal authorization. (PTA supports the confidentiality of school records, including records that pertain to the immigration status of children. Unrestrained access to school records to determine such status can pose a threat of unintended consequences due to any materials in a student's file that may be inaccurate.)

5. Adopt Student Interview Safeguards – PTA recommends any interviews involving students with law enforcement should occur only in the presence of a school administrator and a parent, guardian, or their legal representative. Ensure students know their rights against self incrimination as per the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution.

6. Preserve Instructional Time – Law enforcement actions should be restricted to non-instructional hours, ensuring that students' education is not disrupted.

PTA believes that all schools should be defined in statute as “sensitive locations” and Immigration and ICE officers and agents are to refrain from enforcement actions against students in schools including preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, and other institutions of learning, such as vocational and trade schools.

Florida PTA urges school districts to adopt policies that create procedural safeguards that ensure the safety and well-being of all children. We remain committed to working alongside educators, policymakers, and families to advocate for policies that uphold the rights and dignity of every child.

Language from the National PTA Position Statement on Rights and Services for Undocumented Children is incorporated into this Position Statement.

Adopted on :

By the Florida PTA Board of Directors