

Dear Families,

The safety and well-being of every student in Norwalk Public Schools are at the core of our mission. Recent federal policy changes, including those under the Trump administration, have removed schools from the list of locations traditionally considered sensitive for immigration enforcement. This change has understandably created concerns within our community. We want to assure you that we remain dedicated to protecting all students, regardless of their immigration status, and share the robust measures we have in place.

District Guidelines Regarding Non-Local Law Enforcement and ICE Actions

To safeguard our students and school environments, our district follows strict protocols:

1. No Consent to Access:

Our district does not consent to non-local law enforcement, including ICE, entering school facilities, accessing students, or reviewing student records without legal authority. School principals and staff are not authorized to grant such access without prior consultation with our Legal Counsel.

2. Judicial Warrants Required:

Only judicial warrants signed by a judge are recognized as valid. Administrative warrants are not sufficient to permit ICE to enter our schools. Any documentation presented by non-local law enforcement will be reviewed by Legal Counsel to determine its validity before any action is taken.

3. Immediate Legal Review:

If non-local law enforcement, including ICE, arrives at a school, they will remain outside the premises while the school security officer collects identifying information and consults with the school building leader. The building leader will then consult with Legal Counsel to determine the appropriate course of action. Access will not be granted without explicit authorization from Legal Counsel.

Protecting Student Records

Federal laws such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) safeguard student records. These records cannot be shared with law enforcement without a valid court order, subpoena, or the informed written consent of a parent or guardian (or the student, if 18 or older).

What This Means for Families

We recognize the potential stress and concern these guideline changes can create. To support our families:

Clear Communication: If an immigration enforcement action is attempted, families will be notified promptly after consultation with Legal Counsel.

Access to Resources: We are partnering with local organizations to offer legal assistance, workshops, and counseling to help families navigate these challenging times.

Emergency Planning Support: Our Family Center team is available to work directly with families to create personalized emergency plans. These plans are designed to provide peace of mind and ensure that families are prepared in the unlikely event of an enforcement action.

Our Commitment to a Safe Learning Environment

Our district is steadfast in ensuring that schools remain safe and welcoming spaces for every student. We are committed to adhering to laws that protect students while prioritizing their right to learn in a secure and inclusive environment.

If you have questions about these procedures or need assistance, please contact your school principal or the district office at 203-854-4001. Together, we will continue to support the success and safety of all students in Norwalk Public Schools.

Thank you for your trust and partnership.

Yours in Partnership,

Dr. Alexandra Estrella
Superintendent
Norwalk Public Schools