Council of the Great City Schools
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Council of the Great City Schools Files Amicus Brief in Denver Public Schools Case Rescinding Protected Areas Policy for ICE Enforcement

WASHINGTON, March 3 – The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), a coalition of 78 of the nation's largest urban public-school systems, submitted an amicus brief in *Denver Public Schools v. Kristi Noem*, filed last month in the United States District Court for the District of Colorado.

Denver Public Schools filed this lawsuit to enjoin Defendants' repeal of a longstanding policy against conducting immigration enforcement actions at or near schools, absent exigent circumstances.

The Council's brief provides unique information and perspective concerning the impact of Defendants' actions, including data on how the policy has impacted education in large school districts since it was announced. As the brief argues, Supreme Court justices have reasoned in the past that due to the special features of the school environment, school officials must have greater authority to intervene to proactively prevent violence. The revocation of the Protected Areas policy has left a gaping hole where standards used to exist, leaving schools vulnerable to violent or traumatic incidents initiated by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The Council's focus on student safety and maintaining a safe and welcoming environment in the school space is echoed in a brief survey of its members. All of the survey respondents stated that student safety was a top priority.

Moreover, respondents indicated that they have already seen increased absenteeism, higher anxiety among students, increased bullying, less parental involvement, and heightened fear as a result of the change in guidance.

"Our member school districts serve more than 7.8 million urban students, 44 percent of whom are Hispanic, and 17 percent who are English language learners. As a result, we have a unique perspective on challenges these students face on a daily basis," said CGCS Executive Director Ray Hart. "Conducting immigration enforcement actions on school grounds will do nothing to rectify these challenges, indeed our survey suggests the opposite. The importance of children's safety in the classroom and in school spaces is universally recognized, and we strongly support

schools remaining safe places for our students to attend and participate in all school activities free from harm."

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About The Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 78 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information, and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge to deliver the best possible education for urban youth. www.cgcs.org