

Dear SBSB staff,

As we are tasked with protecting our students, it is imperative that we all be equipped with tools to combat recent legislation that threatens the well-being of our immigrant students. In his inaugural address on January 20th, 2025, Donald Trump rescinded a [longstanding policy](#) that [prevented federal immigration enforcement](#) from making arrests at schools and other previously sanctuary-sensitive locations, like hospitals and religious institutions. This puts students and families at risk of being arrested at school by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

I want to reiterate the importance of the Supreme Court case *Plyler v. Doe*, which ruled that undocumented children have a constitutional right to receive a free and public K–12 education. I would extend that to say that undocumented children also have the right to feel safe and loved in their schools. Please know that we have inclusive registration practices that honors all of our students, regardless of their immigration status. Immigration and Customs Enforcement does not and will never have a place in our schools.

As a result, we will not provide them with any information, especially regarding students, families, or staff. Immigration enforcement actions such as deportation or separation are not welcome on our campus. We will work with our legal counsel to ensure that we protect our students as fiercely as possible. We will prevent entry by federal immigration authorities to the school building in an enforcement capacity unless the federal immigration authorities have a valid judicial criminal warrant or judicial order. An “administrative warrant” or “immigration detainer” is not judicially issued and does not carry the legal authority of a judicial warrant. We will consult with district legal counsel in the event that immigration authorities seek entry to school grounds to determine what type of warrant has been presented and what is required of school officials as a result. Please do not engage, verbally or physically with immigration enforcement, except to notify them they need to speak to your building administrator, or myself.

[Here is a helpful document from the AOE that provides guidance to school districts](#)

For educators, I advise the following:

- Do not provide any information to immigration enforcement about an individual student, family member, or employee, under any circumstances. Remain calm and limit communication to connecting the officer with the school principal.

- Administrators have the right to question Immigration and Customs Enforcement's presence and let agents know that their presence on campus is perceived as a threat and they should contact the Central Office. The administrator should collect any documentation from an officer, such as a subpoena, search warrant, or arrest warrant, and have the officer wait **outside** the school building while Central Office contacts legal counsel.
- **Do not** ask or share information about a student's or their family's immigration status.

If a student or family expresses worry, suggest having them consider updating their emergency contact information in Powerschool, creating [family preparedness plans](#) and sharing the plan with their emergency contact. The family preparedness plans support families in responding to ICE, and creating a child caregiver plan if deportation and separation occur. Family members can also use the ICE detainee locator [Online Detainee Locator System](#) to find someone in ICE custody. (They will need the A-Number, the registration number found on their immigration documents from ICE). In Chittenden County, the [Center for Justice Reform Clinic – Vermont Law and Graduate School](#) offers free legal assistance for immigrant families. They can be contacted at (802) 540-0398, or [cjrclinic@vermontlaw.edu](mailto:cjrclinic@vermontlaw.edu). The Vermont Asylum Assistance Project (802-999-5654) or [info@vaapvt.org](mailto:info@vaapvt.org) also offers free legal counsel.

For families, I advise the following:

- Do not open the door for ICE or any police officer without a signed warrant.
- If ICE knocks on your door, ask them to slide the search warrant under the door or show it through a window.
- You do not need to open the door unless an ICE agent can show you a warrant **signed by a judge with your correct name and address on it**. If they do not have this, then you do not have to open the door. Once you open the door, you lose certain rights.
- Contact the above counsel (Center for Justice Reform or Vermont Asylum Assistance Project).

We are working on directly communicating with all families in the district in their preferred languages. [Check out the red card initiative](#), translated into 16 languages. I realize that you may have questions! [Please use this form to submit questions to me](#), and I will get you a response as quickly as I can. I will also add to this [FAQ sheet you all can see questions and answers](#).

A big shoutout to our multilingual teachers and principals who are already receiving phone calls from families leaning on them for support. Finally, I want to thank each of you for your commitment to our immigrant students. As the proud *hija* with an immigrant mother, I feel humbled to stand in solidarity with you all. You can contact me anytime on my cell phone, or by email. -Monica Desrochers