We invite you to add your signature to this letter here: https://goo.gl/forms/KT33wjacnJ2KPyor2

Additionally, please do not forget to donate to our fundraiser for RAICES Texas if you are able.

Dear Headmaster Seivold,

During our years at Berkeley, we were often reminded of the school's creed: *Berkeley puts people in the world who make a positive difference*. The impact of this mission statement is apparent in our alumni, with many of us choosing to fight injustice in our professions — as lawyers, labor organizers, nonprofit professionals, health advocates, and journalists — but for all of us, not a day goes by that we do not consider the impact of our actions, or inactions, upon the world around us.

For this reason, we would be remiss to stay silent now. Today, we respectfully request that you condemn the policies causing the separation of children from their families at the US-Mexico border, implemented and enforced by Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen — known to us as Kirstjen Nielsen, Class of 1990.

In May, Attorney General Jeff Sessions <u>announced a new zero-tolerance policy</u> on immigration: Undocumented people who cross the border seeking asylum will be prosecuted and separated from their children, including those who present themselves to Border Patrol officials after crossing the border — <u>which, despite Secretary Nielsen's claims, is not illegal</u>. Secretary Nielsen's agency is charged with enforcing this policy.

Despite Secretary Nielsen's <u>claims</u> that her agency does not have a policy of separating children from their families, <u>they undeniably do</u>. Since October 1, 2017, <u>at least 2,700 children have been separated from their families</u> at the border and housed in warehouses that essentially amount to child prison camps. This is an average of <u>45 children per day</u> being taken from their families and shunted into facilities that are over capacity and not equipped to care for children. In some cases, Border Patrol agents have seized children under the guise of <u>"taking them for a bath."</u> Only hours later do the parents realize that their children will not be returned to them. While Secretary Nielsen's agency does not handle the resettlement of these children, her agency is responsible for handing these vulnerable children over to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, known for its history of <u>releasing children to traffickers</u>.

We know the practice of separating children from their parents is undeniably cruel, as well as severely traumatizing for the child. The quality of life in detention facilities only magnifies that suffering. Children are being <u>held in cages and sleeping on the ground</u>. On Monday, ProPublica obtained and released <u>audio</u> of children wailing for their parents inside a CBP facility. This is America, but it doesn't have to be.

Secretary Nielsen has also said that this policy is not a shift from the previous administration. While the law has not changed, the policy is, without question, a shift. Zero-tolerance is a draconian position in which every case is prosecuted, every defendant is held until trial or confession, and children are torn from their parents' arms as a matter of policy.

Given the facts at hand, we do not have faith in Secretary Nielsen to live the values of our alma mater or to make any decisions concerning outcomes for children at the border.

We recognize that it would be easy to dismiss our request as absurd or out of your purview — it would be, in many ways, disadvantageous to Berkeley to chime in. But morality transcends respectability, and today children are removed from the protection of their parents to instead be kept in cages, some even <u>driven to suicide</u> by a graduate of our institution. This issue runs deeper than partisan politics, and treating it as a purely political dispute would secure a spot for our school on the wrong side of history. So we invite Berkeley's administration, faculty, staff, alumni, and students to stand with us and be a voice for integrity and compassion. Berkeley taught us all to lead by example, and we implore you to join us in doing so.

Our power lies in our money, time, and positioning. As students and graduates of Berkeley Preparatory School, we:

- Pledge our dollars to <u>RAICES Texas</u>, an organization committed to providing free and low-income legal services to underserved immigrant children, families, and refugees, which you can donate to <u>here</u>;
- 2. Dedicate our time to causes that advance the wellbeing of people across the world, especially immigrants;
- Use our positioning to call on our peer, Kirstjen Nielsen, to cease the practice of separating children from their families, or resign. We also call on Berkeley's leadership to join us and practice what you teach: Make a positive difference. Use your privilege for good.

We have become who we are because of educators at Berkeley — and who we are compels us to ask for your support. Thank you for your consideration.

Signed,

A cohort of Berkeley Preparatory community members who oppose the separation of children and families, including:

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Nathan '11

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Anjali Reddy '11

Brad Glisson '11

Vikas Kotha '11

Aliza Sena '11

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Jillian Eiland '10

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Kaitlyn Barry '10

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Lindsey Weiss '10

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Desiree Okoh '09

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Diane Patrick '09

Whitney Hawkins Goodman '09

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Eri Jacobs '09

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Richard Blake '08

Hope Ellis '08

Kaitlin Polin '08

Mark Henry Kuivila '08

Anna Ciamporcero '08

Tara Braun '08

Ellen Howett '08

Camila Sainz de la Peña '08

Taylor Martin '08

Lauren Uichanco '08

Kelly Russo '08

Sarah Wormser '08

LaDai Haywood '08

Nitya Kanuri '08

Melissa King '08

Lindsey Berlin '08

Carey Crows (Goldenberg) '07

Stephen Swindal '07

Ariana Proctor (Tuchman) '07

Karie Weissman Swindal '07

Venu Amar '07

Lindsay Firestone '07

Francis D'Hondt '07

Molly Mechanik '07

Nikhil Kundra '07

Evan Eisenberg '07

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Matt Ryckman '07

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Jeff Schwartz '06

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Whitney Holtzman '06

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