



## **Immigration Tip Sheet**

AFT Washington is committed to social justice and human rights in our communities, which includes the right to access a safe education.

However, for our immigrant students and members, these rights are under threat. President-elect Donald Trump has committed to “carry out the largest domestic deportation operation in American history.” Students and workers can only thrive when their school, center or college campus is safe and secure – we must collectively be prepared to advocate for our students and ourselves in the years to come.

As members of your local’s executive committee, you may already be discussing how your union will respond to the incoming administration. Below are information and tips to help guide these conversations.

### **Q: What does the law say regarding student immigration status?**

**A:** All students are [entitled to a public school education](#), regardless of their immigration status. Schools cannot discriminate against students based on their immigration status, and school personnel have no legal obligation to enforce immigration laws.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection currently maintain a policy that provides they will not engage in immigration arrests at or near schools. The incoming Trump administration, however, has indicated it intends to [rescind that policy](#). Members at Green River College have already reported sightings of ICE officials at that campus.

Under the [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA](#), school staff are prohibited from providing information about a student. This includes providing details of a student’s immigration status to Department of Homeland Security agents. However, if immigration officials issue a subpoena or court order, the relevant office at your school or college may be compelled to turn over such information.

### **Q: What steps can our union take to ensure our school is prepared in the event of immigration arrests at or near our campus?**

**A:** Ask your administration for its plan on how to address the presence of immigration officials on or near campus. Ask that they communicate those plans to all staff and use your union’s communication channels to share information.

As an executive committee, discuss what actions your union can take to demonstrate your support for students and families. As a start, you can print the documents listed at the end of this email to post on your union bulletin board. Ask your employer to post them in shared spaces.

**Q: What if I feel pressure from my campus administrators to cooperate with police?**

**A:** As an educator, you are responsible for upholding students’ rights to privacy and access to a public education. Any pressure from your administration to provide protected information to law enforcement may be a violation of federal law. Members should document any such interactions and share with their union representatives.

If you have additional questions or concerns, contact your AFT Washington Union Organizing Representative, and review the resources below.

**More resources:**

[Washington State Attorney General’s Office FAQ on hate crimes and bias incidents](#)

[Keep Washington Working Act guidance for public schools](#)

[Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network](#)

[Immigrant Legal Resource Center Family Preparedness Plan \(English\)](#)

[Immigrant Legal Resource Center Family Preparedness Plan \(Spanish\)](#)

[Immigrant Legal Resource Center Red Cards](#)

[AFT Immigration Know Your Rights \(English\)](#)

[AFT Immigration Know Your Rights \(Spanish\)](#)

[AFT Immigration Raid Emergency Plan \(English\)](#)

[AFT Immigration Raid Emergency Plan \(Spanish\)](#)

[AFT Washington Human Rights Committee](#)