



## **Responses to Frequently Asked Questions:** **Immigration Policies and Freedom from Discrimination**

One of the top priorities of the Los Angeles Unified School District (L.A. Unified) is to create safe spaces for learning, where all students – regardless of immigration status, religion, disability, nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation – are respected and have access to a quality education.

Below are answers to questions many have raised concerning immigration policies and freedom from discrimination and harassment.

### Immigration Policies

**Question 1: How may President Trump’s executive orders on immigration impact students and families who do not have lawful immigration status?**

Answer 1: On January 25, 2017, President Trump signed executive orders related to immigration and border security, including increasing resources to enforce immigration laws, identifying resources for the construction of a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, and withholding federal grants to what the administration could identify as “sanctuary jurisdictions.” It is possible these executive orders will be challenged in courts or by lawmakers. On January 27, 2017, President Trump signed an executive order restricting travel from seven countries. This order is currently being challenged in court.

The executive orders on immigration do not change L.A. Unified’s commitment to providing a free quality education to all District students, regardless of immigration status.

**Question 2: Are public K-12 schools in the United States required to provide a free public education to students, regardless of immigration status?**

Answer 2: Yes. All children in the United States have a Constitutional right to equal access to a free public education regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents. That right was confirmed in the United States Supreme Court case *Plyler v. Doe*. Discrimination is also prohibited by federal laws, including Titles IV, VI, and IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Question 3: Does L.A. Unified ask for the immigration status of a student or family member for enrollment or educational purposes?**

Answer 3: No. L.A. Unified does not ask for the immigration status of a student or family member for enrollment or educational purposes. This includes applications for transportation, free/reduced-price meals, academic programs, extracurricular activities, and other services.

**Question 4: Does L.A. Unified ever share a student’s immigration status or confidential student records information with federal immigration officials?**

Answer 4: L.A. Unified does not collect a student’s immigration status and information (unless a student or parent informs the District that he or she is enrolling under a foreign student or business visa). Therefore, L.A. Unified would not have this information to provide to federal immigration officials. If L.A. Unified inadvertently becomes aware of a student’s status, that information is not retained.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) generally prohibits school districts from providing third parties with student education records. However, there may be exceptional circumstances under which the District could be *required* to provide pupil records information to federal immigration officials, including the following: 1) if there is a valid subpoena, warrant, or court order; and 2) if there are emergency circumstances, such as a confirmed danger to public safety.

**Question 5: Does the Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD) play a role in federal immigration investigations?**

Answer 5: The LASPD's primary mission is to promote a safe learning environment at schools. Members of the LASPD do not inquire about immigration status. Additionally, the LASPD does not interact with immigration officials, unless there is an emergency situation concerning the immediate safety of students or employees.

**Question 6: Can federal immigration officials come onto L.A. Unified campuses?**

Answer 6: Federal immigration officials have a policy restricting enforcement actions at "sensitive locations," including schools, hospitals, and institutions of worship. The policy is still valid at the time of this writing. Also, as with other law enforcement agencies, federal immigration officials may come onto campuses under exceptional circumstances, such as immediate public safety issues, or when there is a valid search warrant, subpoena, or court order. Additional information may be found in the District's Reference Guide [\*REF-6767.1: LAUSD Campuses as Safe Zones and Resource Centers\*](#).

**Question 7: What could happen if I am a recipient of DACA?**

Answer 7: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ([DACA](#)) is a policy implemented under the Obama Administration in June 2012. At this time, the new presidential administration has not released guidance on whether it will modify or remove DACA. Information about DACA can be found on the National Immigration Law Center webpage at <https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/>.

**Question 8: What resources are available to help students and families who are newcomers to the country and are seeking to enroll in the District?**

Answer 8: The District's School Enrollment Placement and Assessment (S.E.P.A.) Center connects students and families with resources to support academic, social, and emotional success. The S.E.P.A. Center also provides referrals to other social services and legal assistance programs that are not affiliated with the District, but are available at the discretion of families. The main S.E.P.A. Center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 1339 Angelina St., Los Angeles, and can be contacted at (213) 482-3954.

In addition, the District has opened temporary extended support sites in each region of the District, which provide similar resources to the S.E.P.A. Center. You can find the extended support site nearest you by calling a hotline that has been set up to respond to questions around these issues and others. The hotline number is (866) 742-2273.

**Question 9: What should I do if I have more questions about immigration laws and procedures?**

Answer 9: District personnel cannot give legal advice concerning specific immigration matters. However, it is the District's opinion that licensed immigration attorneys are the most likely to provide reliable legal advice on immigration matters. For your protection, the District does not recommend seeking legal advice from non-attorney "notarios." A directory of free or low-cost nonprofit immigration legal services providers can be found at <https://www.immigrationlawhelp.org>. Please note that the advice provided by people found on this website do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the District. Additional information and resources can be accessed at <http://achieve.lausd.net/familyresources>.

It is recommended that families with immigration questions contact an immigration legal services provider as soon as possible, because such providers are becoming very busy.

For additional questions regarding enrollment or access to resources, please contact the S.E.P.A. Center at (213) 482-3954.

## Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment

### **Question 10: What is L.A. Unified's policy on discrimination and harassment?**

Answer 10: The District is committed to educational excellence, equity, and access. Our policies prohibit discrimination against or harassment of our students, families, or employees on the basis of actual or perceived religion, disability, nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or other protected classes.

To learn more about the District's nondiscrimination policies, please visit the Educational Equity Compliance Office website at <http://achieve.lausd.net/eeco>.

### **Question 11: What should I do if I believe my child or I have been the victim of discrimination or harassment?**

Answer 11: The District takes allegations of discrimination and/or harassment very seriously. Please immediately report the behavior to a school leader, supervisor, Office of the Superintendent, or your local law enforcement agency. For information about school-based discrimination, please contact the Educational Equity Compliance Office at (213) 241-7682 or visit their website at <http://achieve.lausd.net/eeco>.

For updated information, please visit the District's homepage at [lausd.net](http://lausd.net).