

18.51 Rights and Services for Immigrant Families, Children, and Youth

Resolution passed 2025

Whereas, National PTA supports policies that create a safe and supportive school environment for all families and students, including students in immigrant and mixed status families, and protecting and preserving public school attendance, student learning and well-being are paramount to our country's future and success; and

Whereas, National PTA acknowledges that the separation of a child from their family creates toxic stress and trauma that can have significant and lifelong harm on a child's brain and physical development; and

Whereas, in Plyler v. Doe, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized that the U.S. Constitution requires schools to provide a free public education to all students, regardless of their immigration status; and

Whereas, some undocumented immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as children continue to receive protection from deportation under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and federal legislation, such as the American Dream and Promise Act, is annually proposed by Congress to provide a pathway to U.S. citizenship for DACA recipients; and

Whereas, Washington State law prohibits discrimination based on citizenship or immigration status, particularly with respect to state-funded educational institutions; and

Whereas, the [Keep Washington Working Act](#), enacted in 2019, ensures that Washington "remains a place where the rights and dignity of all residents are maintained and protected in order to keep Washington working" and directs the State Attorney General's office to create model policies and procedures for Washington public schools, for "limiting immigration enforcement to the fullest extent possible consistent with federal and state law . . . to ensure [public schools] remain accessible to all Washington residents, regardless of immigration or citizenship status"; and

Whereas, in Washington State students do not have to be U.S. citizens to receive financial aid or resident tuition for post-secondary education; and

Whereas, on January 20, 2025, the President of the United States rescinded a policy that protected certain areas—such as churches, school, and hospitals—from immigration enforcement; and

Whereas, school attendance is critical to student success, but some families are choosing to keep their children at home due to fears of immigration enforcement activity; and

Whereas, Washington State PTA believes that every child residing in the United States – regardless of their immigration status – has the right of access to a high-quality public education, adequate food and shelter, and basic health care services.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall actively support legislation and policies that provide immigrants who have received protection under DACA the ability to reach their fullest potential, including through a pathway to citizenship; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils ensure that immigrant children and youth and the children and youth of immigrant parents or guardians have access to pre-K, K-12, and post-secondary education without fear of harassment, deportation, family separation, or excess financial burden by advocating for legislation and policies that:

- Protect the privacy of immigrant students and families against illegal data collection, profiling, or threats of deportation by:
 - o Preventing schools and school districts from collecting the immigration status of students and families unless required by law
 - o Requiring schools and school districts to make it clear that students and families are not required to provide social security numbers to the school or the school district unless required by law
- Designate all education-related areas as “sensitive locations” where immigration enforcement is prohibited including, but not limited to: K-12 schools; the area around K-12 schools; routes to K-12 schools; buses and bus stops; preschools; colleges and universities; other institutions of learning, such as vocational and trade schools; and facilities where education-related activities are conducted such as playgrounds, athletic facilities, childcare centers, extracurricular activity program locations, and graduation or other school-related event spaces
- Support financial aid for post-secondary education regardless of immigration status; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall advocate for legislation and policies that support the health, safety, and well-being of children, youth, and their families regardless of their immigration status including, but not limited to:

- Access to child nutrition programs, including school meals
- Access to healthcare
- Access to housing
- Access to food

- Encouraging school districts to provide families with Know Your Rights information in the event of an interaction with immigration enforcement authorities, when possible, in their chosen primary language
- Encouraging families to complete emergency preparedness forms in the event of a family separation
- Requiring school districts to adopt policies and procedures in the event of an immigration enforcement action on school grounds, such as the model policies created by the Washington State Attorney General’s Office as directed by the Keep Washington Working Act, and to provide training for school staff on the policies and procedures
- Requiring schools and school districts to adopt policies and procedures to protect students and families from retaliation, harassment, or bullying due to their immigration status; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils shall create inclusive and welcoming environments so that all children, youth, and families, regardless of immigration status, can enjoy the benefits of PTA participation by:

- Wherever possible, hosting all meetings and events at locations that would be designated protected areas under federal, state, or local law
- Creating policies and procedures in the event of an immigration enforcement action at a PTA-hosted meeting or event