



## **ASCA Statement on Escalating ICE Enforcement and its Impact on Students and Schools**

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) condemns immigration enforcement practices that compromise the safety, stability and well-being of students, families and school communities. ASCA urges federal, state and local leaders to uphold policies that protect all children and ensure families can participate fully in their schools and communities without fear.

Escalations in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations have caused widespread disruption in school communities. Sudden family separation, witnessing enforcement activity, or living with persistent fear of detention or deportation can constitute adverse childhood experiences with consequences that often follow students into adulthood.

More broadly, intensified immigration enforcement contributes to community instability, heightens barriers to learning and erodes trust between families and institutions tasked with supporting them. Students may experience disrupted attendance, declines in academic performance, or increased mental health concerns. Families may withdraw from school engagement, limit use of essential services or relocate abruptly. School counselors have reported increases in anxiety and distress among students when immigration enforcement rises in their communities.

School counselors play a critical role in fostering environments that are safe, supportive and conducive to learning. When enforcement actions undermine these conditions, educators and school counselors face greater challenges in ensuring

equitable access to high-quality instruction, mental health supports and postsecondary opportunities.

Schools must remain welcoming spaces where all students – regardless of immigration status or family circumstances – can learn, grow and thrive. ASCA calls on policymakers to enact and enforce measures that safeguard children, uphold family unity and preserve the trust essential to effective education. Schools and school counselors must be empowered to focus on students' academic, social/emotional and career development without the shadow of destabilizing external actions.

[\*\*Read ASCA's Current Issues in Education: Immigration and Undocumented Families and Students\*\*](#)

[\*\*Read ASCA's Standards in Practice: Addressing Racial Bias in Schools: The School Counselor's Role\*\*](#)