



Communication for Immigrant & Refugee Students & Families

Dear Families,

As many of you know, there have been recent changes at the federal level regarding Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The previous "sensitive locations" policy, which included public schools, is no longer in effect, meaning there is a possibility ICE officials could enter our schools when they would not previously. Ottumwa Community Schools will comply with all federal and state regulations embedded in our role of educating your students. District staff take pride in a safe and welcoming teaching environment and we want all of our families to feel a sense of connection and belonging in our schools.

The Ottumwa Community School District is dedicated to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students. We understand that some families have asked how the district would respond if there were a request to share immigration-related information. We want to take this opportunity to clarify our policies and practices.

Our Policies and Practices:

- If ICE officials arrive with a warrant or subpoena, we will seek verification of their identity, as we would for any visitor to our buildings. Once verified by law, we will comply with the actions outlined in the legal document.
- Any requests for student information or communication with a student from external agencies, including law enforcement or government officials, will be referred directly to the District Office. The district has worked with legal counsel to ensure compliance with all applicable laws while safeguarding students' privacy and rights.
- The district **does not** collect or maintain information regarding student or family immigration status. This information **is not** part of the registration or any other documentation process required by the district. Our focus during registration is on gathering the necessary information to meet educational, safety, and communication needs, as state and federal guidelines require.

Handle with Care:

We understand that families may face difficult situations, such as trauma, loss, or other challenges, that can impact students at school. To help us provide the appropriate care and support for your student, parents and other caregivers can reach out to the students building to alert them of the need to handle with care. This process does not require significant details, or a complicated process. Rather, please alert the school that the student may require additional support, encouragement, or patience.

The Ottumwa Community School District remains committed to supporting all students and families. We take great pride in delivering the best education to our community and welcoming all students, parents, and families. Please contact us if you have any questions or need assistance.

Sincerely,

Mike McGrory, Superintendent