

Educator Reflection Questions for Supporting Immigrant Students and Whole School Communities

This document aims to provide educators and administrators with a framework for engaging effectively with our diverse student population, particularly in relation to sensitive issues surrounding immigration and legal status. It aims to clarify our roles as educators, emphasizing the importance of fostering an inclusive and supportive environment while recognizing the boundaries of our expertise. By outlining key questions and considerations, we seek to equip staff with the tools necessary to understand the unique needs of all students, promote respectful dialogue, and connect families with appropriate resources. This document serves as a guide to ensure that our approach is both compassionate and compliant with legal standards, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for every student in our community.

- Understanding Our Context
 - **What are the current immigration policies affecting our students? How can I ensure my understanding remains up to date?**
 - What are the legal responsibilities that fall within my role regarding student data privacy?
 - What resources can my colleagues and I access to stay informed about the legal rights of students - recognizing that we cannot provide legal advice in our role?
 - What community resources are available to support all families, particularly those needing legal assistance? What department or which staff member is responsible for making these confidential connections?
- Engaging with the Community
 - How can we foster an inclusive dialogue among students, parents, and local officials regarding immigration issues, while ensuring we do not provide legal advice?
 - **What collaborative efforts can we pursue with other educators to promote understanding and support for all students, while being clear about our limitations in addressing legal matters?**
 - How can we engage local organizations that provide legal resources and support to families, ensuring that we direct families appropriately without assuming those roles ourselves?
- Creating an Inclusive Environment
 - What steps are we taking to ensure our school is a safe haven for all students?

- How do we celebrate the diverse backgrounds of students in our curriculum and events?
- **What measures are in place to address bullying and discrimination, ensuring that all students feel safe?**
- For Administrators: Educating Ourselves and Empowering Staff
 - Have I provided training for staff on student rights, emphasizing that we should refer legal questions to qualified professionals?
 - What do I know about the ways that local officials and law enforcement are planning to respond to requests from federal immigration officials?
 - **What resources and support can I provide to help staff understand the challenges faced by our students and their families?**
 - What guidelines do we have for staff on discussing student information in a manner that maintains confidentiality and respects legal boundaries?
 - Have we reviewed what student data is shared as part of the school's directory information, and if in the past, it included country of birth, have we removed that category?
 - **Do we have a concrete action-oriented plan of action in case immigration officials come to the school? If so, is it understood by all of the school staff? Is it printed and clearly accessible at the front desk for front desk staff?**
- Supporting Students
 - What strategies do we have to identify and support the unique needs of all students?
 - How can we foster peer support among students to promote understanding and respect?
 - What systems are in place for students to express concerns confidentially?
 - How can we communicate to families that their concerns will be treated with confidentiality and respect?
 - What systems do we have for students to report concerns anonymously?
- Defining Roles and Referrals
 - What issues are within our purview as educators, and what should we refer to community organizations or legal experts?
 - When should we involve legal experts for specific immigration concerns, and how can we guide families in seeking that help?
 - **What mental health resources are available? Are you familiar with the reporting requirements of those professionals? How can we facilitate access for students without assuming roles outside our expertise?**
 - How can we create a referral system that connects families with appropriate resources, ensuring clarity about our role as educators?
- Self-Reflection
 - What are my own biases and assumptions when interacting with diverse families?
 - In what ways can I ensure I am not taking on issues beyond my expertise, particularly regarding legal matters?
 - **How can I create an open environment where families feel comfortable sharing their needs while guiding them to appropriate resources?**
 - How can I access professional development to support better students within my role as an educator?