

Student Safety and Immigration Enforcement

Recommendations for supporting students, families, and staff in the face of immigration-enforcement concerns.

01
Student Safety
& Well-Being

02
Staff Guidance
& Training

03
Family
Resources

Introduction

This proposal recommends that Granite School District help students, families, and staff safely and legally address immigration-enforcement concerns. It asks the district to approve resources and adopt practical policies that improve student safety, increase family trust, and reduce legal risk for staff and the district.

The concerns facing families, students, and educators have changed quickly, and current procedures and resources have not kept pace. These concerns affect people of all citizenship and immigration statuses. U.S. citizens may worry about their loved ones or that they will be perceived as foreigners. Documented immigrants may fear that a legal misstep could jeopardize their status. Mixed-status or undocumented families may be unsure where to turn for accurate help. Students are being asked to navigate complex and frightening issues on the way to school, and some families are losing trust that the district has a clear plan to keep students safe. This affects attendance, learning, and school climate.

Staff are also being placed in a difficult position. Without clear guidance or approved resources, they may feel forced either to improvise or to avoid the subject altogether. Improvisation increases the risk of misinformation, inconsistent responses, student harm, and legal exposure for the district. Avoidance can leave students feeling unsupported and can allow misinformation, bullying, and fear to spread.

The proposal recommends that Granite establish clear protocols for immigration-enforcement concerns that would:

- Support students' safety and well-being at school and during transportation.
- Equip staff to respond to student and family concerns effectively while reducing legal risk.
- Provide families with trusted resources to reduce fear, address safety concerns, and keep students connected to school.

THIS PROPOSAL DOES NOT ASK GRANITE TO:

- ✗ Provide individualized immigration legal advice.
- ✗ Interfere with immigration enforcement.
- ✗ Train students or families to break the law.
- ✗ Adopt a sanctuary policy.
- ✗ Take a partisan position.

THIS PROPOSAL ASKS GRANITE TO:

- ✓ Approve and share trusted resources.
- ✓ Clarify staff boundaries, responsibilities, and facilitate optional training.
- ✓ Improve transparency around safety, privacy, transportation, and attendance procedures.
- ✓ Address bullying, misinformation, and emergency-planning needs.
- ✓ Prepare students to travel to and from school safely and lawfully.
- ✓ Address both the physical and psychological safety of students.

These steps have already been implemented in other school districts and are grounded in ordinary student-safety, privacy, and attendance responsibilities. As immigration-enforcement concerns evolve, we ask that Granite’s policies, procedures, and resources continue to be updated in order to remain current.

1 Support Students’ Safety and Well-Being

Issue

Students are facing new challenges as immigration-enforcement activity and fear increase around school communities. Many students do not know how to respond safely and lawfully if they encounter immigration enforcement, increasing the risk of panic, illegal or unsafe decisions, or actions that could endanger themselves or others.

Student safety is not limited to detention by immigration enforcement. Witnessing enforcement activity, fearing family separation, being unsure how to respond, or feeling unsafe traveling to or from school can cause real emotional harm and interfere with learning and attendance. This affects students of all citizenship and immigration statuses.

Many families do not feel confident that their children will be safe from the time they leave home until they return, and they are worried that private information could be disclosed. Immigration-enforcement-related safety concerns can be handled through the same practical framework Granite already uses for other student safety concerns: clear reporting, documentation, communication, and follow-up.

Heightened concerns and misinformation around immigration enforcement have also created new opportunities for bullying and harassment. Some students may intentionally use immigration-related fears to intimidate classmates, while others may unintentionally mistreat students out of ignorance. Granite already has resources for reporting bullying and harassment, and those remain important. However, prevention is more effective than relying only on students to report harm after it happens. Smaller patterns may be harder for students to recognize and report, but they can still damage trust and make students feel unsafe at school.

Recommendations

1

Provide approved educational materials

We ask that students and families have access to trustworthy, legally vetted educational materials that teach lawful and safe conduct. This educational material could help students understand that they should not lie, run from immigration enforcement, physically interfere, or show false documents. This is a safety concern that affects all students. They will be safer if they understand basic constitutional principles and know when and how to comply with a lawful request. Access can be provided in several different ways, depending on what the district is comfortable with. See Appendix A.

2

Clarify safety and privacy protections

Full transparency about safety and privacy will help families understand procedures, reduce fear, and build trust that schools are safe places for students. Understanding the protections already in place will ease concerns of families and build trust. The Granite Immigration Policies FAQ could be updated to explain how private information is protected, including FERPA protections, directory information, opt-out options, safeguards against improper disclosure, and the protocol for accidental disclosure. It could also explain procedures in place to keep students safe during encounters with immigration enforcement on campus and during transportation.

3

Expand safe routes and transportation safety procedures

Granite already has procedures for school-travel safety concerns, such as severe weather, unsafe roads, or threats near a school. Immigration-enforcement-related concerns could be routed through the same practical safety framework.

We ask that transportation staff have guidance on what to do if a student does not feel safe during transportation. Granite can make information available so families know who to contact and staff know how to document, escalate, and respond to any safety concern. Granite can identify an existing point of contact and offer practical supports such as flexible arrival, pickup, or attendance options when needed. See Appendix B.

2

Equip Staff to Respond Effectively

Issue

Educators are being asked to respond to student fear, bullying, and misinformation without clear guidance or approved resources. Granite has correctly stated that employees should not provide legal advice. The challenge is that many staff may not know the difference between legal advice, general information,

emotional support, and referral to approved resources. They may also lack the information needed to recognize misinformation or respond to it consistently.

Without guidance, staff may either improvise or avoid the subject altogether. Improvising can increase the risk of misinformation, inconsistent responses, staff exposure, and legal risk for the district. Avoiding the subject can also cause harm. If some safety concerns are addressed openly while concerns affecting primarily students of color are avoided or minimized, students and families may reasonably perceive unequal treatment.

Concerns about race-based bullying were raised at the May 5, 2026 school board meeting. One student described how threats of immigration enforcement can be used to target students based on race or perceived immigration status, and how silence from adults can allow that behavior to continue. Misinformation can also contribute to a hostile school climate even when students spreading it do not intend harm. Rumors, jokes, or inaccurate claims about immigration enforcement can increase fear, normalize harassment, and make targeted students feel less safe at school. Guidance should help staff prevent race-based bullying, interrupt harmful comments, correct basic misinformation, respond without hesitancy or avoidance, and refer students and families to approved resources.

Recommendations

1

Approve a list of resources to share

We ask that staff have a district-approved list of resources they can confidently display, distribute, or refer to. They could be the actual resources or QR codes. The goal is not to turn teachers into immigration experts. The goal is to prevent improvisation and give staff safe, consistent referral options.

2

Issue guidance on responding to immigration concerns

Granite could provide guidance that clarifies what staff may and may not do when discussing immigration. This is similar to other sensitive areas. Staff can share general health information without diagnosing a student. They can refer a student to a counselor without providing therapy. Similarly, staff can refer families to approved immigration resources without giving immigration legal advice. This will help protect staff, students, and the school district. See Appendix C.

3**Facilitate optional training**

Other school districts have offered optional school-based trainings coordinated with community groups and school resources. Community partners could help coordinate optional trainings, subject to district review and approval, focused on what they can or can't say to students, how they can support students while staying within their legal obligations, and how to recognize and respond to misinformation and bullying. We would work with the district to make sure they are done appropriately. See Appendix D.

3**Provide Families With Trusted Resources****Issue**

Immigration-enforcement concerns are placing added strain on families. Many families who have previously complied with legal requirements are now facing confusing, rapidly changing obligations. They may not know what information is required, what their rights and responsibilities are, what to do if a caregiver is detained, or where to turn for trustworthy help.

That uncertainty can affect whether families feel safe bringing children to school, whether students arrive on time, and whether students are able to focus once they are in class. By connecting families with qualified legal, community, translation, and emergency-planning resources, Granite can help reduce confusion, support attendance, and make it easier for families to stay engaged in their children's education.

Recommendations**1****Share trusted legal and community resources**

Granite could provide district-approved links or QR codes to nonprofit legal-service providers, licensed attorney directories, community organizations, translation supports, and emergency-planning resources. See Appendix E.

2**Provide general emergency-planning information**

Granite could encourage families to update emergency contacts, identify trusted adults, make caregiver plans, keep key documents together, and save legal and community resource contacts, without asking staff to provide legal advice.

Conclusion

The main goal is for school to be a safe and trusted experience for all families. There may be multiple ways to improve safety, but the end goal is that:

- Families trust that the district is doing what it can to keep their children safe.
- Families have access to resources that help keep students connected to school.
- Students know how to act safely and legally while going to and from school.
- Students affected by race-based bullying or misinformation know their concerns will be taken seriously.
- Staff feel supported and prepared to respond to concerns consistently and within district boundaries.

The district does not need to solve every immigration-related concern to make meaningful progress. By incorporating immigration-enforcement concerns into existing safety, privacy, transportation, attendance, bullying-prevention, and staff-guidance procedures, Granite can reduce confusion, build trust, and support student attendance.

Appendix A: Educational Materials for Students and Families

Granite can address immigration-related fear by providing recommended educational materials. This framing fits within Utah’s existing civic and character education framework. Utah Code §153G-10-204 identifies civic and character education as a continuing responsibility of public schools and includes instruction in “civility” and “obedience to law.” The same statute allows local school boards and administrators to provide the “training, direction, and encouragement” needed to carry out that work.

Some important principles that will help students stay safe and follow the law include:

- Do not lie to immigration enforcement.
- Do not show false documents.
- Do not run.
- Do not physically interfere with immigration activity.
- Recognize and follow lawful orders.
- Understand the safe and lawful application of constitutional rights.

When students do not know these principles, they run the risk of breaking the law and endangering themselves or others. These materials could be practical, safety-focused, and kept within appropriate legal boundaries. The district could choose from several distribution options, such as:

- Posting district-approved materials on the Immigration Policies FAQ.
- Providing QR codes that link to approved resources.
- Making materials available upon request through schools or district offices.
- Including links in family communications or newsletters.
- Sharing materials with counselors, family liaisons, front-office staff, and administrators for referral purposes.
- Providing optional take-home materials for families.
- Making approved resources available to teachers who request them.
- Including the information in broader safety, civics, attendance, or family-support communications.

Several organizations have already developed general educational materials that explain basic constitutional rights and safe conduct during immigration-enforcement encounters.

Granite could review and approve a limited list of rights-and-responsibilities resources such as:

- **Immigrant Legal Resource Center Red Cards / Tarjetas Rojas** — Printable, multilingual cards explaining basic constitutional rights during encounters with immigration enforcement.

- **Immigrant Legal Resource Center Know Your Rights educational materials** — Printable rights-awareness tools for community use.
- **Utah Immigrant Advocacy Coalition Know Your Rights resources** — Utah-facing educational materials, printable cards, and links to AILA.
- **AILA Know Your Rights one-page handouts** — Materials on what to do if enforcement visits a home, stops someone in public, or comes to a workplace.
- **National Education Association immigration guidance for educators** — Supports schools in sharing Know Your Rights information, distributing Red Cards, and preparing staff to respond appropriately to concerns.

If the district is uncomfortable with these resources, we can work with the district and immigration attorneys to approve an alternative that meets the same need. The key is that families and staff have access to reliable information that helps them know how to respond safely and appropriately.

Appendix B: Safe Routes and Transportation Safety

Many students in Granite School District do not feel prepared to travel to and from school safely. At the May 5, 2026 school board meeting, community members raised concerns about students being harmed by encounters with immigration enforcement while going to school. See Appendix F.

Granite does not need to create an entirely new transportation system to address this concern. It can build on existing safe-route, attendance, and transportation procedures so staff know how to recognize and respond when circumstances affect a student's ability to get to school safely. This guidance can remain general and safety-focused while still acknowledging that some of the recent harms raised by families involve immigration-enforcement-related events.

Transportation staff need enough guidance to recognize when a student may not feel safe getting off the bus, walking from a stop, entering a pickup or dismissal area, or continuing home. These situations can create real safety concerns even when there is no physical injury or direct threat to the school.

A practical process could include:

- A clear point of contact for families who do not feel safe sending a student to school.
- A way for schools to document and escalate route-related safety concerns.
- Communication to families when a reported concern affects arrival, dismissal, or transportation.
- Reasonable attendance support when a family's safety concern affects a student's ability to attend school.
- Guidance for transportation staff on who to contact when a student reports feeling unsafe or staff observe a potentially unsafe circumstance.

Transportation staff should not be expected to physically interfere with immigration activity, make legal judgments, or make immigration-related decisions. They should have enough information to recognize when a situation may be unsafe for a student, respond calmly and legally, avoid unnecessary escalation, and direct the concern to appropriate school or district staff. This will help ensure students are not left without a safe plan.

The Granite Immigration Policies FAQ could also be updated to include practical transportation safety questions, such as:

- What should a family do if immigration enforcement is seen near a school, bus stop, walking route, or pickup/drop-off area?
- Who should families contact if they do not feel safe sending a child to school?
- What steps is the school taking to support student safety during transportation?
- What will transportation staff do if a safety concern affects a route, stop, pickup, or dismissal area?
- How will the district communicate when safety concerns arise near a school?

Other school districts have addressed transportation-related immigration-enforcement concerns in their own local contexts. Federal Way Public Schools in Washington directs bus drivers to drive past a stop if enforcement is at or near it, keep students on the bus, and contact transportation leadership. Northshore School District in Washington states that students will not be released to immigration officials at a bus stop and that buses may return to school so students can be safely reunited with families. LAUSD and Tahoe Truckee Unified School District in California treat school buses and district transportation as part of the school safety environment and route immigration-enforcement requests through district procedures. Granite could review these examples and adapt them as appropriate for Utah law, district policy, and local student-safety needs.

Appendix C: Staff Guidance

We ask that Granite issue guidance so educators know how to respond to bullying, misinformation, or when students or families raise immigration-related concerns. Staff should know they should not provide legal advice, but they are expected to support students, protect confidentiality, respond to bullying, and refer families to approved resources.

<p>STAFF MAY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reassure students that they belong at school. ✓ Avoid asking students or families about immigration status. ✓ Protect private student and family information. ✓ Refer families to approved legal and community resources. ✓ Share district-approved general educational materials. ✓ Respond to bullying, harassment, rumors, and misinformation. ✓ Connect students with counselors, family liaisons, translation support, or other district resources. 	<p>STAFF SHOULD NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Interpret immigration documents. ✗ Give advice about a specific immigration case. ✗ Promise legal outcomes. ✗ Present personal opinions as district guidance. ✗ Interfere with immigration enforcement. ✗ Share private family information outside proper district procedures. ✗ Share student or family information with immigration enforcement outside lawful district procedures.
---	---

This guidance will hopefully reduce improvisation and protect students, staff, and the district. Some staff will want to provide more guidance than other staff. Granite could provide tiered guidance, such as “safest,” “safe,” and “higher-risk” examples, so staff can better understand what they can do within their own comfort level.

Appendix D: Optional Trainings

Granite could consider optional staff training to help employees understand how changing immigration-enforcement concerns may affect students and families of all citizenship and immigration statuses. This training could be based on examples from other school districts and coordinated with appropriate community groups, legal partners, and school resources.

Useful topics could include:

- **Safe and lawful responses** — General information about how students, families, and staff can respond to immigration-enforcement encounters without escalating, physically interfering, lying, showing false documents, or taking unsafe actions.
- **Rights, responsibilities, and staff boundaries** — General information about constitutional rights, Granite policy, employee obligations, privacy protections, and the difference between general information, emotional support, referral, and legal advice.
- **Bullying, harassment, and misinformation** — How to recognize, prevent, and respond to race-based bullying, immigration-related threats, rumors, jokes, and common misconceptions using district-approved information.

- **Student support and referral** — How to recognize when a student may be struggling because of immigration-related fear, family separation concerns, transportation concerns, bullying, or misinformation, and how to connect students and families with appropriate school, district, legal, or community resources.

Many educators are already seeing students whose attendance, behavior, emotional well-being, or academic performance may be affected by unaddressed concerns around immigration enforcement. Optional training would give staff practical tools for recognizing those concerns, responding appropriately, and helping students stay connected to school.

Appendix E: Legal and Community Resources

Granite could share qualified outside resources that help families find support and keep students connected to school. This approach helps families find accurate help while keeping district staff within appropriate boundaries, as is done in other districts.

Potential resources for district review could include:

- **National Immigration Legal Services Directory** — A directory of nonprofit immigration legal-service providers.
- **Utah organizations listed in the National Immigration Legal Services Directory** — Examples include BYU Community Legal Clinic, Catholic Community Services of Utah, Comunidades Unidas, Holy Cross Ministries of Utah, Immigrant Legal Services, and the International Rescue Committee.
- **AILA Immigration Lawyer Search** — A licensed immigration-attorney directory for families seeking private legal counsel.
- **La Red de Solidaridad hotline** — Community support for families affected by deportation or immigration enforcement. Note: this is a grassroots organization, not a nonprofit.
- **Local nonprofit and community organizations** — Organizations that provide immigration, translation, family-support, emergency-planning, or referral assistance.

Appendix F: Quotes from Community Members

“

I have experienced parents who are hesitant to reach out for services, and some even express their uncertainty about dropping off their students for school. This is a safety concern and is deeply impacting our declining attendance. We are falling short in maintaining trust with our families and causing confusion within staff. ICE vehicles have already been spotted across the street from several of our campuses this year.

MARGARITA RUIZ

“

Ever since ICE has had an increased presence in the state, I have noticed our attendance dramatically decline. I have had students personally tell me that they were not able to come to school because a loved one of theirs was picked up and they were afraid to leave their house. I had another student who previously had perfect attendance and really good grades come to me and say that their uncle had been picked up while driving students to school in Granite School District. Since then, my student's cousins have not been able to go to school because they are terrified of what is going to happen to them.

MIRIAM CASTLE

“

I have kids who are in 4th grade who are living with family friends because they got home and their parents had been taken. They ask me, 'Is it my fault because I saw some officers watch me walk home? Am I the reason they are gone?'

TAYLOR ARNEY



The threat of ICE’s encroachment on students like me. Many of my family and many of my friends at our schools, countless immigrant friends have disappeared. The hate and racism that I and many like me experience on the daily in our schools is frankly unacceptable, and it really stems from the voices that are perpetuated or silenced in our school systems. I go day to day in school listening to off-comments, like hearing comments about calling ICE on students, about our skin color, the casual use of slurs in our schools and our hallways and our classes and discriminatory comments.

ANTHONY GALLARDO