

PROFILES IN EDUCATOR COURAGE

How Teachers are Leading the Way in Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Students During this Time of Fear and Uncertainty



Teachers across the country are going the extra mile in supporting immigrant and refugee students and families, according to a new survey from Teach Plus. This resource packet is designed to be a tool to help these and other teachers continue this essential leadership. It provides the following:

+ Examples of Teacher Leadership

- These are examples of teachers' actions to support immigrant students and their families, and to engage all students in better understanding our country's history, issues, and policies related to immigration

+ Resources on Immigration for Teachers

- The quick links to the law and related resources will help teachers access information that can help them do even more to help their students

+ Data on Teacher Views on DACA

- These new findings show how teachers across the country feel about an immigration policy that affects 700,000 students.

EXAMPLES OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

A recent Teach Plus poll found that teachers, schools, and districts are taking three kinds of actions to support their immigrant and refugee students:

- + Providing trainings for students, parents and teachers
- + Helping all students understand and process current events
- + Helping immigrant and refugee students access higher education

PROVIDING TRAININGS FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND TEACHERS



HELPING STUDENTS ACCESS DACA BENEFITS

We actually have a Dream Center on campus that provides information, training, and support for DACA students and families. Teachers work with our Dream Center to refer students and families who need help accessing the protections and benefits of DACA.

- Teacher from California

Our school holds informational workshops, makes experts available to help students fill out DACA paperwork, and has made announcements about being a 'sanctuary school.'

- Teacher from Illinois

PROVIDING INFORMATION, TRAINING, AND TRANSLATORS FOR PARENTS

Some of the staff organized a 'know your rights' workshop with immigration lawyers and experts on DACA and related policy to make sure students and families had access to credible information about immigration, deportation, and current policy.

– Teacher from Illinois

We provide information about what to do if ICE comes to your home.

– Teacher from Washington, DC

Our community coordinator and family liaison hold regular parent meetings wherein parents' concerns around current immigration laws are discussed. Parents know our school is one of the safest places they can be and that anyone in our school would defend their right to be there.

– Teacher from Colorado

OFFERING TRAININGS FOR TEACHERS

We are training teachers in how to assist DREAMers and their families, and working with student organizations as well as external partners to spread the word. The Chicago Teachers Union has also taken a very open stance on sanctuary schools and is encouraging community members to make sure that we protect undocumented students.

– Teacher from Illinois

We work hard to meet students where they are, providing strong supports for students who are English language learners, translation services for families, and abundant targeted supports for students' individual particular needs. We've also begun to have regular conversations as a staff about race and culture and about understanding students from various backgrounds. We make sure every student feels that they belong and that they are part of our community.

– Teacher from Massachusetts

PUBLICIZING SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING ENGAGING NON-IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Our school has a published policy (translated in Spanish, Portuguese, and Arabic) about our commitment to equal access for all students regardless of their documentation status. We do not record information about documentation and immigration status and would not provide any information without a warrant. We also provide emotional support and counseling for students with difficulties stemming from immigration.

– Teacher from Massachusetts

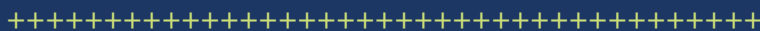
[The] Superintendent and area school board member have sent out letters/emails of support and services available to support those students.

– Teacher from California

Our Superintendent also has said on record (with The Boston Globe) that she welcomes all children to the district, regardless of immigration status. My students read this article every year.

– Teacher from Massachusetts

HELPING IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS ACCESS HIGHER EDUCATION



HELPING CONNECT IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

We have a Dreamer's Club that tries to help undocumented students find scholarships for post-secondary education, as well as tries to make sure the school is a welcoming and safe environment.

– Teacher from Illinois

We have brought in immigration lawyers to counsel undocumented students and their families and started a scholarship fund (now in its second year) especially for undocumented students who don't qualify for financial aid.

– Teacher from Illinois

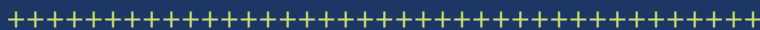
We help students find ways to pay for college – don't allow them to give up just because of their immigration status.

– Teacher from Washington, DC

Our school has a Dreamers and Allies Club, is raising money for scholarships, and works to connect students to legal and financial resources they need to keep themselves and family members safe and to pursue post-secondary education.

– Teacher from Illinois

HELPING ALL STUDENTS UNDERSTAND AND PROCESS CURRENT EVENTS



WORKSHOPS ON WRITING TO POLICYMAKERS

In morning meetings we talk about current events, how they affect us and others, and who we can talk to if we disagree with policy. I have also taught units on the history of immigration and modern immigration, led workshops on writing letters to senators, and interviewed parents and other teachers who have gained their citizenship through different paths.

– Teacher from Massachusetts

ENGAGING PARENTS IN TELLING THEIR STORIES

Our school is doing a "Write our World" program where immigrant and refugee parents tell their story to connect with each other and understand each other's experiences. We also teach to current events affecting refugees and immigrants and invite parents to be a part of the dialogue.

– Teacher from Colorado



USING CURRENT NEWS SOURCES IN CLASS

I do an entire unit on refugees and have recently revisited the themes discussed in that unit by listening to Trump's inaugural address. Students wrote response poems as a way to react to his ideas. We also listened to an NPR interview in response to his executive order.

– Teacher from Massachusetts

I have made sure that the current national conversations happening around immigration policy in the news are discussed in class, especially in a research and fact-checking capacity.

– Teacher from Illinois

USING DAILY WRITING TIME FOR STUDENTS TO SHARE CONCERNS AND FEARS

I asked my students to describe their ideas of utopia (in preparation for reading a dystopian novel), several students included “no Trump” or “no wall” in their descriptions. Throughout the election and on Inauguration Day, several students shared their concerns and fears in what they had written during our daily free writing time. One student even broke down crying, reading aloud her fears for friends in her neighborhood whom she worries will be deported. We have established trust and care in our classroom for ALL of our classmates, and students feel safe sharing with one another and give each other encouragement and support. In some cases, as with the student who broke down crying that day, I've had individual conversations and have tried to offer what help I can.

– Teacher from Tennessee

Resources

Fact Sheets

- + [Fact sheet on Trump Administration Executive Actions on Immigration](#)
- + [Fact Sheet for Families and School Staff: Limitations on DHS Immigration Enforcement Actions at Sensitive Locations](#)
- + [Five Questions Educators are Asking about ICE Raids and Supporting Immigrant Youth](#)

Resource Guides

- + [Building a Bright Future for All](#)
- + [Immigrant and Refugee Children: AFT Guide for Educators and School Support Staff](#)
- + [Making Schools Safer for Undocumented Students](#)
- + [Ten Ways to Support Undocumented Students](#)

Materials to Share with or Students and Families

- + [DACA: Current Status and Options](#)
- + [Know your Rights: Information for Students and Families](#)
- + [LULAC Oportunidad App](#)
- + **Scholarship Information**
 - + [Educators For Fair Consideration Scholarships](#)
 - + [Golden Door Scholars](#)
 - + [Scholarships open for undocumented students](#)
 - + [TheDream.US Scholarship](#)
 - + [Univision Scholarships open to Undocumented Students](#)

DATA ON TEACHER VIEWS ON IMMIGRATION POLICY

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To understand teacher perspectives on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, Teach Plus administered a national flash poll, drawing 681 responses from teachers in both charter and district public schools. In this flash poll, teachers were asked the degree to which they support or oppose continuation of DACA and what their districts, schools, or they and their colleagues were doing on this issue.

Teachers overwhelmingly voiced support for continuation of DACA.¹

89% of teachers support continuation of **DACA**

A majority of teachers said that their districts and schools were taking steps to provide all children, regardless of their country of birth, equal access to education. Furthermore, they reported that they and their colleagues were explicitly addressing the issue of immigration with students.²

66% of teachers say their **districts** are taking steps

71% of teachers say their **schools** are taking steps

54% of teachers or their colleagues were explicitly addressing the issue of immigration with their students

ENDNOTES



1. Question: "To what degree do you support or oppose continuation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy?" (n = 681) Responses: "Strongly support" (81.2 percent), "Somewhat support" (8.1 percent), "Neither support nor oppose" (3.7 percent), "Somewhat oppose" (1.9 percent), "Strongly oppose" (3.5 percent), "Unsure" (1.6 percent). Results may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

2. Question: "Is your district taking steps to provide all children, regardless of their country of birth, equal access to education?" (n = 677) Responses: "Yes" (66.0 percent), "No" (4.0 percent), "Unsure" (30.0 percent). Question: "Is your school taking steps to provide all children, regardless of their country of birth, equal access to education?" (n = 680) Responses: "Yes" (71.0 percent), "No" (3.5 percent), "Unsure" (25.4 percent). Question: "Have you or other teachers in your school explicitly addressed the issue of immigration with students?" (n = 679) Responses: "Yes" (53.9 percent), "No" (27.1 percent), "Unsure" (19.0 percent). Results may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

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