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S.227

An act relating to creating immigration protocols in Vermont schools

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is to secure the right of every child to equal access to a free public education and to a school that is safe from intimidation and fear, regardless of immigration status. In order to ensure the right to educational equality, schools must take steps to protect the integrity of school learning environments for all children, so that no parent is discouraged from sending a child to, and no child is discouraged from attending, school, including due to the threat of immigration enforcement on a school campus.

Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. chapter 33 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 33. FIRE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS  
~~AND~~, SAFETY PATROLS, AND IMMIGRATION PROTOCOLS

\* \* \*

§ 1486. IMMIGRATION PROTOCOLS

(a) Definitions. As used in this section:

(1)(A) “Law enforcement officer” has the same meaning as in 20 V.S.A. § 2351a and includes any officer of a federal law enforcement agency or any person acting on behalf of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency.

(B) “Law enforcement officer” does not include a school resource officer or safety officer who is stationed at a school.

1           (2) “Nonpublic area of a school” means an area of a school that  
2           normally requires authorization to enter, consistent with the policy required by  
3           section 1484 of this chapter, and includes any area a superintendent or head of  
4           school or designee determines to be nonpublic.

5           (3) “School” means a public school or an independent school approved  
6           under section 166 of this title.

7           (b) Immigration resources and support.

8           (1) A superintendent or head of school shall:

9                   (A) distribute the immigration resource guide developed by the  
10           Office of the Attorney General pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection  
11           (b) to staff, students, and family members of students;

12                   (B) at each school the superintendent or head of school oversees,  
13           designate at least one individual to serve as a resource for immigration-related  
14           matters who shall receive on an ongoing basis updated information and  
15           training material as provided to the superintendent or head of school by the  
16           Office of the Attorney General; and

17                   (C) provide support, to the greatest extent possible, to a student with  
18           regard to immigration-related concerns, including connecting the student and  
19           the student’s family with an immigration advocacy institution and similar  
20           resources.

1           (2)(A) The Office of the Attorney General, in consultation with the  
2           Agency of Education, shall develop an immigration resource guide that shall:

3                   (i) include immigration- and civil rights–related resources;  
4           information regarding standby guardianships pursuant to 14 V.S.A § 2626a;  
5           and a list of immigration, human rights, and relevant advocacy organizations  
6           available to provide immigration assistance to students and staff; and

7                   (ii) be developed in a manner that serves to protect the privacy and  
8           safety of students and staff.

9                   (B) The Office of the Attorney General shall review the guide at least  
10           once annually and send any updates made to the guide to the Agency of  
11           Education for distribution to all superintendents and heads of schools not later  
12           than 30 days after completing the update.

13           (c) Student information privacy. School districts and schools are  
14           prohibited from:

15                   (1) collecting or requesting information regarding citizenship or  
16           immigration status of a student or of a family member of the student except as  
17           required by State or federal law or as required to administer a State- or  
18           federally supported educational program;

19                   (2) disclosing a student’s immigration status, citizenship, place of birth,  
20           nationality, or national origin;

1           (A) in any database that the school maintains; or

2           (B) as directory information, as that term is defined by the Family

3           Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34

4           C.F.R. Part 99; and

5           (3) voluntarily sharing student information, including immigration

6           status, citizenship, place of birth, nationality, national origin, sexual

7           orientation, status as a survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault, status as

8           a recipient of public assistance, or school discipline records, with a third party

9           unless required to do so by State or federal law.

10          (d) Law enforcement on-site and requests for information.

11          (1) A superintendent or head of school shall:

12           (A) subject to subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1), be the sole  
13           authority to admit a law enforcement officer who appears on an immigration-  
14           related matter into a nonpublic area of school; and

15           (B) designate at least one individual who works at each school to  
16           serve as a designee of the superintendent or head of school in the event that the  
17           superintendent or head of school is not present when the law enforcement  
18           officer appears on-site.

19          (2) The superintendent or head of school or designee shall not allow a  
20          law enforcement officer appearing on an immigration-related matter into a  
21          nonpublic area of a school unless the officer provides official identification and

1 a judicial warrant that authorizes entrance into specific areas of the school and  
2 names a specific individual located within the school who is subject to a search  
3 or arrest.

4 (3) Absent a judicial warrant pursuant to subdivision (2) of this  
5 subsection, no school or individual working at a school shall reveal any  
6 information about a student or school staff member in response to an  
7 immigration-related request from a law enforcement officer unless otherwise  
8 required by law.

9 (4) As used in this subsection, “immigration-related matter” and  
10 “immigration-related request” mean an administrative warrant, civil warrant,  
11 immigration detainer, or any other document or request that pertains to an  
12 individual’s immigration or citizenship status.

13 (e) Immigration agreements.

14 (1) Except as required by State or federal law, no school, school district,  
15 or supervisory union shall enter into an agreement with a State, local, or  
16 federal government entity that furthers the enforcement of any immigration  
17 law.

18 (2)(A) Any proposed agreement pursuant to subdivision (1) of this  
19 subsection (e) that purports to be required by State or federal law shall be  
20 subject to review by the superintendent or head of school after the

1 superintendent or head of school has consulted with the Office of the Attorney

2 General.

3 (B) The superintendent or head of school shall provide a  
4 recommendation on the proposed agreement to the school's appropriate  
5 governing body after the superintendent's or head of school's review pursuant  
6 to subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2).

7 (f) Applicability. Nothing in this section is intended to prohibit or impede  
8 any public agency from complying with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C.  
9 §§ 1373 and 1644. To the extent any school, school district, or supervisory  
10 union policy or practice conflicts with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C.  
11 §§ 1373 and 1644, the policy or practice is, to the extent of such conflict,  
12 abolished.

13 (g) Policy required.

14 (1) Model policy and recommended procedures. On or before January  
15 1, 2027, the Agency of Education, in consultation with the Office of the  
16 Attorney General, the Vermont Independent Schools Association, and the  
17 Vermont School Boards Association, shall develop, and review at least  
18 annually, a model policy along with recommended procedures that reflect the  
19 requirements set forth in subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

1           (2) Adoption of policy and procedures.

2           (A) Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, each school board  
3           shall develop, adopt, ensure the enforcement of, and make available in the  
4           manner described under subdivision 563(1) of this title an immigration  
5           protocol policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed  
6           by the Agency. Any school board that fails to adopt a policy shall be  
7           presumed to have adopted the most current model policy published by the  
8           Agency.

9           (B) Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, each independent  
10          school shall develop, adopt, and ensure the enforcement of an immigration  
11          protocol policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed  
12          by the Agency. Any approved independent school that fails to adopt a policy  
13          shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model policy published by  
14          the Agency.

15          Sec. 3. IMMIGRATION RESOURCE GUIDE

16          The Office of the Attorney General shall complete the immigration resource  
17          guide required pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1486(b)(2) on or before August 1,  
18          2026, and shall send the completed guide to the Agency of Education for  
19          distribution to all superintendents and heads of schools on or before August 31,  
20          2026.

1      Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

2           This act shall take effect on passage.