

***The Impact of Immigration Enforcement Policies  
On Teaching and Learning in America's Public Schools***

**RESEARCH PAPER DESCRIPTIONS**

**U.S. Immigration Enforcement Policy & Impact on Teaching and Learning in the Nation's Schools**

Patricia Gándara and Jongyeon Ee, Civil Rights Project, UCLA

Educators from more than 730 schools across 24 districts and 12 states participated in a survey on the *Impact of Immigration Enforcement on Teaching and Learning in the Nation's Schools*. Most of these schools were Title I schools serving disproportionately low-income students. Threats to students and their families make a challenging situation even more so. Data are provided for 3500 respondents. Many hundreds of respondents told us that their immigrant students (whether they were US born or not) were terrified that families and friends, and occasionally they themselves, would be picked up by ICE that it was, at times, very difficult for students to learn and teachers to teach. 90% of administrators reported observing emotional and behavioral problems among immigrant students. Two-thirds of respondents also reported that the fear and concern for classmates was affecting the education of students who were not targets of enforcement. More than one in seven respondents from the South reported that concern for classmates was affecting their students extensively. Respondents describe the students' worst fear being left alone or left to care for their younger siblings and not knowing how they would survive. Many respondents reported that family members of their students had been deported and that these incidents were well known to the whole class or school community, reinforcing fears many students held about their own situations or those of their friends. Some educators also reported students suffering deprivation because one or both parents had been deported or lost their jobs due to their immigration status and there was not enough money to buy food or meet basic needs.

**Stressed, Overworked, and Not Sure Whom to Trust: The Impacts of Recent Immigration Enforcement on our Public School Educators**

Rachel Freeman, Patricia Martin, Shena Sanchez, University of California-Los Angeles

Stepped up immigration enforcement policy in the past year has had a negative impact on our public K-12 schools. Students and their families have been affected by the increased threat and enforcement of detention, deportation, and community raids. Missing from the discourse, however, are the educators who work closely with students from immigrant backgrounds. To date, there is scant research on how these harsh enforcement policies have affected teachers, administrators, and school staff. In this

study, we find that public school educators nationwide have been deeply impacted by the trauma experienced by their students and school communities. Educators who participated in this study report (1) experiencing symptoms that are consistent with Secondary Traumatic Stress, (2) being overworked as they strive to assist their students whose families are being targeted by immigration officials, and (3) feeling a sense of breakdown in community at their schools. This investigation illuminates how ramped-up immigration enforcement is harming educators, and consequently, students and school communities across the country. This report is the second of two studies conducted on schools across the nation and a subset of educators who were further surveyed and interviewed on this topic.

### **When Families Are Deported: Schooling for US-Citizen Students in Mexico**

Bryant Jensen, Brigham Young University and Mónica Jacobo, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas

Since 2009, more Mexican immigrants are leaving than coming to the United States. This includes voluntary returns as well as deportations. Because migration historically is a family matter, the US-born-citizen children of return migrants are a rapidly growing population in Mexico. Currently there are an estimated 600,000 US-citizen students attending preschool through high school in Mexico—between 2 and 3% of their total student population. Many of these students are English-dominant, encounter challenges accessing and fitting into Mexican schools, and aspire to return one day to the US. We summarize extant research, analyze response efforts by the Mexican government, and recommend ways federal and state governments in the US can partner with Mexican institutions to meet the educational needs of US-citizen students in Mexico.

### **From *Plyler* to Sanctuary: Education Policies Promoting a Welcoming and Safe Environment for Immigrant Families**

Julie Sugarman, Migration Policy Institute

All students, regardless of their immigration status, have the right to free public education in U.S. elementary and secondary schools. However, complaints from across the country about discriminatory enrollment practices have made clear that not all district and school personnel are aware of their obligation to enroll children from unauthorized immigrant families. Some families—including those with legal status—have reported being turned away due to a lack of required documents to prove the student’s age, relationship to the guardian, or residence within the district. In addition to complying with federal and state guidance on the enrollment process, in the past year some districts have affirmed that they welcome immigrant families by declaring themselves sanctuary districts or safe havens. The specifics of each declaration differed, but most included a policy that schools would not cooperate with immigration enforcement officers unless they had a warrant, subpoena, or court order; outlined processes for school staff to comply with law enforcement requests; and limited the kinds of information related to immigration status that schools and districts can collect.