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House Committee on Rules
Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee,

We would appreciate concrete guidance about how schools should interact with immigration enforcement officials. All districts in Oregon would benefit from consistent, official guidance on this complex and emotional/political issue. Without such guidance this fall, we were forced to do our own research and come up with answers on a district-by-district basis throughout the state.

In the past year, this issue was addressed locally in our district and many others in Oregon. Although the level of concern among our staff, students and family has decreased as a result of our local efforts, we know that the political discourse could rapidly change back to one that causes fear and concern in our community.

Our district is very diverse. About half of our 42,000 students are white, 37 percent are Hispanic and the remaining students are comprised of many different ethnic groups. About one fifth of our students are English language learners.

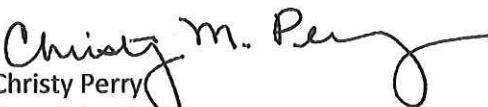
During last fall's political campaigns, many staff, students and community members grew increasingly stressed about immigration issues. There was particular concern about the role of school staff in the event that federal immigration enforcement attempted to contact students or their families.

Our district took a number of steps to reassure staff, students and families:

- Communicated to our community about our commitment to providing safe and welcoming schools for everyone.
- Researched the role of immigration enforcement and connected with elected officials at the state and federal levels.
- Engaged our own legal counsel for advice and support.
- Provided communication to school staff about how to proceed if contacted by someone claiming to be an immigration official.
- Provided training to front-line office staff about how to proceed and whom to contact in the event that someone claiming to be an immigration enforcement official arrives.
- Shared these steps with the board, the community and advocacy groups.
- Participated in community meetings with local law enforcement to present a unified message of support for all families in our community.
- Conducting ongoing discussion groups and information sharing among district staff.

In case of new developments at the national level, it would be helpful to have clear, concise and up-to-date guidance on these issues from the state level. That would aid districts in providing clear, consistent and accurate information to staff, parents, students and the public.

Thank You,


Christy Perry
Superintendent