

SAFE ZONE School Board Resolutions: FAQ

1. What can we do to address student fear about aggressive immigration enforcement?

Join with your local NEA association to lobby your school board for a SAFE ZONE resolution. It contains reassurances for students, procedures for responding to law enforcement, and information and support for families and staff. Countless school districts [across the country](#) have already passed SAFE ZONE resolutions. These districts include large urban districts like Los Angeles, to small rural districts in Colorado and New Hampshire, and everywhere in between, such as Omaha, Nebraska, and Louisville, Kentucky.

2. What needs to take place in order for our district to become a SAFE ZONE?

Your school board can take up a proposed resolution like the one attached here at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Supply your school board with sample language and be sure to comply with the board's meeting notice requirements. Through the board's normal governance procedure, it can approve and sign a SAFE ZONE resolution, including a policy that would then take effect immediately.

3. Does a SAFE ZONE resolution require additional district expenditures, staff responsibilities, school hours, or other resources?

No, unless you wish to add support beyond NEA's template, such as adding a counselor for extra support for immigrant students who are in crisis. The template SAFE ZONE resolution reaffirms and clarifies the constitutional right all students have, regardless of immigration status, to access a free public K-12 education. The district administration will need to take steps to ensure the resolution's requirements are being fulfilled as outlined in the district policy attached to the NEA template SAFE ZONE board resolution, but it does not add new or different job duties or hours for educators.

4. Can I discuss immigration enforcement and student fears in my classroom?

Yes, if your school board passes a SAFE ZONE resolution that provides for such discussion, the discussion is age-appropriate and mandatory curricular subjects are also covered in a timely way. The productivity of the learning environment improves when pressing concerns of students can be addressed. In the absence of a SAFE ZONE resolution, NEA recommends you follow existing district rules on classroom teaching.

5. Can I refuse directives from law enforcement?

No, a SAFE ZONE resolution does not provide immunity should you decline to obey directives from law enforcement. The resolution does provide steps you should request that law enforcement follow. If law enforcement refuses to cooperate, that becomes a matter for district legal counsel and courts to determine. You are not expected to put yourself or those around you at risk to assert these rights.

6. Does the model SAFE ZONE resolution protect non-citizen students from the school-to-prison-to-deportation pipeline?

No, SAFE ZONE policies like the one attached here are aimed at protecting students' rights at school but do not address disciplinary practices that criminalize misbehavior through the involvement of law enforcement. In the case of non-citizen youth, law enforcement actions can result in barriers to obtaining or maintaining legal immigration status as well as possible detention and deportation. For information regarding the harmful immigration consequences for non-citizen youth of the school-to-prison pipeline, [click here](#). And for additional resources on stopping the school-to-prison pipeline visit the [NEA EdJustice website](#) and sign the [petition](#) to shut down the pipeline.