

UWHARRIE CHARTER ACADEMY

2025-2026 IMMIGRATION POLICY

WHEREAS, it is the right of every child, regardless of immigration status, to access a free public K-12 education and the School welcomes and supports all students;

WHEREAS, the School has a responsibility to ensure that all students who reside within its boundaries, regardless of immigration status, can safely access a free public K-12 education;

WHEREAS, federal immigration law enforcement activities, on or around School property and transportation routes, whether by surveillance, interview, demand for information, arrest, detention, or any other means, harmfully disrupt the learning environment to which all students, regardless of immigration status, are entitled and significantly interfere with the ability of all students, including U.S. citizen students and students who hold other legal grounds for presence in the U.S., to access a free public K-12 education;

WHEREAS, through its policies and practices, the School has made a commitment to a quality education for all students, which includes a safe and stable learning environment, means of transportation to and from school sites, the preservation of classroom hours for educational instruction, and the requirement of school attendance;

WHEREAS, parents and students have expressed to the School fear and confusion about the continued physical and emotional safety of all students and the right to access a free public K-12 education through School schools and programs;

AND WHEREAS, educational personnel are often the primary sources of support, resources, and information to assist and support students and student learning, which includes their emotional health;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the U.S. Immigrations Enforcement Office (ICE), state or local law enforcement agencies acting on behalf of ICE, or agents or officers for any federal, state, or local agency attempting to enforce federal immigration laws, are to follow School Policy, attached to and incorporated in this Resolution, to ensure the School meets its duty to provide all students, regardless of immigration status, access to a free public K-12 education;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board declares the School to be a Safe Zone for its students, meaning that the School is a place for students to learn, to thrive and to seek assistance, information, and support related to any immigration law enforcement that interferes with their learning experience;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the School shall, within 30 days of the date of this Resolution, create a Rapid Response Team to prepare in the event a minor child attending school in the School is deprived of adult care, supervision, or guardianship outside of school due to a federal law enforcement action, such as detention by ICE or a cooperating law enforcement agency;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, it continues to be the policy of the School not to allow any individual or organization to enter a school site if the educational setting would be disrupted by that visit; given the likelihood of substantial disruption posed by the presence of ICE or state or local law enforcement agencies acting for ICE, any request by ICE or other agencies to visit a school site should be presented to the Superintendent's Office for review as to whether access to the site is permitted by law, a judicial warrant is required, or any other legal considerations apply; this review should be made expeditiously, but before any immigration law enforcement agent or officer appears at a school site;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in its continued commitment to the protection of student privacy, the School shall review its record-keeping policies and practices to ensure that no data is being collected with respect to students' immigration status or place of birth; and cease any such collection as it is irrelevant to the educational enterprise and potentially discriminatory;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, should ICE or other immigration law enforcement agents request any student information, the request should be referred to the Superintendent's Office to ensure compliance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student constitutional privacy, standards for a judicial warrant, and any other limitation on disclosure; this review should be conducted expeditiously, but before any production of information is made;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the School shall post this Resolution at every school site and distribute it to School staff, students, and parents using usual means of communication, and that the Resolution will be translated into all languages spoken by students at home;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Superintendent shall report back on compliance with this Resolution to the Board at its next meeting;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board directs the Superintendent to review School policies and practices regarding bullying and report back to the Board at its next meeting and communicate to staff, students, and parents the importance of maintaining a bullying-free environment for all students;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board affirms that certificated School employees have the academic freedom to discuss this Resolution during class time provided it is age-appropriate; and students are to be made aware that School counselors are available to discuss the subjects contained in this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, after-school providers and other vendors and service providers who contract with the School shall be notified of this Resolution within 30 days and required to abide by it.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION, STUDENT PRIVACY, AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

School personnel must not allow any third party access to a school site without permission of the site administrator. The site administrator shall not permit third party access to the school site that would cause disruption to the learning environment.

Uwharrie Charter Academy based on its educational experience and as part of its deliberative process as our governing body, has found that access to a school site by immigration law enforcement agents substantially disrupts the learning environment and any such request for access should be referred to the Superintendent's Office immediately.

School personnel must contact the Superintendent's Office immediately if approached by immigration law enforcement agents. Personnel must also attempt to contact the parents or guardians of any students involved.

The Superintendent's Office must process requests by immigration law enforcement agents to **enter a school site or obtain student data** as follows:

1. Request identification from the officers or agents and photocopy it;
2. Request a judicial warrant and photocopy it;
 - a. If no warrant is presented, request the grounds for access, make notes, and contact legal counsel for the School;
3. Request and retain notes of the names of the students and the reasons for the request;
 - a. If school site personnel have not yet contacted the students' parents or guardians, do so;
 - b. Do not attempt to provide your own information or conjecture about the students, such as their schedule, for example, without legal counsel present;
4. Provide the agents with a copy of this Policy dated 12 Feb 20
5. Contact legal counsel for the School;
6. Request the agents' contact information; and
7. Advise the agents you are required to complete these steps prior to allowing them access to any school site or student data.