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House Bill 1341: Public Schools - School Security Personnel - Immigration Investigation and Enforcement

Hearing before the House Judiciary Committee, February 24, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a nonprofit legal services organization which advocates for social justice, and economic and racial equity in Maryland, including by upholding the rights of historically excluded and underserved students through individual representation, community outreach, and systemic advocacy. The PJC's Education Stability Project is committed to making discipline responsive to students' behavioral needs, fair, appropriate to the infraction, and designed to keep youth on track to graduate.

PJC strongly supports HB 1341, which establishes clear and appropriate boundaries for the role of public-school security personnel by prohibiting them from participating in federal civil immigration enforcement and from sharing student or employee information for immigration enforcement purposes without proper documentation. These protections are necessary to maintain safe schools, preserve trust between families and educators, and ensure equal access to education for all Maryland children.

Schools Must Be Safe and Accessible for Every Child

Maryland law and long-standing constitutional principles guarantee every child access to a free public education regardless of immigration status. When students or their families fear that routine school interactions could lead to immigration consequences, that right becomes meaningless in practice.

Families across Maryland already make daily calculations about whether it is safe to attend school, communicate with teachers, or seek help from school staff. If a parent believes enrolling their child, updating emergency contacts, attending a conference, or responding to a school call could expose their family to immigration enforcement, they may avoid school entirely. Students miss class, health services, counseling, meals, and extracurricular activities — not because they do not want to participate, but because they are afraid.

Public school security personnel are highly visible authority figures. When those personnel are allowed — or perceived — to act as immigration agents or information sources for immigration enforcement, the effect is immediate: students disengage from school.

This bill addresses that problem directly. It ensures that school security staff serve their intended function — maintaining school safety — rather than being placed in a role that undermines educational access.

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This Bill Improves, Not Weakens, School Safety

Opponents claim that policies like this reduce safety; in reality, the opposite is true.

Effective school safety depends on trust. Students must feel safe reporting bullying, threats, harassment, weapons, self-harm concerns, and other dangers to school officials. Parents must feel safe contacting the school when problems arise. Educators must be able to reach families without fear that communication itself will cause harm.

When school personnel are connected to immigration enforcement, families lose trust. Students stop reporting problems. Parents stop answering phone calls and critical safety information is lost.

Across the country, educators and school administrators have repeatedly observed the same pattern: fear of immigration consequences leads to lower attendance rates, reduced parent engagement, and reduced reporting of safety concerns. That does not make schools safer – it makes them less able to identify and prevent harm.

This legislation would allow school security personnel to better protect students within the school environment, and immigration enforcement would remain the responsibility of federal agencies operating through lawful processes outside the educational setting.

Importantly, the bill would not prevent compliance with a judicial warrant, court order, or other lawful legal requirement. Instead, it would prevent informal cooperation and data sharing that bypasses legal safeguards and compromises student safety and privacy. School security staff are trained to maintain school order and respond to security threats, not to interpret complex federal immigration law or act as immigration agents.

Clear Boundaries Benefit Educators, Students, and the State

Public schools exist to educate children. When immigration enforcement becomes intertwined with school operations, educational institutions take on a function they are neither trained nor designed to perform.

This bill would not obstruct federal law enforcement. Federal agencies retain their full legal authority and may still obtain records through lawful judicial procedures. Schools – and specifically school security personnel – would be prevented from becoming an informal extension of civil immigration enforcement.

Students cannot learn effectively when they are afraid. Families cannot partner with schools when communication may carry immigration consequences, and school safety cannot function without trust.

By ensuring that school security personnel are focused on school safety – and not federal civil immigration enforcement – HB 1341 strengthens education, protects privacy, and promotes safer schools for everyone.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1341.

For more information contact:

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