



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION, YOUTH, & OLDER ADULTS COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the mission of the Education, Youth, and Older Adults Committee is to study, review, and recommend policies that enhance educational opportunities, support the well-being and development of young people, and improve the quality of life for older adults. The committee is committed to fostering equitable access to high-quality education, advocating for youth empowerment, and ensuring that aging residents have the resources and services necessary to thrive.

The Honorable John Bullock

CHAIR

PUBLIC HEARING

July 23, 2026

12:30pm

CLARENCE "DU" BURNS COUNCIL CHAMBERS

25-0042R

*Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal
Immigration Enforcement on City Students*

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Brandon M. Scott – Mayor
Zeke Cohen – Council President



Office of Council Services

Nancy Mead – Director
100 Holliday Street, Room 415
Baltimore, MD 21202

EDUCATION, YOUTH, & OLDER ADULTS COMMITTEE

The Honorable John Bullock
CHAIR

Resolution Hearing

25-0042R

Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

Sponsor: Council Member Mark Parker District 1

Purpose: FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore City Public School System, the Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and any interested stakeholders to appear before the City Council to discuss the impact that escalated federal immigration enforcement is having on City students.

REPORTING AGENCIES

- **Baltimore City Public Schools**
 - **Health Department**
 - **Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success**
 - **Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs**
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BACKGROUND

In January 2025, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security rescinded longstanding guidance that generally discouraged immigration enforcement actions in or near "sensitive locations," including schools, churches, hospitals, and other places where vulnerable populations gather. The policy change allows federal immigration officers to conduct enforcement activities at these locations when deemed appropriate, prompting concern among school systems, local governments, and immigrant advocacy organizations nationwide.¹

These concerns became particularly significant in Baltimore in June 2026 when Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents detained the parents of a Baltimore City Public Schools student outside Hampstead Hill Academy while they were dropping off their child. The incident drew widespread attention from elected officials, educators, and community organizations, who raised concerns about the potential effects of immigration enforcement near schools on student safety,

¹ U.S. Department of Homeland Security. DHS Ends "Sensitive Locations" Guidance for Immigration Enforcement. January 2025. <https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/dhs-rescinds-biden-protected-areas-enforcement-policy>

attendance, and emotional well-being.² One of the detained parents was later ordered released by a federal judge after legal advocates challenged her continued detention.³

Following the Hampstead Hill Academy incident, Baltimore City Public Schools reaffirmed that all children have a constitutional right to a public education regardless of immigration status and stated that the school system would continue following established protocols regarding interactions with federal immigration authorities. School leaders and advocates have also expressed concerns that increased immigration enforcement may discourage families from sending children to school, accessing school-based services, or participating in educational activities.³

Nationally, educators and researchers have reported similar concerns. According to the UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools, approximately five million children in the United States live with at least one undocumented parent. Research indicates that fear of immigration enforcement can contribute to increased absenteeism, anxiety, depression, reduced academic performance, and decreased participation in school activities among affected students.⁴

Across the country, numerous jurisdictions have adopted or strengthened policies intended to support immigrant students and families. Several school districts, including Los Angeles Unified School District, Chicago Public Schools, Denver Public Schools, and New York City Public Schools, have reaffirmed protocols requiring school officials to consult legal counsel before granting immigration enforcement officers access to school property unless presented with an appropriate judicial warrant. Several states and local governments have also enacted or reaffirmed "safe haven" or "welcoming city" policies that limit cooperation with federal civil immigration enforcement where permitted by law and emphasize maintaining access to education, healthcare, and public services regardless of immigration status.

Maryland has likewise taken steps to support immigrant communities through local government initiatives and school system guidance. Baltimore City and several other Maryland jurisdictions have adopted policies intended to ensure students continue to have access to public education and supportive services while complying with applicable federal and state law.

Bill Summary

Council Resolution 25-0042R requests an informational hearing on the impact that increased federal immigration enforcement activities are having on Baltimore City students. Specifically, the resolution invites representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools, the Baltimore City Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and other interested stakeholders to discuss how recent federal immigration enforcement actions have affected students and their families.

The hearing seeks information on the effects of immigration enforcement on student attendance, academic performance, physical and mental health, access to food and housing, and overall

² The Baltimore Banner. "After ICE arrest at Hampstead Hill Academy, schools and families grapple with fear." 2026. <https://www.thebanner.com/education/k-12-schools/ice-immigration-baltimore-hampstead-hill-academy-4VYXWAX4AVDIJF6BCMY7JEJWCM/>

³ WMAR-2 News. "Judge orders release of mother detained by ICE at Baltimore elementary school." 2026. <https://www.wmar2news.com/local/judge-orders-release-of-mother-detained-by-ice-at-baltimore-elementary-school>

⁴ UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools, Our Children's Fear: Immigration Policy's Effects on Young Children (2025), https://transformschoools.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/UCLA_ImmigrationEnforcementBrief_12.4.23.pdf

well-being. The resolution also aims to better understand students' experiences with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and how federal immigration policies are impacting Baltimore City schools and communities.

FISCAL NOTE

This Resolution should have no fiscal impact on city funds.

Analysis by: Julianne Jemmott
Analysis Date: 7/21/2026

Direct Inquiries to: Juliane.Jemmott@baltimorecity.gov

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0042R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmembers Parker and Ramos

Cosponsored by: Councilmembers Middleton, Gray, Bullock, Blanchard, Dorsey, Conway, Porter, Jones, and Glover, and President Cohen

Introduced and read first time: December 15, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Youth, and Older Adults Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Baltimore City Public Schools, Health Department, Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

FOR the purpose of inviting representatives from the Baltimore City Public School System, the Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and any interested stakeholders to appear before the City Council to discuss the impact that escalated federal immigration enforcement is having on City students.

Recitals

The federal government's widespread immigration raids and arrests have fostered a climate of fear in communities nationwide. This "crackdown" by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has occurred in locations such as churches, hospitals, and even schools, which were all once considered safe havens restricted from immigration enforcement. Since the current presidential administration rescinded such restrictions, detentions and deportations have steadily risen. According to a report by UCLA, some 5 million children in the United States live with at least 1 undocumented parent. Evidence suggests that the stress associated with living under such conditions can lead to issues with academic attendance and achievement.

As of 2022, there were over 1 million foreign-born residents in Maryland, representing nearly 17% of the total population, a larger share than neighboring states and than the United States as a whole. According to the 2020 Census, foreign-born residents make up 8% of Baltimore's population. The City Council seeks a hearing to discuss the impact that the federal immigration enforcement escalation is having on City schools students. The hearing will seek to learn more about City students' experience with ICE and the federal immigration enforcement apparatus, as well as the effect of that apparatus on student physical and mental health, school attendance, classroom performance, access to basic needs such as food and housing, and life at home.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the City Council invites representatives from the Baltimore City Public School System, the Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and any interested stakeholders to appear before the City Council to discuss the impact that escalated federal immigration enforcement is having on City students.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 25-0042R

1 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
2 CEO and Board of Commissioners of the Baltimore City Public School System, the Baltimore
3 City Health Commissioner, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family
4 Success, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and the Mayor's Legislative
5 Liaison to the City Council.

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL



EDUCATION, YOUTH, & OLDER ADULTS COMMITTEE

25-0042R

*Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal
Immigration Enforcement on City Students*

Agency Reports



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Dr. Michelle Taylor, Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City Health Department
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	January 15, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0042R - Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

Council Bill 25-0042R - Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students calls for an informational hearing to discuss the impact of escalating federal immigration enforcement on City students. The resolution calls for the Baltimore City Public School System, the Health Department, the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to participate in the hearing.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) appreciates the opportunity to review Council Bill 25-0042R - Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students. BCHD runs several programs and services in City Schools, including but not limited to the operation of school health suites in 113 schools, school-based health centers in four schools, and school-based violence prevention programming in two schools. BCHD also provides programs and services for City Schools students and their families outside of schools, including our Community Asthma and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention programs and clinical services (including but not limited to family planning, sexual and reproductive health, and immunizations).

BCHD has not observed any impacts of federal immigration enforcement on its in-school programming and services. However, the agency has seen impacts on City Schools students and their families through the programs it provides outside of schools.

With regard to our clinical operations, as immigration enforcement increased, BCHD's clinic attendance saw a slight decrease (although the agency cannot say for certain whether there is a direct causal relationship). While clients are cautious about sharing information related to their

immigration status, clinic staff have heard from clients about their experiences and concerns. Some of those concerns included the deportation of a family member, and fear of being deported while their children remain behind. In the alternative, they fear having their children deported while they remain in United States. We have also heard from mothers that they are concerned about being detained while bringing their children to or picking them up from school. Concerned clients also include some of our immigrant clients who do have legal status, because they have seen news reports making it clear that enforcement is not limited to individuals without legal status.

Our Lead Poisoning Prevention Programs and Community Asthma Program have also experienced effects of increased immigration enforcement. Program staff have found that immigrant families are more reluctant to participate in our programs and to allow home visits for assessment of lead and asthma triggers. Increased immigration enforcement erodes trust in government workers, leading to families sometimes withholding information, declining services, or disengaging with the program. As such, staff have worked to encourage immigrant families to participate in the programs.

BCHD recognizes the importance of a safe and welcoming environment where all children can thrive. Therefore, BCHD requests a **favorable** report on Council Bill 25-0042R.



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Dr. Debra Y. Brooks, Director, Mayor's Office of Children Family & Success
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	July 8, 2026
SUBJECT	COUNCIL BILL 25-0042R Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

Bill Report: BILL 25-0042R Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

Bill Summary

Council Resolution 25-0042R seeks to convene an informational hearing before the Baltimore City Council to examine how increased federal immigration enforcement activity is affecting Baltimore City students' school attendance, mental and physical health, home life, and access to basic needs such as food and housing. The Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success (MOCFS), the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA), Baltimore City Schools, the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD), and relevant stakeholders are invited to share testimony.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

MOCFS supports BILL 25-0042R and appreciates Baltimore City Council's stance to support local immigrant families. MOCFS's mission is to drive transformative change in the City of Baltimore by using a three-generation approach to deliver comprehensive services that pave the way for the success of Baltimore's children and families. As such, our agency provides wraparound services to all local families through case management and qualifying assistance programs. MOCFS also directly supports the well-being of students through the Safe Passage program, the Mayor's Back to School Rally, Interagency Coordinated Response to Youth Violence in Baltimore City program (ICRYV), and various community engagement activities with Baltimore City Public Schools. We will continue to collaborate closely with MIMA and

Baltimore City Schools to support immigrant students and families across Baltimore City.

FISCAL IMPACT

The enactment of Council Resolution 25-0042R is not anticipated to have a direct fiscal impact on the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success.

CONCLUSION

The BILL 25-0042R Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students will be a great opportunity for City Council to hear insights on how local students and families are being impacted by federal immigration enforcement. We appreciate the elevation of this topic by local leadership and will continue to collaborate with government agencies and partners to support our families.

AMENDMENTS

None

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL



EDUCATION, YOUTH, & OLDER ADULTS COMMITTEE

25-0042R

*Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal
Immigration Enforcement on City Students*

Public Testimony

July 20, 2026

The Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: Testimony—The Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on Baltimore Communities

Dear Council President and Members of the Baltimore City Council:

On behalf of Elev8 Baltimore, I write to express our deep concern regarding the ongoing impact of federal immigration enforcement actions on children, families, schools, and communities across Baltimore City.

As an organization committed to educational equity, community well-being, and the redistribution of power to those most affected by systemic inequities, we believe it is critical to acknowledge both the direct and indirect harm being caused by current immigration enforcement practices. These actions extend far beyond those who are detained or threatened with detention. Their effects ripple throughout entire neighborhoods, creating fear, instability, and recurring trauma that undermine the social fabric of our city.

The documented impacts on immigrant families are substantial. Parents live with the constant fear of separation from their children. Students experience heightened anxiety, depression, and disengagement from school. Families may avoid accessing healthcare, social services, food assistance, or legal support out of concern that doing so could expose them to enforcement actions. These outcomes directly contradict the values of dignity, safety, and opportunity that Baltimore seeks to uphold.

Community Schools Coordinator, which are full-time staff placed in schools to support schools with coordination of service, opportunities, and engagement, several of which serves large populations of immigrant families have expressed concerns on Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity in Baltimore. Through reports from partners such as CASA Maryland, at least 16 people were detained in the past three weeks alone in raids at grocery and convenience stores, and at a Home Depot in Baltimore. Immigrants who have no history of and have shown no propensity for violence have been dragged out of cars and stores and forcibly thrown to the ground and handcuffed. Images of people bleeding while being held on their knees are flooding the news. These ICE actions in Baltimore create an atmosphere of anxiety and fear that reaches far beyond the individuals who may be directly targeted.

Immigrants and US-born family members of other cultures are alarmed, intimidated, and experiencing instability while simply trying to work, raise their children, and contribute to their communities. In this area, children have developed pervasive anxiety that a parent or loved one could be detained or



separated from their family at any moment and injured in the process. National news shows us ICE is increasingly operating in ways that many community members perceive to resemble a rogue militia.

This fear is having a direct impact on our students and our school. We are seeing students and families afraid to leave their homes. Family and student participation has declined in meetings, events, and extracurricular activities. Students and families who were previously engaged with teachers are now increasingly hesitant to be in public.

Parents are also working less. Some are reducing the hours they spend at their jobs because they fear being stopped or picked up by ICE. For families already living on limited incomes, this loss of work can have devastating consequences. As a result, we are seeing greater reliance on school food pantries, creating increased pressure on an already taxed resource. Families who would otherwise be working and providing for themselves are increasingly seeking assistance because fear has limited their ability to participate fully in the workforce and in daily life.

The effects of this climate of fear are also visible in our children's emotional well-being. Children come to school worried about what might happen if a parent does not come home from work. These are burdens that no child should have to carry while trying to learn, grow, and succeed in school.

Equally concerning, however, is the secondary trauma experienced by those who support and care for immigrant families. Community members, educators, school leaders, Community School Coordinators, afterschool providers, healthcare workers, social workers, faith leaders, youth development practitioners, and other frontline professionals are increasingly forced to witness the fear, uncertainty, and suffering experienced by the families they serve. Repeated exposure to traumatic events, family disruption, and ongoing crisis contributes to emotional exhaustion, compassion fatigue, stress, and burnout. This recurring trauma not only affects the well-being of individual professionals, but also places tremendous strain on schools, healthcare systems, nonprofit organizations, and community institutions that are already working to address longstanding educational, economic, and public health challenges.

In Baltimore's schools and community spaces, we regularly see the consequences of this fear. Students struggle to concentrate when they worry a parent may not be home at the end of the school day. Families become less likely to engage with schools and community programs. Trusted service providers are left navigating crises that no child, family, or neighborhood should face. The result is not only harm to individual families—it is harm to community trust, neighborhood cohesion, educational outcomes, public health, and collective well-being.

Immigrants today form communities and benefit society by filling large and growing gaps in the US labor force. Evidence shows immigrant inflows have eased tight labor markets and moderated wage pressures in affected industries.

Our immigrant families are our neighbors, our coworkers, our children's friends, and vital members of our communities. They work, pay taxes, send their children to our schools, support local businesses, and contribute to the cultural and economic life of this city. They deserve to live without fear and with access to food, healthcare, and community.

Recommendations

While the federal government controls immigration enforcement policy, Baltimore City has both the opportunity and responsibility to mitigate the harm being experienced by residents and the systems that support them. We respectfully urge the City Council to consider the following actions:

First, expand access to trauma-informed behavioral health services for immigrant families directly impacted by enforcement actions. These investments should include culturally responsive counseling, crisis intervention, family support services, and community-based healing programs that are accessible regardless of immigration status.

Second, dedicate resources to supporting those who experience secondary and recurring trauma while caring for impacted families. Teachers, Community School Coordinators, healthcare providers, afterschool staff, social workers, nonprofit professionals, and community leaders often bear an invisible emotional burden as they assist families navigating fear and uncertainty. Investments in wellness supports, counseling, trauma-informed training, peer support networks, and workforce retention strategies are critical to sustaining the professionals and organizations serving on the front lines.

Third, increase funding for immigration legal services, know-your-rights education, family preparedness planning, and legal representation. Access to legal support can be the difference between stability and crisis for many families and serves as an essential safeguard against further harm.

Fourth, develop resources and support mechanisms for employers, schools, and nonprofit organizations that are actively working to protect and support their employees and families. Many organizations have become first responders to the social and emotional consequences of enforcement actions, often without dedicated funding or infrastructure to do so. Strategic investments can strengthen their ability to continue serving Baltimore residents with dignity and care.

Finally, we encourage the Council to create opportunities for more protected and trauma-informed stakeholder engagement. While transparency remains a cornerstone of democratic governance, some of the most affected individuals may not feel safe sharing their experiences in highly public settings. Small, confidential focus groups and listening sessions with impacted families, service providers, educators, healthcare workers, and community leaders can create safer spaces for honest dialogue. This recommendation is not intended to limit public accountability, but rather to ensure that vulnerable residents and frontline professionals do not have their trauma publicly displayed in ways that could expose them to further harm or allow their stories to be weaponized against them.

We reject policies and practices that rely on fear, intimidation, and family separation. We believe every person, regardless of immigration status, deserves to be treated with dignity and humanity. We further believe that communities thrive when residents feel safe accessing schools, healthcare, community resources, and public institutions without fear of persecution.

Elev8 Baltimore has long stood alongside families and communities in the pursuit of justice. Our work is grounded in the belief that those closest to the challenges are closest to the solutions, and that lasting change occurs when power is shared with residents and communities rather than imposed upon them. It

is critical while developing new and updated legislation that those that work with and are impacted by targeted enforcement are included in drafting legislation and policies. We are committed to advancing systems that center community voice, protect human dignity, and promote equitable opportunities for all children and families. We cannot remain silent when policies and practices inflict harm on the very communities we are called to serve.

The harms associated with aggressive immigration enforcement extend far beyond those directly targeted; they reverberate through classrooms, workplaces, healthcare settings, community organizations, and entire neighborhoods. Baltimore has an opportunity to lead by investing in healing, protection, legal advocacy, and community resilience. We urge the City Council to advance policies and resources that affirm the humanity of all residents, support those on the front lines of this work, and ensure that every family could live safely, participate fully in community life, and thrive.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to building a city that values justice, equity, and the well-being of all its people.

Submitted On behalf of Elev8 Baltimore, Inc.

Alexandria Warrick Adams

Chief Executive Officer

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July 23, 2026

Re: Written Testimony for 25-0042R Informational Hearing – Impact of Federal Immigration Enforcement on City Students

Asylee Women Enterprise (AWE) is a Baltimore-based nonprofit that provides holistic services to asylum seekers and immigrant survivors of trafficking as they rebuild their lives in Maryland.

AWE respectfully submits this written testimony to share what we have witnessed as a community service provider and the experiences our clients have shared about how federal immigration enforcement is affecting their children's access to school, extracurricular activities, and overall sense of safety.

The impact of federal immigration enforcement on the families we serve has been profound. Many families are living with constant fear. Parents have changed their daily routines, paying for private transportation instead of using public transit, avoiding extracurricular activities, and limiting trips outside their homes because they no longer feel safe. The emotional toll on parents and children has been significant.

Many of the families we serve rely on public transportation to get their children to school. Parents have told us that when they see unmarked vehicles, individuals with face coverings, or unfamiliar cars nearby, they become frightened and return home rather than continue to school. Some have kept their children home for days or even weeks because they feared they or their children would be detained on the way. Many families describe the guilt they feel as they watch their children miss educational, social, and extracurricular opportunities because fear has made it difficult to leave their homes.

Many of our clients have asked us to share their experiences with the Council. The following stories are shared with their permission and reflect only a small sample of what we have witnessed in recent months.

- **One mother** whose son attends a Baltimore City public school described how excited her son was to go on a class field trip to Hersheypark. While many parents looked forward to the opportunity, she experienced it very differently. Instead of feeling excited for her son, she was consumed by fear – worrying that something might happen to him or that she herself could be detained while he was away. Rather than looking forward to hearing about his day, she anticipated anxiously checking her phone and wondering whether her family would still be together when he returned home.
- **One mother of a kindergartener** is enrolled in ICE's Intensive Supervision Appearance Program (ISAP). She wears a GPS ankle monitor, attends monthly ICE check-ins in Hanover, and must remain at home for frequent home visits from her ICE officer. She has no criminal history and is complying with all the requirements of her pending immigration case. One scheduled home visit fell on the day of her daughter's kindergarten graduation. The ICE officer never arrived, but she could not leave her home in case he came later. As a result, she missed her daughter's kindergarten graduation.



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Asylee Women Enterprise

- **A father** shared that his son had finally begun thriving in kindergarten after struggling during his first few months of school. Then, several members of their church were placed on ankle monitors, and the family learned that someone in their community had been deported. His son's anxiety increased dramatically. He began withdrawing at school and became very upset each time his father had to report for a scheduled ICE check-in.
- **Another mother** shared that her eight-year-old son asks her to send him text messages throughout every school day so he knows she has not been taken by ICE. Instead of focusing on school, friends, or simply being a child, he spends the day worrying whether his mother will still be there when he gets home.
- **A mother of three children** attending Baltimore City schools described how the immigration enforcement climate has dramatically changed her family's daily life. After ICE agents were reported near her son's school and people were detained near her home, she no longer felt it was safe to walk her son to and from school, even though they live only a short distance away. On some days, she kept him home because she feared encountering ICE on the way. The impact extended beyond school. Last summer, she enrolled her son in a soccer program at Patterson Park, but withdrew him after learning that ICE agents had begun showing up in the area and detaining people.
- **Another mother** with a daughter who attends a Baltimore City school shared: "My biggest fear is having to take my daughter to the school bus stop because I live near 7-Eleven and Home Depot. I used to walk there feeling very afraid. Right now, I'm calmer because my daughter is on school vacation, but once she goes back to school, I'll be very scared and worried again."
- **Another client** told us that her greatest fear is being separated from her family. Last school year, her son attended Fallstaff Elementary School and missed numerous days of school because she feared taking him after learning that ICE agents were near the school. She shared: "It is very scary because my son only has me as his mother, and we do not have any other family here. I am afraid that the government would take him away from me if they detained me. We are afraid to leave the house and not know if we will come back, or even come back alive, because I have seen that they are being very aggressive and killing people. The other day I saw them take a father away, and one of the immigration officers had to stay behind with a baby who was about two years old. Most of the people they are detaining are not criminals. They are fathers, single mothers, and people who are fighting to provide for their children. My brother is currently being detained, and it is heartbreaking to hear what he tells me about the reality of detained migrants. Every day, between 20 and 25 migrants arrive at the detention center. Many mothers cry for their children. It makes me feel helpless that I cannot do anything, not even for myself. This fear keeps us from going out. We are afraid that something will happen to us."

AWE also serves many teenage clients who are students in Baltimore City schools. Many have shared that they are terrified to attend school.



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- **One teenage client** shared: "There are four people living in my home: my sister, her two children (a girl and a boy), and me. Since the situation with ICE has become more complicated, our home has practically become a refuge 24 hours a day. My sister lives with the constant fear that something could happen to her if she goes outside, and that fear also affects her children, who spend most of their time staying inside the house. It is difficult for her to find a job and live a normal social life. [What] immigrants are living through forces us to make decisions we never wanted to face."
- **Another client in high school** shared: "I study at the National Academy Foundation school. I have been afraid of going out and being detained. I have not stopped going to school, but there is always that worry in the back of my mind about something happening. I am afraid of being taken away or detained. This situation has caused fear for me and my family because we do not know what could happen. It makes us feel nervous and less safe when we are outside."
- **Another high school student** shared: "I have been afraid to go to school because near my school there is a Hispanic store [where] many people have been detained. It makes me afraid because I have to pass through that area to get to school. I am scared that ICE might detain me."
- **One client who graduated this spring** shared with us that they were afraid to go to school because they feared something would happen to them on the way there. At one point, they stopped attending school for a period of time after hearing that ICE might be checking schools. The immigration enforcement climate also affected their family, causing them to stop going out together and avoid family activities. They were even afraid to go to work because of the possibility of being detained.

While these testimonies represent only a small sample of the families we serve, they reflect a pattern we have witnessed repeatedly. Federal immigration enforcement is disrupting children's education, limiting participation in extracurricular activities, and creating profound fear and uncertainty for families.

AWE is deeply concerned that these impacts will continue without meaningful action to protect the safety and well-being of Baltimore's immigrant families. Every child deserves to learn, play, and grow in a community where they feel safe, and every parent should be able to take their child to school without fearing family separation.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony and for your continued commitment to the well-being of Baltimore's children and families.

Respectfully submitted,

The staff and clients of Asylee Women Enterprise (AWE)