



Education Groups Oppose the Proposed Public Charge Rule

The proposed public charge rule would penalize students - **one of four of whom have an immigrant parent** - who use public benefits that are critical to students' health and well being, ensuring educational success and their contributions to our community. The effects of this rule would negatively and dramatically impact immigrant families and their children, as well as all students, schools and communities.

Why does the proposed public charge rule matter to K-12 education?

- Access to Medicaid, SNAP and housing all positively contribute to students' educational outcomes - and to their lifetime success.
- The proposed rule will result in more students without health insurance; adequate access to nutritious food; and more students will live in unstable housing.
- When students lack health insurance or can't see a doctor, they are more likely to miss school or to come to school sick.
- When students come to school hungry or have inadequate nutrition, their ability to focus and learn is diminished.
- When children are in an unstable housing environment, their education suffers. The loss of federal housing assistance will increase the risk of students living in unsafe, overcrowded, and unstable housing.
- Inadequate nutrition, a lack of routine medical care, and destabilized living situations contribute to disruptive behavior, inattention in class, absenteeism, and incomplete work.
- **All** students in a child's school experience the effects of that child's absences, behavior challenges and academic difficulties.
- Systems designed to coordinate student benefits - like free and reduced price lunches in schools, which are NOT subject to public charge determinations - will be unable to do automatic enrollment based on other programs.
- As families turn away from using public benefits, the costs of providing services in schools will fall on school districts and local taxpayers.

What did major education groups have to say?

“The proposed regulation would worsen the lives of countless families across the United States. Children in immigrant families do not live in isolation. They live and grow up in communities where their individual success is critical to the strength of the country’s future workforce and collective economic security. Our lives are profoundly interconnected with the lives of the individuals most impacted by this regulation. Children who are hungry will be unable to focus in class, and the entire class will make less educational progress.”

The Children’s Partnership

“Every day, NEA members engage face-to-face with K-12 students in our nation’s public schools. The children who come to school without breakfast, who miss class because of an untreated illness, or go absent as their families move from place to place -these are our members’ students. Both NEA and our members know the obstacles they face. The proposed rule would only worsen these students’ chances of academic success.”

National Education Association

“AFT members in schools and healthcare settings witness the effects of inadequate nutrition lack of healthcare or unstable housing situation on individual student behavior, attendance and academic achievement. The consequences have a ripple effect: All students in that child’s school experience the detrimental effects of his or her absences, academic difficulties or behavior challenges. This Trump administration proposal will not just hurt immigrants and their families, but all students who attend school with these children, which is the case in virtually every community in America.”

American Federation of Teachers

“If this regulation becomes law, we expect a significant number of immigrant parents will refuse to consent to allowing districts to bill Medicaid for healthcare or special education expenses for their children. As a result, districts that rely on Medicaid to meet the healthcare and special education needs of immigrant children will have to dip into local dollars to continue ensuring immigrant children are healthy enough to learn and receive the special education services they are entitled to under IDEA. The loss of Medicaid funding will place a considerable burden on school districts to raise local revenue through taxes or reallocate existing local resources to fill the gaps left by substantial decreases in Medicaid reimbursement.”

AASA: the School Superintendents Association

“Educators can readily attest to the effects of inadequate nutrition, a lack of routine medical care, and destabilized living situations on students. These factors contribute to disruptive behavior, inattention in class, absenteeism, and incomplete work. In other words, a marked decline in the quality of education follows, for both directly affected students and their peers. The proposed rule would drastically increase these barriers to education and development.”

Healthy Schools Campaign

“Children living in households that choose not to participate in SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid, for fear of impacting their immigration status, will not automatically qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, and many will not complete the income-based household meal application, resulting in the neediest children not meeting the minimum dietary requirements. Programs such as SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid are essential in assisting low-income families that struggle with food insecurity to help their children reach their full potential.”

The Children’s Partnership