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To: *All Media Partners*

Release: ***Immediate***

Media Statement from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education

Charlotte, NC – The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education understands that recent news about potential immigration enforcement activity may be creating anxiety for some of our families, including misinformation that federal immigration action has been carried out at CMS schools; that is not the case.

Please know that our priority is and always will be the safety, well-being, and education of every student in our schools. We are deeply committed to serving and protecting all students so they can receive the best education possible for a promising future.

We want to assure our families and students that regardless of any federal policy change, CMS will continue to comply with federal statutes, state statutes, and Board policies that protect all of our students' rights to a public education. The 1982 *Plyler v Doe* landmark Supreme Court case determined that immigrant students, including those who are undocumented, have the constitutional right to free public education.

Due to the current state of uncertainty around immigration enforcement, our staff has re-issued long-established districtwide guidance on students' protected rights and how to interact with immigration officers who come onto CMS property. Included in that guidance is the following:

- Compliance with [O-ELX](#) and accompanying regulation [O-ELX/R](#).
- CMS employees are legally obligated to safeguard the confidentiality of personally identifiable information, including a student's name, parents' name, address, telephone number, migrant status, homeless status, and English

language proficiency level, except if otherwise required by federal law per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

- When enrolling a student, schools cannot ask for immigration status, citizenship status, or social security number.
- School employees cannot voluntarily report the undocumented status of students to law enforcement.
- Immigration officials are not permitted in our schools unless they have a court order or a legally sufficient warrant issued and signed by a judge. Immigration officials will be denied access to students and student records, or any information without a signed court order or properly issued warrant.

CMS is committed to ensuring that our staff, students, and families are aware of their rights when they are within our schools. CMS will, like all school districts across the nation, monitor if any changes at the federal level could impact this guidance.