

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin,

We write in strong opposition to the recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforcement activity in and around schools and educational institutions in San Diego County. Over the past several weeks, ICE agents have detained parents and students near multiple educational institutions, raising serious concerns about the safety and well-being of our students, parents, families, and educators.¹ Parents should be able to drop their children off at school without fearing detention, and students should be able to attend class without encountering federal immigration enforcement around their campus.

According to the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD), on September 9, ICE agents detained two parents after they dropped off their children at John Marshall Elementary School in Chollas Creek.² And this is not an isolated incident. During last year's back-to-school season, several parents were also arrested by ICE or other federal agents while on their way to or from school pick-up and drop-off lines.³

These concerns extend to institutions of higher education as well. On September 8, the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) confirmed that ICE arrested one individual and pursued another near a college campus.⁴ College officials confirmed that the driver and passengers were students at San Diego City College. Schools have reported that the presence of ICE officials outside a college campus is highly disruptive and can discourage students from attending classes and accessing campus resources.

These incidents are concerning because immigration enforcement activity near schools can have an impact on all students and families, even when enforcement does not occur directly on school property. ICE activity near schools destabilizes the sense of safety schools offer and places an additional burden on school staff and local communities.⁵ The fear among students and families that these incidents cause can also likely negatively impact a student's educational engagement, mental and physical health, academic performance, and developmental trajectories.⁶

Schools and institutions of higher education have long been places where students feel safe enough to learn, belong, and achieve their academic dreams without their lives being uprooted. Schools should not become the backdrop for immigration enforcement activity, nor should parents have to choose between bringing their children to school and fearing that they may be detained in the process. As back to school season continues, we

¹["ICE arrests parents of 2 young children near John Marshall Elementary School in Chollas Creek" ABC 10 News San Diego, September 2026](#)

²["ICE arrests near schools spur new outcry in San Diego" TIMES of San Diego, September 2026](#)

³["Linda Vista Parent Arrested by ICE While Waiting to Pick Up Child from School" Voice of San Diego, August 2025](#)

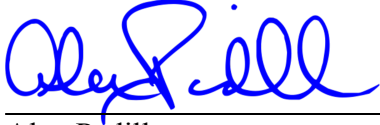
⁴["San Diego City College students protest ICE arrest of student" FOX 5 News, September 2026](#)

⁵["How immigration enforcement is harming US Schools and Students" Brookings, April 2026](#)

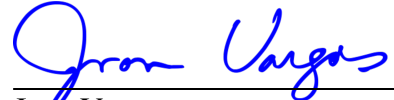
⁶["The Impact of Immigration Enforcement and Anti-Immigrant Policies on K-12 Schools, Educators, and Immigrant Youth and Families" National Immigration Law Center, August 2026](#)

demand that you end all ICE activity in the immediate vicinity of schools and college campuses, particularly during school arrival and dismissal times.

Sincerely,



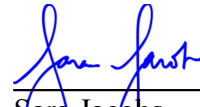
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress