



October 1, 2019

Dear APS Staff, Students and Families,

Thank you for a great start to the new school year.

This year, we have heard from some families who have raised concerns about any changes in immigration policies. As School Board members, educators and school leaders, we want to restate and reaffirm our core values, and to reassure everyone that all students and all families are welcome and safe in our schools.

In accordance with the federal law, APS does not monitor the immigration or citizenship status of our students. This means:

- APS does not require any information about ANY student's immigration or citizenship status;
- No APS schools share confidential student information with outside state or federal agencies without consent in advance from the student's parent or guardian;
- APS does not act on behalf of federal agencies to enforce immigration laws or to aid in deportation; and
- APS will not tolerate discrimination or intolerance in school, and we will do everything we can to provide support and resources to ensure the safety of our students and families.

Family Emergency Plan

We encourage all families to have an emergency plan and identify a trusted adult or guardian who your children can turn to in the event of any emergency. Make sure your student knows who you have designated and be sure to include these emergency contacts in ParentVUE using the [Annual Online Verification Process \(AOVP\)](#). Check to make sure your student's emergency release information is always updated and accurate. There are computer kiosks available in each school and staff trained to help you complete the online verification process to ensure these emergency contacts are current.

We encourage you to contact your school principal, counselor, or another trusted adult in your school or in APS with questions and to let us know how we can support you.

New Visitor Management System – Alternative Identification

We have heard some questions about the new online process APS uses to manage visitors and volunteers entering our schools to ensure the safety of our students. All parents and legal guardians who are listed on a student's Synergy account may request to go through an alternate identification process at their child's school. While we want to make sure that our schools are safe for children

to learn, we continue to hope that all parents and guardians always feel welcome to visit their students' schools. For more information about visiting our schools and required identification, view our [emergency management web page](#) or talk with someone at your child's school.

Federal “Public Charge” Rule

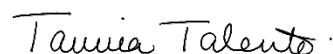
Some families also have asked if the new federal immigration “public charge” rule for individuals applying for permanent residency or a green card and set to go into effect on October 15, will affect student access to free and reduced-price meals. This rule does not currently count “health and nutrition” programs for family members, so it should not count against an applicant. This year, families can access the Annual Free/Reduced Meal Application online through the [AOVP](#) or by directly visiting the [My School Apps](#) website. Families also still have the option to complete the form on paper. Families can pick up a paper application at the Office of Food and Nutrition Services at the Syphax Education Center (2110 Washington Blvd.) or request a paper application be mailed to them by calling 703-228-6130.

Other Resources for Immigrant Families

- Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC): <https://www.ilrc.org/community-resources>
- Protecting Immigrant Families: <https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/know-your-rights/>
- Arlington County Immigrant Resources: <https://topics.arlingtonva.us/resources-immigrants/>
- National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR) Census 2020: <https://www.nnirr.org/drupal/mobilizing-for-census-2020>

We sincerely hope that all students pursue their goals this year with confidence, knowing that they will be safe and supported at school. APS is their “second home,” and we are deeply committed to ensuring the safety and success of all students.

Sincerely,



Tannia Talento
Arlington School Board Chair



Cintia Johnson
Interim Superintendent