
From: "AFT Public Affairs" <ddike@aft.org>
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Subject: Statement by AFT President Randi Weingarten On Alabama's New Immigration Law



A Union of Professionals

AFT News Release

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Statement by Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers, On Alabama's New Immigration Law

A new Alabama law requires elementary and secondary schools to collect data on the immigration status of their students' parents. School officials say many immigrant families, fearful of drawing unwanted attention, are keeping their children out of class.

WASHINGTON—Alabama's new immigration law is a crippling blow to the hopes and dreams of thousands of the state's youngest and most vulnerable students. Immigrant families have correctly viewed public education as the path to the American dream. If allowed to stand, this harsh and counterproductive law will leave that dream in tatters. In a misguided attempt to punish illegal immigration, Alabama has instead punished blameless children for trying to get an education and achieve a better life.

Educators should not be put in the position of being immigration-law enforcers. School should be a place where children can learn and teachers can teach. This heavy-handed measure also saddles cash-strapped school districts with yet another unfunded and unwanted mandate. That's a foolish waste of resources and time that would be better spent supporting teaching and learning in the classroom.

We join the growing chorus of educators and civil rights leaders asking the Justice Department to vigorously challenge the measure's legality.

The AFT represents 1.5 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators.

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