



BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE CODE 4FPA: PROACTIVE ICE PLANNING AND RESPONSE

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Summary

As part of proactive planning to protect our students and school communities in the event of any federal action in Burlington, we have developed this procedure. While our hope is that we do not need to implement this, it is important to be prepared, be aware of the steps that we may need to implement, and practice some of them ahead of time. Minneapolis Public Schools uses a school-centric model that relies heavily on trained volunteer families to support students and their community. BSD seeks to emulate this model of support.

This procedure will go into effect in the event that ICE becomes active in our neighborhoods around our schools, including, but not limited to, leaving vehicles, patrolling neighborhoods, and/or harassing community members. **The direction to implement the procedure begins with the Superintendent or their designee.**

Schools will utilize the structure of each school's Safety Team to coordinate the implementation of all parts of this approach that sit within schools. ***Each school will have this in place no more than two weeks after the adoption of this procedure.***

This procedure does not include resources for families. Please see [Resources for families, staff, and students impacted by ICE](#) for that information.

Reminder of No Trespass for Law Enforcement

As a reminder, law enforcement is not allowed on school property without permission, as is outlined in our procedure on "[Encounters with Law Enforcement and Immigration](#)." Should Immigration Enforcement come onto school property, "advise the officer that they must wait outside the school building and off school property while you obtain guidance from counsel."

Communication

Clear, accurate, and timely communication is essential when proactively planning for the possible presence of ICE in our community. The superintendent and the communication specialist will take the lead on developing communication regarding ICE in the community. If ICE activity occurs on or near school property and may impact students or families, the district will issue timely communication that:

- Shares verified information only.
- Reassures families about District safety protocols.
- Reiterates student privacy protections.
- Provides available resources or support services.

Messaging may be developed along with school administrators, and all efforts will be made to ensure communication is translated for families. Communication will keep in mind the various audiences in the District, knowing that secondary students receive community messages from the Superintendent.

Alerting/Reporting on ICE Presence

The first call should be to the Director of Engagement at 802-316-6653, call and then text. If they cannot be reached, the next call should be to the Director of Equity at (802) 865-5332. If this person is also not available, contact the Superintendent's Office at (802) 864-8474.

If an ICE action is happening in Burlington **during the school day**, we need details of the address and time of day, how many agents are present, and whether people are being detained. First-hand information is best.

Information Regarding Immigration Status of Students

This is protected information and should not be shared under any circumstances. We don't know, we don't assume, we don't share.

Time of Day

Interactions with ICE may happen at any point during the day. The way we respond will depend on the time of day, as well as other circumstances.

Before School

Implement walking school buses. See "Transportation" below.

During School

For incidents with ICE that occur on school grounds during the school day, we will follow our procedure on "[Encounters with Law Enforcement and Immigration](#)."

If there is an ICE presence or activity happening within view of the school when students would be outside, we will bring all students inside following standard protocols around building visitation.

If there is an ICE presence at dismissal or anywhere students may go after school (passing by or at their home address), we will hold these students at school and call their families to work out next steps. The next steps could include:

- Waiting for an adult to come get them at school (from the contacts list in PowerSchool)
- Allowing them to go home as they normally do (GMT, walking, etc.)
- Using a Walking School Bus to escort them home
- Assist with bus or private vehicle transportation.

During AfterSchool Programming

Students who remain in our schools for Expanded Learning Opportunities, athletics, or other after-school activities follow the same procedures that are followed during the school day. While we have more control over our properties, we need to work with those in charge of other settings (such as away games at other schools, field trips, etc.) to best support and protect our students. The Superintendent will determine if and when we need to cancel afternoon/evening events, including, but not limited to: classes, athletics, performances, school dances, and other evening school-sponsored gatherings.

- At school, follow our “during the school day” procedures.
- At athletic venues (not our schools) - Gather in advance the procedures for these venues: other public schools, colleges and universities, public venues such as ice-rinks.
- At community partner sites (see “Community Partners”)

Evenings, Weekends, and Days Off

BSD properties are often used by community members and partners outside of the typical school day. In the event there is elevated ICE activity on or near the property during this time, that activity should be reported to both the on-site point of contact, as well as to BSD’s Director of Engagement, Victor Prussack, who can be reached at (802) 316-6653. The Director of Engagement will confer with the superintendent regarding the next steps, which could include, but are not limited to

- Community communication
- Asking Burlington Police Department for help
- Asking BSD staff to report and respond

Transportation

Asking for Support Getting Students to and from School

Families can reach out directly to their schools or to their Multilingual Liaison if they do not feel safe bringing their students to/from school for regular school days, conferences and meetings-all conferences and meetings, after school events (such as athletics, school dances, performances, etc.), and Parent University courses.

To better support the safety of students, we will make every effort to have a staff or family volunteer presence where students travel on their way to and from school.

BSD School Buses

This section is to be [printed](#) and kept in all buses in an easy-to-reach location.

Any student riding a school bus is considered to be on private school property, just as if they were on school premises.

1. No bus entry is allowed by anyone other than rostered students, the driver, and authorized school personnel.
2. Bus drivers are directed not to interact with immigration agents. If uncomfortable in silence, limit yourself to saying “I am not authorized to engage.”
3. Bus drivers are directed to communicate immediately with the administration if immigration enforcement occurs at or near bus stops while on duty.
4. Bus drivers may open the doors for children who wish to exit, but remind them that they can stay if they want to.

- a. If a student requests to remain on the bus or to be returned to a BSD school, the driver will honor the request and communicate immediately with administrators, who will meet the bus at final destination, escort the student safely onto the premises, and contact guardians and legal counsel.

Green Mountain Transit Buses (GMT)

Many of our students ride GMT buses to and from school each day. GMT buses are open to the public; this is true for both the Neighborhood Special and regular routes. Over 65% of their funding is from the federal government and law enforcement is allowed to board any public bus. GMT has a [procedure](#) in place whereby, should a bus be boarded by law enforcement (ICE or otherwise), the driver immediately contacts their supervisor who then informs the BPD Police Chief and school district representatives (the Superintendent, the Director of Equity, and the Director of Engagement). There are no reported cases of law enforcement removing and detaining students on any buses.

Staff

School staff will be outside and visible to students as they approach schools in the morning (at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the school day) and as they leave in the afternoon (at least 15 minutes after the end of the school day). Locations include bus stops and vehicle drop-off and pick-up locations. In addition, school safety teams will put together ahead of time a list of staff volunteers who will walk with students several blocks beyond school or get in personal vehicles and drive along the routes that students take home. This is a voluntary assignment and separate from any assignments covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Walking School Buses

In almost all cases, guardians and parents of students are an untapped resource to help support getting our students safely to and from school. To assist students in getting to school safely and to lower the anxiety of their families, the volunteer Rapid Response Team at each school will support walking students to school, chaperoning to and from school, and waiting at bus stops. The purpose of this program is to support vulnerable families at our schools to be as safe as possible from ICE threats. Ally parents will coordinate and implement the logistics to get students to school safely while building relationships with them and their families. School and district staff, working with a volunteer parent/guardian Rapid Response member, will play the critical relational role of getting parents connected to this structure. Educators are often the ones who have the deepest relationships and trust with families.

Walking School Buses, while used informally in some schools, is a strategy that has been successfully implemented in other districts, including Minneapolis, to increase a feeling of safety and security. *Once these are established, they should be practiced so that they can be activated as needed.*

Volunteer Support

BSD's role is to keep our students safe and focused on learning in our schools. Outside of our schools, we rely heavily on trained volunteers to support students and their families. Models of how to do this and some level of coordination can come from the District; ultimately, vulnerable students need the organization and implementation to come from volunteers. This has been implemented successfully in Minneapolis. Our approach is outlined in "[Neighborhood Support Teams: What They Are & How To Get Involved](#)," as developed by and for District families with consultation from the District.

The Three Key Pillars of Neighborhood Support Teams Approach are:

- 1) [Community Connection & Mutual Aid](#) (Ongoing)
- 2) [Know Your Rights Education](#) (Ongoing)
- 3) [Rapid Response](#) (Emergency - As Needed)

All Neighborhood Support Team activities are **legal and nonviolent** ways to support and protect the rights and safety of community members. Neighborhood Support Teams are **launched and led by individual school communities** and are composed of family and community members who carry out the work. These teams work in collaboration with BSD, and act independently to stay rooted in community needs.

Communication to and from Volunteers

Volunteers will use Signal, a free, open-source, and highly secure instant messaging app to communicate. If you would like to support any of the above areas, please join [the Signal interest group](#) for your school community to get involved. From there, you'll receive the next steps for how to connect with different parts of the Neighborhood Support Team's mission.

Training and Vetting

Interested volunteers will begin with the [Signal interest group](#). Anyone who works directly with students will go through the [District level 3 background check process](#).

Volunteer Leadership

Each school should have a volunteer leadership structure to support this work, and one volunteer point-person from this group should coordinate with the principal, school volunteers, and volunteer leadership from other schools. The District will work with the Unified PTO (UPTO) to stand up volunteers, and the UPTO will support the organization of these volunteers, including training them.

Use of Whistles

The use of whistles to alert anyone of the presence of law enforcement has been determined to be a useful safety tool. While this has worked well in larger cities, Migrant Justice is not using whistles as a strategy in Vermont. If things should change, we would follow these guidelines.

The use of whistles will be implemented if the superintendent, in consultation with Migrant Justice, determines that they are needed. Whistles should only be used for this purpose and not for other purposes, such as simply getting the attention of students. Whistles will be procured and distributed by volunteers. They should be used only by school staff and volunteers who have been trained in their use.

Directions for Use

ICE nearby-blow 3 short bursts. If you hear this and you are concerned for your safety, either head away from this sound or get inside somewhere where you are safe.

- ICE detaining someone-blow 1 long whistle. If you hear this and you are concerned for your safety, either head away from this sound or get inside somewhere where you are safe.

We will make sure that [Printable Whistle Use Cards in English and Spanish](#) are also available in other languages as well.

Filming Encounters with Immigration Enforcement

BSD does not direct or otherwise expect staff to film any encounters. We also cannot discourage staff and families from doing so. If you DO choose to film, please remember to stay calm and do not escalate the situation, and record from a distance, without interfering. This [Know Your Rights](#) resource from Building Bright Futures provides more details. **If staff film encounters with any of our students**, those videos must be shared as soon as possible with your direct supervisor, and these must then be shared with the Superintendent or their designee.

Field Trips

At the discretion of the Superintendent, field trips may be limited or canceled. This could include BHS students who access the YMCA for physical education, YES programs, Burlington City and Lake Semester, parades, etc. Exceptions may be made for field trips that utilize school buses and are going to other schools, or otherwise, at the superintendent's discretion.

If a law enforcement incident is occurring near a field trip that is taking place, it is at the discretion of the teacher to divert the path.

Family Conferences and Meetings

All conferences and meetings will either have a remote option or move to remote only as determined by the Principal in consultation with the Superintendent or their designee.

Community Partners

Many of our students spend significant amounts of time outside of school with community partners. The Director of Engagement is responsible for communicating this procedure with Community Partners and collaborating with them on understanding and potentially adapting their procedures around this topic. This list includes, but is not limited to:

- Boys and Girls Club, King Street Youth Center, Greater Burlington YMCA, Very Merry Theater, Burlington City Arts, The ONE Center, Outright VT, Miller Center, Fletcher Free Library, Family Room, AALV, Spectrum, YouthBuild.

City Responsibilities

The District is in close communication with the Mayor's Office in terms of developing this procedure, communicating concerns and imminent threats as well as unsubstantiated rumors. All communication from the Mayor's Office will be directly to and from the Superintendent or the Director of Engagement. All communications with BPD will be directly to and from the Superintendent or the Director of Equity and Safe and Inclusive Schools.

The City will work with local businesses to designate Safe zones (See Chicago and Minneapolis)

Clerical Information

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