



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education 

DATE: October 16, 2017

SUBJECT: Recent Request for Information Regarding Federal Grant for Immigrant Students

Earlier this year the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) asked you to collect and provide to CSDE information concerning whether children in your district meet the federal definition of Immigrant Children and Youth. CSDE needs this information to award eligible districts the federal Language Instruction for Immigrant Students and Youth Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. As you know, this grant enables districts to provide important educational services and support to recent immigrant students.

CSDE thanks you for your efforts in obtaining the information needed for us to award grants to eligible districts under this program. As you prepare to provide your district's information to CSDE for determination of grant awards, CSDE wants to remind you that any written responses you have received from families as well as the data you provide to CSDE are educational records protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and should be treated as confidential. These materials should not be disclosed to the public or other governmental agencies (including in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act) unless the parent or guardian has provided prior written consent. Absent consent, some other basis for disclosure, such as a subpoena or order of a court that complies with FERPA, would be required.

We have received information that families in some school districts may not understand why this information was requested and how this potentially sensitive information about their children will be used. In light of these inquiries, CSDE has prepared the enclosed explanatory letter (in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Creole-Haitian, Arabic, and Chinese) which responds to the questions that have been raised. We understand that districts may be collecting this information in different ways. I am providing this letter for you to use if families in your district have questions or have raised these concerns.

Again, I want to thank you for your efforts in obtaining and providing this important information.

If you have any questions, please contact CSDE Director of Legal Affairs, Peter Haberlandt, at 860-713-6520, or e-mail peter.haberlandt@ct.gov.

cc: Peter Haberlandt, CSDE Director of Legal Affairs