

SCOE distributes form that allows congressmen to assist families facing immigration issues

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The Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) is collaborating with the offices of congressmen Jared Huffman (D-San Rafael) and Mike Thompson (D- St. Helena) to distribute a form that is critical to helping the representatives assist families with immigration issues. If an individual is facing deportation or having other immigration-related problems and wishes to seek help from their congressional representative, filling out an advocacy authorization form (see attached) is the required first step.

Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools Steve Herrington is making the form available online at scoe.org and in his administration office at SCOE. He has also sent the form to the superintendents of Sonoma County's 40 school districts and suggested that they make it available at their school sites if they see fit.

"People don't always know where to get these important forms, so we're doing what we can to create a broader network of public access by making them available at school sites," he said.

The effort comes at a time when some Sonoma County school boards have voted to make their districts safe havens. The Sonoma County Board of Education, which oversees SCOE's court and community schools, voted to make SCOE a safe haven as well. The county board's resolution takes numerous steps to reassure and protects students of immigrant families in Sonoma County. See the full text [here](#).

School officials around California have reported that undocumented children, as well as children who are citizens but have undocumented family members, have suffered increased stress and anxiety as a result of increasingly strict deportation policies. This can impact students' abilities to learn. About one in eight students in California schools has at least one parent who is undocumented, according to [a new report](#) from the Education Trust-West, an Oakland based advocacy group.

What is the Advocacy Authorization Form?

The ICE Advocacy Authorization Form gives a congressman and his staff permission to contact Immigration and Customs Enforcement on behalf of the person who has filled it out and signed it. It allows them to request information about a particular person, such as where and how someone is being detained.