



September 12, 2017

Dear Students, Families, and Staff,

As the daughter of immigrants, I am familiar with the challenges of acclimating to a new country. As a former teacher and principal, I know that one of the fundamental conditions for success in our schools is for everyone – students, families, and staff – to feel safe, welcomed and respected.

The announcement made by the White House regarding President Trump’s plans to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program is deeply disappointing for many in our city. It challenges our ideals of fairness, equality and mutual respect.

I want to be clear that New York City public schools will remain safe and welcoming environments for everyone, regardless of immigration status. We will do everything in our power to protect every child in our care, every family in our midst, and every staff member in our ranks.

If you’re a Dreamer, support is available. If you are a DACA recipient or know a Dreamer in need of support, the City has resources regardless of immigration status, including access to free, confidential immigration legal services. Visit nyc.gov/DACA for more information and a fact sheet on DACA available in 10 languages.

When I taught social studies, I made it a point to ensure students could discuss real differences with mutual respect at the core, and this is something I’ve encouraged schools to do as Chancellor. To create safe learning environments, every child must feel respected and included. The Department of Education (DOE) remains steadfastly committed to all our families whatever changes may happen at the national level.

This includes remaining committed to protecting the rights of our students and staff. Federal agents, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, will not be permitted to enter our schools unless absolutely required by law. The DOE does not track the immigration status of staff and students and will not release any information unless absolutely required by law. By protecting our students and staff, we can all focus on the important work of teaching and learning. For additional information on supports available for families and educators, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/SupportingAllStudents>.

I encourage you to have a conversation with your family about how we commit ourselves to respect, tolerance and acceptance. We must stand together, as one New York City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Carmen Fariña'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carmen Fariña
Chancellor