

Mr. Michael Hoose
Interim Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Elizabeth Kupiec
Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Tyler Baker
Director of Pupil Personnel Services

February 2025

Cato-Meridian Central School District Families and Caregivers,

We understand that recent news and events surrounding immigration enforcement may be causing concern and uncertainty for some members of our school community. We want to take this opportunity to reassure all our families that the Cato-Meridian Central School District is committed to following state and federal laws while also providing a safe, nurturing and welcoming environment that promotes learning and growth for all our students. Regardless of their immigration status, all students ages 4-21 are entitled to a free public education in New York. We will continue working with our legal team and collaborating with other agencies in order to ensure the safety and protection of our students. Please review the guidance below:

Current Laws and Regulations

- NYS and Federal laws and regulations state: "School districts may not refuse admission based on national origin, immigration status, race or language proficiency, among other grounds."
- The US Supreme Court has long upheld its ruling "that students may not be denied a free public education based on their immigration status or that of their parents or guardians."
- Immigration enforcement agencies, including ICE, do not have access to school grounds without proper legal authorization.
- The NYS Education Department's long-standing position is that law enforcement officers may not remove a student from campus or question a student without the consent of the parent.
- More information on New York State's Guidance on Safeguarding the Rights of Immigrant Students can be found on NYSED's website at <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/oag-go-sed-immigration-students.pdf>.

Student Privacy Protections

- Schools cannot disclose student immigration status without parental consent.
 - Student personally identifiable information (PII) can only be shared if required by a judicial order or subpoena, or with parental/guardian consent.

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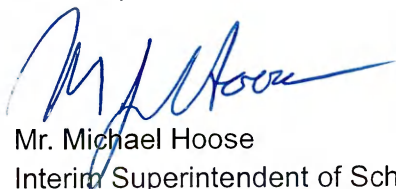
Supporting Students and Families

- School counselors and professionals are available to support students and families. If you or someone you know has concerns or needs resources, please reach out to the school counselor in your child's school for guidance.

We are a school district that honors and cherishes diversity, and together, we remain committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment for all.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 315-626-3439, extension 5001.

Sincerely,



Mr. Michael Hoose
Interim Superintendent of Schools