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District Remains Committed to Ensuring Safe and Supportive School Environments for All Students

PITTSBURGH January 30, 2017 – Following the Jan. 25th Board vote to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all students, the federal government has acted to impose pervasive restrictions on the ability of immigrants and refugees to enter the United States.

With more than 1,000 English Language Learners, a growing number of which are refugees, many District families find themselves worried and alarmed because of their ethnicity, immigration status or citizenship. The Pittsburgh Public Schools values the diversity of its students and believes that all students deserve to attend school in spaces that are safe, free from bullying, racism and the threat of deportation.

"We remain committed to our mission '…to prepare all children to achieve academic excellence and strength of character, so that they have the opportunity to succeed in all aspects of life,' regardless of their immigrant status," said Superintendent Anthony Hamlet. "It is unfortunate that many of our students and families are living with anxiety related to recent action at the federal level. We want them to know they are welcomed in the Pittsburgh Public Schools."

The District remains committed to upholding its policy, aligned to state and federal laws, which provides "that a child's enrollment in public school may not be conditioned on the child's immigration status," and will use the Fourth Amendment to protect the personnel records of students and staff.

Any request made of the District or its schools by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials to access information or school grounds must be processed through the Law Department and the Office of the Superintendent. Schools will not permit ICE officials to access any students, without having contacted the Law Department with all relevant documentation.

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