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For Immediate Release

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# SCUSD's Board votes to support 'safe haven' schools

**December 9, 2016 (Sacramento):** Sacramento City Unified School District's Board of Education voted unanimously Thursday to designate SCUSD schools as "safe havens" that protect students regardless of immigration status.

"Students cannot learn in an environment of fear," said Board Vice President Jessie Ryan. "Last night, by unanimously passing the Safe Haven School District resolution, our district made a strong statement that we hear our community's fears and will do everything in our power to protect all students irrespective of race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual preference or immigration status."

The resolution comes amid fears expressed by students and parents that undocumented residents will face deportation if President-Elect Donald Trump implements a hardline immigration policy. It reinforces policies against hate speech and directs staff to step up efforts to build more tolerant climates throughout the district.

"I applaud the Board for sending this unequivocal statement to our diverse community," said Superintendent José L. Banda, himself the son of immigrant field workers. "I also want to thank all our teachers, principals and staff who advocated for the resolution's passage."

The resolution was supported by the Sacramento City Teachers Association, the Council on American Islamic Relations, La Familia and the Black Parallel School Board.

More than 30 speakers lined up at Thursday's Board meeting to express support for the resolution. Many spoke passionately about their own immigrant experiences and urged passage of the initiative to send a strong message to families worried about the future.

The resolution affirms that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents will not be allowed to enter schools or other district property without prior written approval from the Superintendent. It also calls for a restriction on the sharing of information with an agency attempting to ascertain citizenship status. SCUSD by its own admissions and enrollment policies does not collect citizenship data.

"We hope other school districts will join us in standing with our students in these uncertain times," Ryan said.

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