



SAINT THOMAS  
AQUINAS

February 3, 2017

Dear STA Community,

The recent Executive Order banning citizens from specific countries from entering the United States, as well as other immigration rhetoric, has raised concerns with children, parents and teachers in the STA community.

In response to this order and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, which calls us to respect the dignity of all people and aid the oppressed and vulnerable, the STA School Commission has adopted the attached resolution as it relates to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Fr. Steve Schwab and I wholeheartedly support this resolution.

From the earliest days of racial integration in our city to our present school population that boasts children and parents from 17 countries, Diversity, Inclusion and Welcome have been hallmarks of the St. Thomas Aquinas community. Our wall of international flags in the hallway is not a decoration; it is a consistent reminder that all are welcome and appreciated at our school.

We will continue to welcome all families who seek a Catholic education for their children, respond with compassion and hospitality and educate our students in the fullness of God's creation as evident in the multiculturalism of humanity.

Sincerely,

Cara Swinefurth  
Principal

RESOLUTION REGARDING SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS SCHOOL PRACTICES  
RELATED TO IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

WHEREAS, Cardinal Tobin reminds us to understand and heed the call of God, who through Moses told the people of Israel: “You shall not oppress an alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt” (Ex 23:9); and

WHEREAS Saint Thomas Aquinas embraces its responsibility to welcome and educate all students and uphold its mission to provide a premier education for all students; and

WHEREAS, Saint Thomas Aquinas is committed to the physical safety and emotional well-being of all students within its control, and is committed to ensuring that all schools and school facilities are welcoming and safe places for students and their families; and

WHEREAS, Saint Thomas Aquinas has adopted policies ensuring the provision of equal educational opportunities to all enrolled students, regardless of their immigration status, national origin, or language; and

WHEREAS the presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) employees on Saint Thomas Aquinas property for the purposes of removing students or their family members or obtaining information about students and their families disrupts this safe and welcoming environment; and

WHEREAS, Saint Thomas Aquinas believes that it is in the best interests of the students, staff, families and community of Saint Thomas Aquinas that it take action to assure all students and families that it will oppose, by reasonable legal means available, disruptions to the educational environment that ICE actions may create.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Saint Thomas Aquinas, shall adopt procedures and practices that assure the following:

That unless specifically required by law, commission members, school employees, contractors, volunteers, and representatives will not use school resources solely for the purpose of detecting or assisting in the apprehension of persons whose only violation of law is or may be being an undocumented resident in the United States, or failing to produce documents authorizing residency in the United States;

That commission members, school employees, contractors, volunteers, and representatives shall refrain from inquiring about a student's or family's immigration status;

That commission members, school employees, contractors, volunteers, and representatives shall not--unless compelled by a valid court order, by law, or subsequent to receiving parent's signed

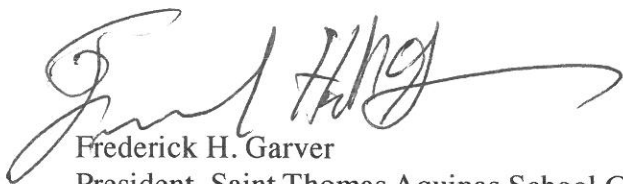
consent—disclose to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers any information about a student's or family's immigration status;

That commission members, school employees, contractors, volunteers, and representatives shall require any ICE personnel wishing to enter any property owned by Saint Thomas Aquinas to notify the school principal and archdiocese General Counsel in advance of such entry and to provide proper written authority to enter such property;

That commission members, school employees, contractors, volunteers, and representatives shall refrain from referring students and parents with questions about their immigration status to ICE; and

That commission members, school employees, contractors, volunteers, and representatives shall continue to assure that all students have access to the learning and other educational services available at their schools, including rigorous courses, student extracurricular activities and athletics, and support services regardless of the student's or family's immigration status.

Adopted January 30, 2017



Frederick H. Garver  
President, Saint Thomas Aquinas School Commission



Vicente Giordanelli  
Vice President, Saint Thomas Aquinas School Commission