



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION

Justice Department Reaches Settlement with Georgia School District to Ensure All Students Can Enroll in and Attend School

The Justice Department announced that it has entered into a settlement agreement with the Henry County School District in Henry County, Ga., to ensure that all students in the district are able to enroll in school, regardless of national origin or immigration status. The settlement agreement resolves the department's investigation into allegations that the district improperly notified parents that their children would be withdrawn from school for not providing a social security number, and failed to make its enrollment procedures accessible to parents with limited proficiency in English.

Under the settlement agreement, the district will ensure that all parents understand that providing their child's social security number is voluntary, and no child will be denied enrollment or attendance in school for declining to provide a social security number. The settlement agreement also requires the district to provide parents who have limited English proficiency with enrollment and registration information in a language they can understand. The district further agreed to conduct training for administrators and staff on registration and enrollment procedures and proper communication with limited English proficient parents.

"Public schools serve all children in this country, no matter where they or their parents were born," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "No one benefits when a child is kept out of the classroom. The Justice Department is committed to ensuring that all that students and their families are welcomed in school, regardless of background."

The settlement agreement reflects guidance that the Georgia Department of Education issued to all Georgia school districts in September 2012, after the Justice Department raised concerns about student enrollment practices in the state. The new guidance makes clear that no student can be denied enrollment in any public school or program for declining to provide a social security number or declining to apply for a social security number.

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