

---

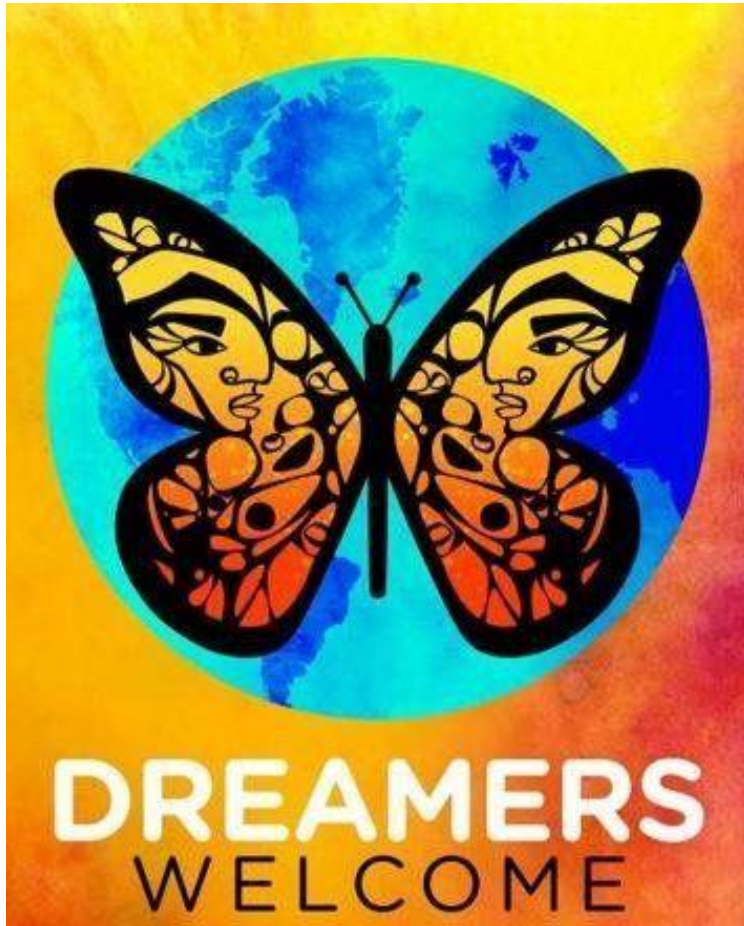
---

**For HS counselors:**  
*Understanding and helping students with their  
immigration concerns, during post-secondary planning*

For MEFA  
By Andrea Keenan  
September 2021

---

---



## Today's agenda:

Introduction – 5 minutes

Counseling best practices –  
30 min

Your Tactical Guidebook - 20  
min

Open Q&A – 5 min



# Introduction

# About me

- Director Of College and Career Counseling at Excel Academy Charter HS in East Boston
- 11 years in education access, 4 as a HS counselor.
- Born in Mexico City
- Immigrant and first-generation college student
- Ally and Advocate
- A resource for you!
- [akeenan@excelacademy.org](mailto:akeenan@excelacademy.org)







# Counseling best practices

# Think of the four-levels of your work

- a. **Individual:** how will you keep informed? What are your resources? (tactical guidebook in this slide deck, webinars, bookmark online information outlets)
- b. **Counselor + student/family relationship:** best practices
- c. **Team-level:** Coordinating support within your counseling office
- d. **Within the wider School/organization:** Dos and Don'ts

# Think about your **MACRO** strategies and your **MICRO** Strategies

WHAT do I mean by *strategies* and WHY do we need them?

For both, you need to to:

- GET **CREATIVE**
- INCREASE **COMMUNICATION and Transparency**, especially when talking with families. Be honest about what you don't know, but fact find, then loop back with them. Be on the journey together.
- THINK ABOUT WHAT IS THE **RIGHT FIT** FOR THE STUDENT(S)
- TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE **SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM EFFECTS**

# MACRO: keeping lists of students?

How can counselors do this safely?

Why is it important to get a good grasp of who may have immigration concerns?

- Connect with 9th/10th grade counselors... is there anything you should know?
- Figure out a system that is 100% safe but also easy to use for all the counselors. And ONLY the counselors.



# MACRO: Counselor calibration meeting

- This is an example of a “macro strategy” because you would implement this alongside your other counselors.
- We need this because targeted and strategic counselor advocacy goes a long way... especially for 4 year colleges (but not exclusive to it)
- Think of ways you can take meeting notes in a coded way. (student privacy is key!)
- Ideal timing: early/mid-December before regular decision application deadlines, but late enough that students have a better idea of where they want to apply.
- Counselors refer back to it and keep each other updated if there are updates.
- How? Start with a roll call, then identify the student’s ideal PS plan, and use each other to gameplan the strategy.

# MICRO: How to talk to students

Step 1: Set the scene.  
MAKE YOUR OFFICE  
“UNDOCUFRIENDLY”

## The Atmosphere

Liberated and safe spaces must be welcoming environments that undocumented youth and their families can easily recognize even if they have never met the staff or volunteers working in the office.

**On your door:** Display-“I am an Unafraid Educator With and For Undocumented Students”

**On your walls:** Display posters from the immigrant youth-led movement

**On your bookshelves:** Include titles like-  
•Publications from UCLA IDEAS like Underground Undergrads and Undocumented and Unafraid

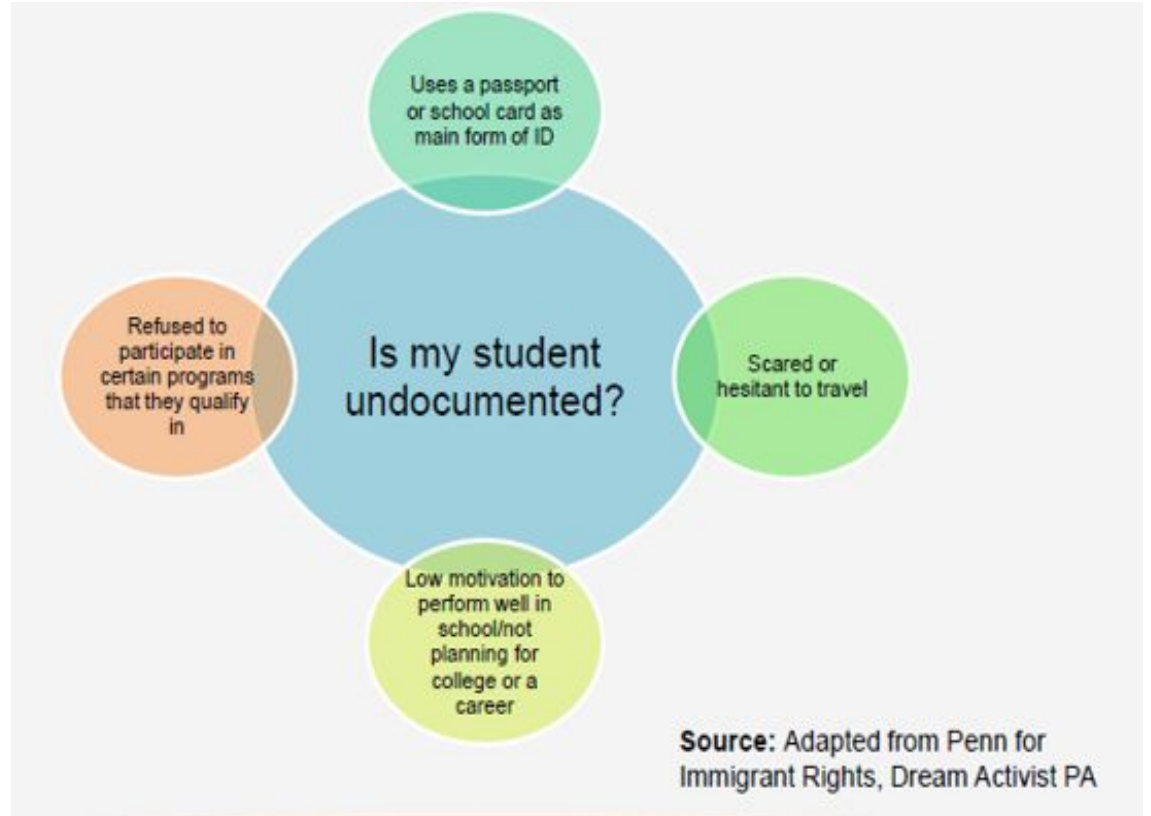


Source: Erin Howard, BCTC  
Latino Outreach Director, 2014

# MICRO: How to talk to students

**Step 2:** Assess the situation and ask yourself:

1. Do you know their status?
  - a. **If NO, but you suspect something...**  
give students and families chances to tell you (but obvi don't ask) "Is there anything else you want to share that would help me advise you better about life after High school"?



# MICRO: How to talk to students

## Step 2: Assess the situation

### 1. Do you know their status?

#### a. If YES, how did you find out about their status?

##### i. Did they share it with you?

1. If yes, did they give you permission to share it with others? If you forgot to ask when they first self-disclosed, don't fear coming back to the subject. **Honesty**, and **communication** with the student are key.

a. "Hey, so remember when you shared with me about your immigration status. (again thank you for trusting me!), so I wanted to ask you, would it be OK for me to share what you told me ONLY with \_\_\_\_\_ (be specific) so that they can help me as I help you?" "This person has expertise with this..."

##### ii. Did you hear about it from others?

1. Then unless the student gave permission for that person to share it with you, it's as if you didn't know. Go back to the person and ask them to ask the student for permission to share with you and the reasons why. We need to normalize RESPECT for these students in our schools, first and foremost.

2. OR it's as if you didn't know and GO BACK TO (a) and give the student the space, respect, and earn their trust so they tell you too. It may take a little longer, but the payoff is greater... it will make for a stronger counselor-student dynamic that will carry you through the rest of the year and their process.

## MICRO: How to talk to students (cont'd )

Then, make space in your calendar to have as many check-ins with these students (and families as possible for you and your program) throughout the year... for me it's as often as I can, even if it's just 2 min in the hallway.

- Clear, concise, and warm communication is key to keep their trust.
- If you don't know an answer, be honest about that. (this is tough even for seasoned counselors). Own it, tell them you will fact find, then when you have the answer, loop back with them asap.
- Walk with them through the process. Ask their opinions, give them options and ask for their feedback.

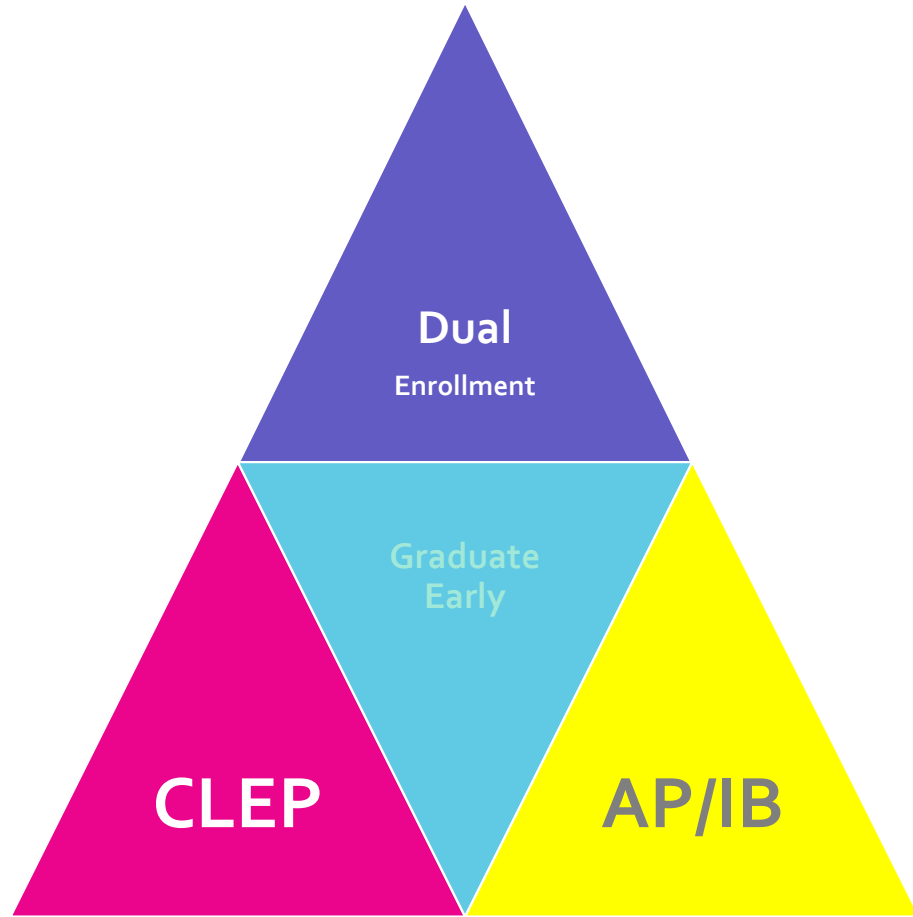


# MICRO: How to talk to students (cont'd 2)

Tough convos:

1. When you know the student does not qualify for federal aid:
  - a. That doesn't mean they don't qualify for any other aid. Make that clear to the student.
  - b. Take your student through your thought process, think through scenarios with the student... they appreciate that.
  - c. If the student is completely undocumented, explain to the student that public colleges are the least affordable, and that their list will be smaller, but that every college/program they apply for will be very intentional!
  - d. Start applying to private scholarships ASAP. Engage/motivate the student with incentives...

## Other Tips while in High School



More specifics about  
Post-Secondary  
counseling for different  
types of HS students

# How do you counsel....

## A student with a GPA of 3.8 +?

- 3.7-4.0 = “bubble” students. Essay, demonstrated interest, and interview becomes VERY important. Is their application telling THEIR authentic story?
- 4.0+ - the biggest hurdle here is family literacy and crafting the student AND parent/guardian’s College-going identities. Would the student have more opportunities if they were able to go to a College that’s farther away? What’s the family context? Is the student an emotional or financial caretaker at home?
- Read lists and ask colleagues for recent “undocufriendly colleges” in your area

# How do you counsel....

## A student with a GPA between 3.0 and 3.7?

- Think about strategic undermatching and colleges that give “merit aid” scholarships
- Can the student live at home? If so, saving \$ on Room and Board can be the difference-maker
- Do students have relatives in other parts of the state or the country?
  - Ex. California, smaller private colleges who give merit aid



# How do you counsel....

## A student with GPA below 3.0 or hesitant about going to college?

- WHAT ARE THEIR CAREER ASPIRATIONS? Don't feed the "you have to go to College just to go to College narrative." It's a OK narrative early in HS and very prominent and important culturally, depending on the family... but in senior year, students need a dose of career-focused vocabulary. What are their skills? Interests?
- 2-4 year programs: DUET\*\*\*, Endicott Boston, BFIT, Quincy College, UMASS Online, Community colleges if they qualify for in-state tuition.
- If a student has a work permit and is career focused: Vocational programs, career and technical apprenticeships. Example: Year up
- If no work permit and in MA, encourage students to connect with SIM. Also, to learn how to be independent contractors! They can still attend College or other programs, but they should get connected to legal aid too!

School/Organization-wide  
context and tips

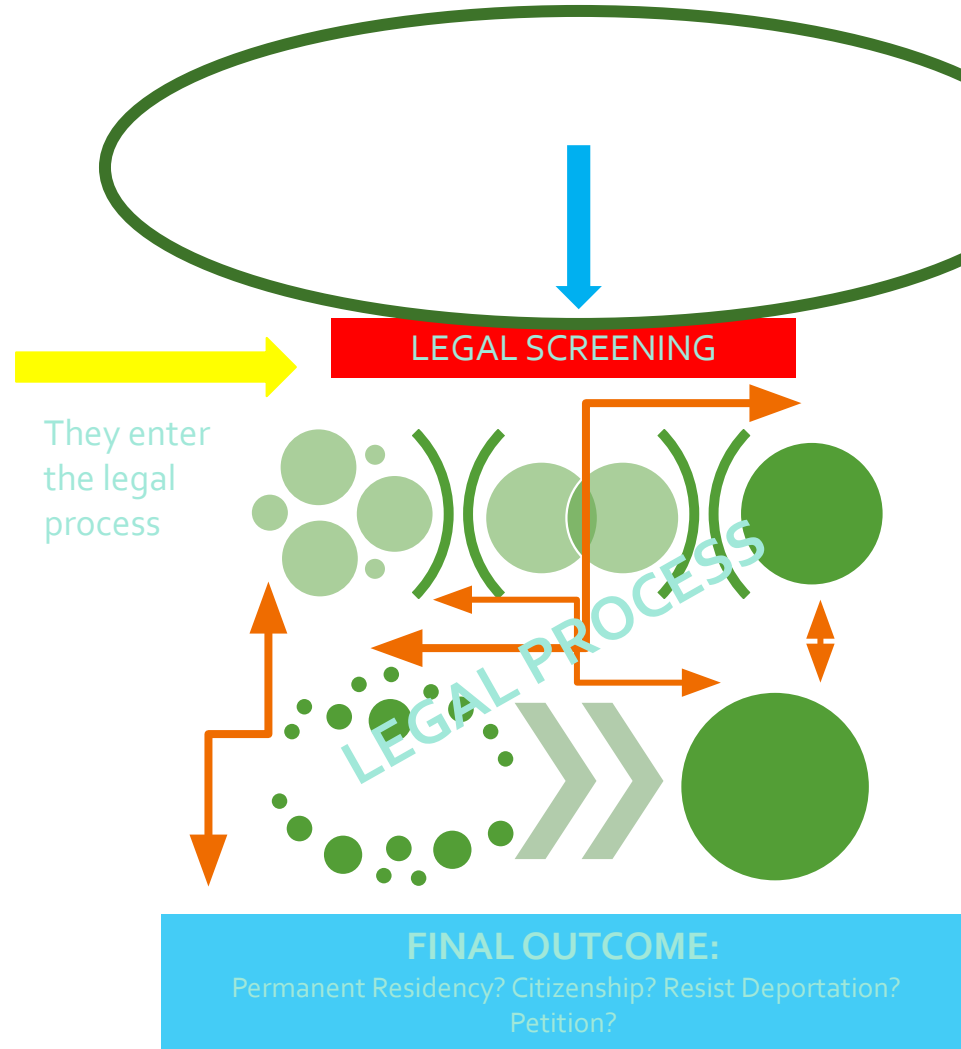
## How to be an ally and an advocate

- We want to empower our students to be their own advocates: to find their voice and to be unafraid to stand up for themselves, their communities, and for the greater cause.
- The fight for immigration reform is not our fight. But we can be allies and we should empower our students to join in it, if they want and are ready.
- Attend trainings (like the one today!) Listen to student stories. Thank them for their trust. Join or create ally communities.

## What we will do and will not do in schools to keep our students safe

- Self-disclosure. It needs to happen so we can help students, when they choose to ask for help. But we can **never** ask a student or family what their immigration status is.
- Please try to avoid writing emails with sensitive information, especially before a student or family has given permission to spread the information to others, regarding their status. Face-to-face information with and others when needed.
- Please do not keep a written list anywhere of who is undocumented in the main office or really anywhere when it includes first/last names + status in the same place. Major no!
- Think about your organization's stance on undocumented student allyship :)

As administrators, staff, and counselors, what is our role outside of post-secondary counseling?



What is their current status? What are their options? First step is getting them to get them connected to trusted legal aid.

They enter the legal process

Once they are working with an attorney (or if they already are), what we can do is offer emotional and maybe even logistical support for the student: Letters of support? Time off to attend hearings?

**FINAL OUTCOME:**  
Permanent Residency? Citizenship? Resist Deportation? Petition?





# Tactical Guidebook

## The larger Context

- US National
- Naturalized citizen
- Statuses that grant I-94s
- Asylum granted
- Asylum pending
- Refugee
- TPS
- Permanent resident
- Conditional permanent resident
- T Visa
- U Visa
- J and F visas
- Other temporary Visas
- DACA
- Family sponsored visas
- VAWA Self petitioner
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- Undocumented

## The larger Context

—

*highlighted  
statuses are  
eligible for  
Federal Aid*

- **US National**
- **Naturalized citizen**
- Statuses that get an I-94 Arrival/Dept Record like Asylum
- **Asylum granted**
- Asylum pending
- **Refugee status granted**
- TPS
- **Permanent resident**
- Conditional permanent resident
- **T Visa**
- U Visa
- J and F visas
- Other temporary Visas
- DACA
- Family sponsored visas
- VAWA Self petitioner
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- Undocumented

**Who is considered  
documented?  
Who is eligible for  
Federal Financial  
Aid?**

- U.S. citizens or nationals
- U.S. permanent residents  
(I-551, I-151, or I-551c)
- **Eligible non-citizens**

**Documented:  
“Eligible  
non-citizen”**


## **I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) Given out by DHS:**

- Persons **granted** asylum
- Refugees
- Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
- Battered immigrants, qualified aliens and their designated children
- Conditional entrants
- Cuban-Haitian entrants

## **T- Visa:**

- Victims of human trafficking

- Family unity status
- Temporary residents
- Non-immigrant visas, such as work, students, tourists, and foreign government officials.
- **TPS** (Temporary Protective Status)


A blue callout box with a wavy top and bottom edge, containing the text "Employment Authorization card holders".

Employment  
Authorization  
card holders

**Other statuses – NOT  
eligible for Federal  
Title IV funds**

- 
- *D.A.C.A (Not a status, it's an exemption from deportation.)*

*(Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)*

A blue callout box with a wavy top and bottom edge, containing the text "Employment Authorization card holders".

Employment  
Authorization  
card holders

# Countries currently on TPS

- [Burma \(Myanmar\)\\*](#)
- [El Salvador](#)
- [Haiti\\*](#)
- [Honduras](#)
- [Nepal](#)
- [Nicaragua](#)
- [Somalia\\*](#)
- [Sudan](#)
- [South Sudan](#)
- [Syria\\*](#)
- [Venezuela\\*](#)
- [Yemen\\*](#)

Check here for updates:

<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>

## Permanent Resident Card



(2010)

## Employment Authorization Card



## Differences between cards

Both these statuses give the holder a USCIS #  
(Formerly called the A#, which is still used on the FAFSA.)

For further detail, and information on specific status concerns, consult **Volume 1, Chapter 2** of the Federal Student Aid Handbook on <http://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byAwardYear.jsp?type=fsahandbook&awardyear=2015-2016>





## Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

---

One Ashburton Place, Room 1401  
Boston, MA 02108-1696

TEL (617) 994-6950  
FAX (617) 727-0955  
WEB [www.mass.edu](http://www.mass.edu)

Richard M. Freeland, *Commissioner*  
Charles F. Desmond, *Chairman*  
*Massachusetts Board of Higher Education*

### **FACT SHEET: IN-STATE TUITION FOR DACA BENEFICIARIES**

- Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) made a change in federal immigration policy regarding deportation enforcement for young immigrants that meet certain criteria, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). This policy states that the federal government will “defer action” or not prosecute deportation cases for qualifying individuals for a period of two years from the time their application for “deferred action” is approved. If approved, DACA beneficiaries will receive work permits in addition to deferred action status.
- In accordance with this change in federal policy, the Administration has determined that under the existing Board of Higher Education policy, DACA beneficiaries are eligible for in-state tuition at our 29 public campuses as long as they meet the Board’s other residency requirements for those institutions.
- These students are already allowed to attend public campuses; the only issue is whether they pay in-state rates or out-of-state rates. In any scenario, students must be accepted based on their academic record.

Other statuses who may qualify for in-state tuition



Temporary Protective Status (TPS)



If in doubt, always ask a public college's Admissions office if a student qualifies for in-state tuition.

# Did you know?

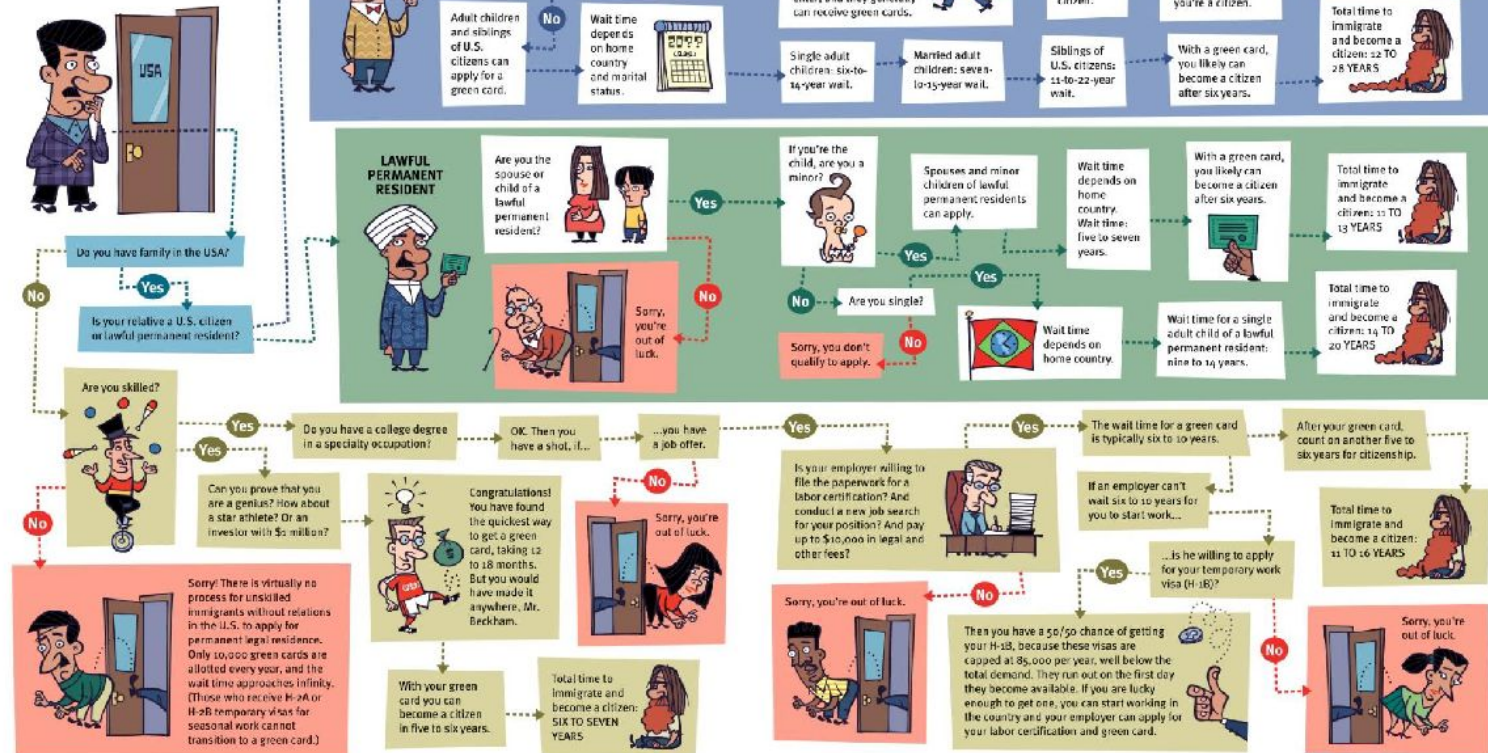
- It takes on average 10 to 16 years for a “skilled worker” to get on the pathway to citizenship or become a citizen.
- Much longer, if ever, for everyone else.
- This is why the push for comprehensive reform matters.

# What Part of Legal Immigration Don't You Understand?

Mike Flynn and Shikha Dalmia

Illustrated by Terry Colon

Opponents of illegal immigration are fond of telling foreigners to "get in line" before coming to work in America. But what does that line actually look like, and how many years (or decades) does it take to get through? Try it yourself!



(Flynn is director of government affairs and Dalmia is a senior policy analyst at Reason Foundation. This chart was developed by Reason Foundation in collaboration with the National Foundation for American Policy.)

“By definition, an undocumented person is a foreign national who:

(1) entered the United States without inspection or with fraudulent documents;

or

(2) entered legally as a nonimmigrant but then violated the terms of his or her status and remained in the United States without authorization.”

**Definition:**  
**“Undocumented”**

*-National Immigration Law Center*

# In the U.S.

11.2 million Undocumented immigrants of all ages living in the United States

2.1 million Undocumented students in the United States potentially eligible for most recently proposed federal DREAM Act (S. 729 in the 111th Congress)

1.1 million Undocumented children under the age of 18 living in the United States

65,000 Undocumented students who have lived in the United States for five or more years graduating from high school each year

7,000 – 13,000 Undocumented students enrolled in college throughout the United States

## Some of the barriers faced by Undocumented students

Not all fall under the profile of a “high achieving student”

1. Ineligible for specific degrees/professional licenses that require state certification(this varies from state to state)

2. It's harder to travel abroad and domestically (limited access to state ID, driver's license and **REAL ID barriers**, DACA)

3. Not eligible for many paid internships (that are funded by or connected to state or federal funding)

4. Many come from low-income communities

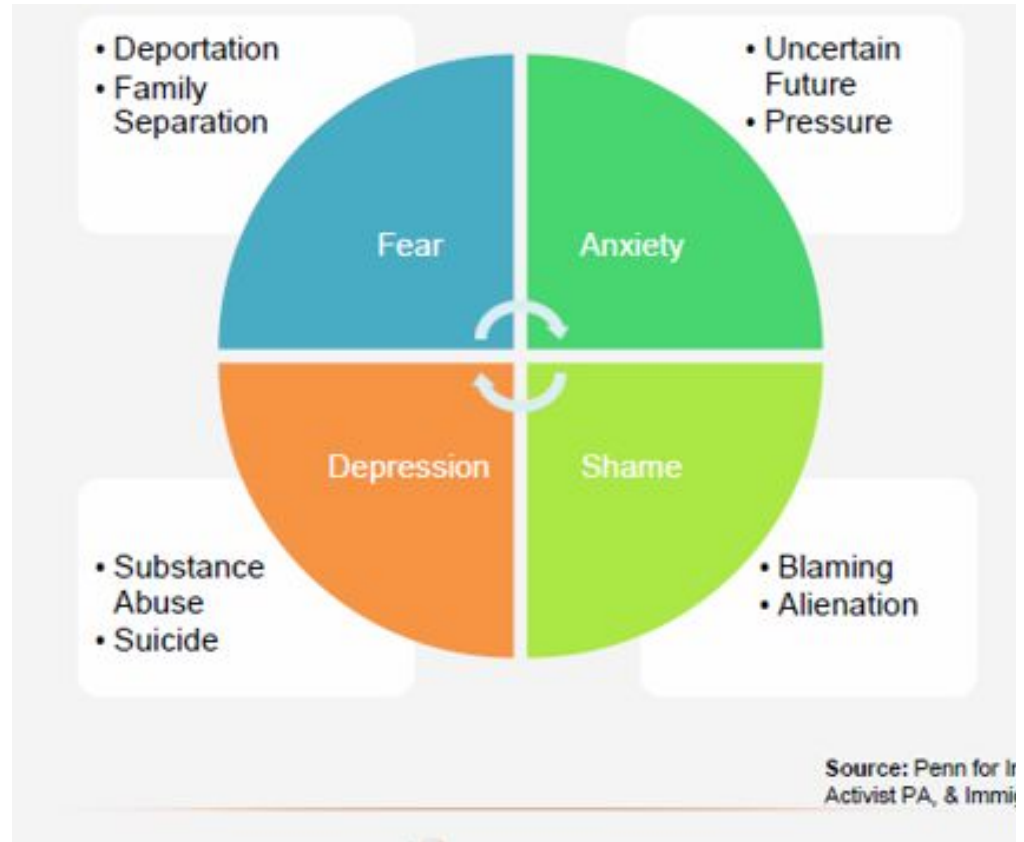
**What do  
these  
barriers  
lead to?**



Direct source: United We Dream's former DEEP curriculum



# Mental health



Direct source: United We Dream's former DEEP curriculum

**Tactical  
information for  
students who want  
to go to college:  
Institutional  
Policies**

---

Institutional Aid may be available. Policies vary from school to school, but some may give students merit awards.

---

Be honest about immigration status. Colleges are prohibited from releasing information unless under court order.

---

They often want to connect with someone in the Admissions office/scholarship offices who works with Multicultural Students or International Students

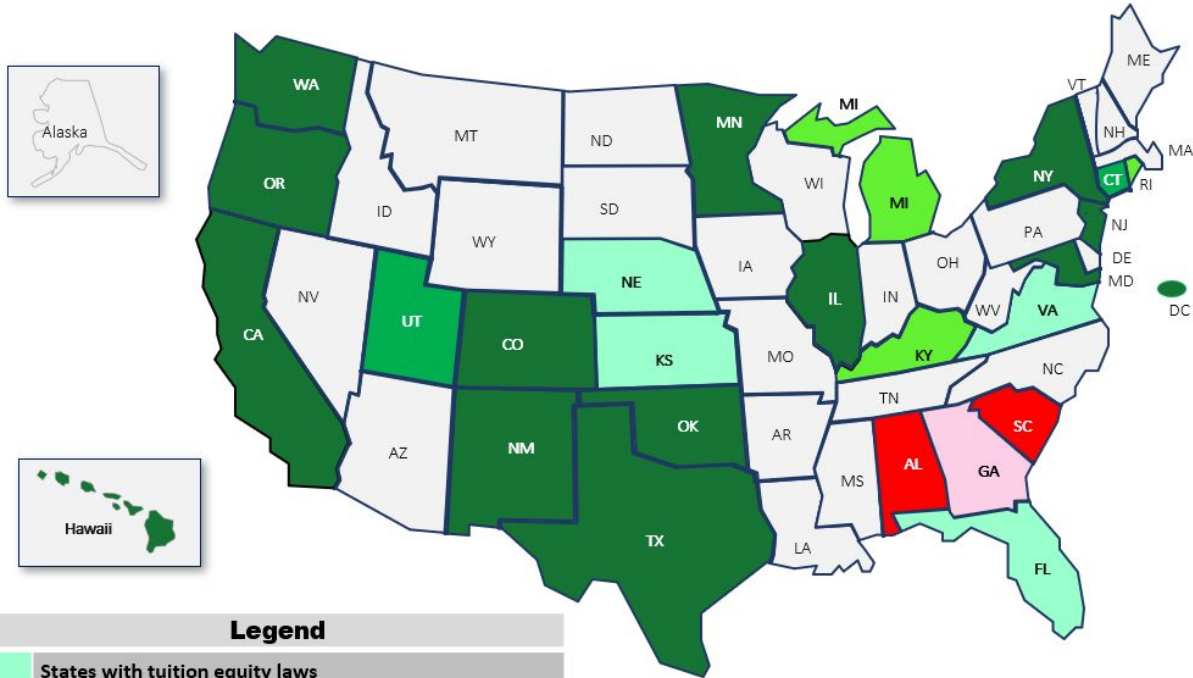
---

The student might be considered “Domestic” for Admissions and “International” for Financial Aid at colleges. Very confusing!!



- There is **no federal law** that prohibits the admission of undocumented immigrants to U.S. colleges.
- Federal or state laws **do not require students to prove citizenship** in order to **enter private** U.S. institutions of higher education. Some public campuses have differing policies.

# Current State Laws & Policies on Access to Higher Education for Immigrants | April 2020



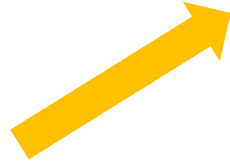
## Legend

	States with tuition equity laws
	States with tuition equity policies at major institutions
	States with tuition equity laws and scholarships
	States with tuition equity laws or policies and some state financial aid
	States that ban enrollment to undocumented students
	States where some college systems deny enrollment



What does this mean for the...

FAFSA?



Only students with a SSN may apply. If a student filling out FAFSA has one or two undocumented parents, the parent(s) can insert 000-00-0000 in lieu of a SSN. (DACA and TPS: For Institutional aid only/ save SAR for some private scholarships)

CSS Profile?



All Students may apply. Encourage your students to be honest about their status in the "Explanation/Special Circumstances Section." For Institutional aid only.

Stay Up to date:

1. American Civil Liberties Union

<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights>

2. USCIS.gov (it has now archived  
DACA content!)

3. National Immigration Law Center \*\*\*

<https://www.nilc.org/>

4. Immigrant Legal Resource Center

<https://www.ilrc.org/>



## What else?



1. Advocate: Encourage students to get involved and support each other in school. If in MA, connect them to SIM!



2. The Dream and Promise Act passed in the House of Representatives! It's the first time an immigration protection act has passed since 2010.

<https://dreamandpromise.com/>



3. ICE Raids ARE happening. Provide ACCESS to free resources in multiple languages to your students and families. <https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards>



**United We Dream**

**THE NIYA.ORG**  
NATIONAL IMMIGRANT YOUTH ORGANIZATION



**QUIP**  
Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project

 **OWN the DREAM**  
ÚNETE al SUEÑO

 **NDLON**  
NATIONAL DAY LABORER  
ORGANIZING NETWORK

**Connect  
students to  
resources**



# Some scholarship resources - my favorite!

1. **MALDEF's Scholarship Resource Guide:**

<https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resource-guide/>

A great, inclusive list of scholarships that do not require citizenship status to apply.

2. **Harvard College's Act on a Dream Scholarship Database:**

<https://www.actonadream.org/scholarshipdatabase>

3. Different states have their own resource guides via community based organizations- check out [this guide as an example](#) of the La Plaza organization in Indiana

4. **Immigrants rising's scholarship resource guide PDF for undergraduates:**

<https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/undergraduatescholarships/> and <https://immigrantsrising.org/2020scholarships/>



Q&A

# Sources

- <http://www.iacac.org/undocumented/>
- <http://www.mass.edu/aboutus/documents/2012-11%20DACA%20In-state%20Tuition%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- <http://www.bls.gov/>
- <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/young-lives-on-hold-college-board.pdf>
- <http://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>
- [http://e4fc.org/images/GIN\\_NACAC\\_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf](http://e4fc.org/images/GIN_NACAC_SENSITIVESUBJECTS.pdf)
- <http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca>
- <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/KnowledgeCenter/Documents/UndocumentedStudentUniversityResources.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf>
- <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbprofallRT?Rep=DE14A>
- <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/two-years-and-counting-assessing-growing-power-daca>
- United We Dream's DEEP curriculum
- MIRA coalition