

Status Update

Legislative Threat to Education for All

[HB793/SB836](#) | Rep. Lamberth/Sen. Watson

Last Updated: March 19, 2026

Introduced in 2025, this [bill](#) was openly discussed by both sponsors as a vehicle to overturn the *Plyler v. Doe* precedent, which guarantees all children living in the United States access to free public education regardless of immigration status. Advocacy by thousands of Tennesseans halted the bill's progress in 2025, but sponsors have brought it back in 2026.

The Senate version of the bill passed in 2025, and the House passed a different version on March 16, 2026. The two chambers will need to agree on the same version of the bill, which can happen in two ways:

- One chamber can vote to conform to the version the other chamber passed
- A conference committee can be convened to create a compromise version of the bill. Both chambers would have to vote on the compromise version for it to be adopted.

After legislative alignment, the bill will also need to be signed into law by Governor Lee.

Question about this resource?

Contact Nikkolette Hunter at nhunter@edtrust.org.

Key Provisions	<u>House Version</u>	Senate Version (Combination of <u>Amendment 1</u> and <u>Amendment 2</u>)
Public schools collect information on student immigration status as part of school enrollment.	<p>Requires schools to collect information on immigration status for all students</p> <p>Schools must report aggregated data to the TN Dept. of Education (TDOE), including types of documentation provided, student counts, and the reason given for those who do not produce documentation</p> <p>TDOE must report annually to immigration authorities and various state agencies on student counts and documentation.</p>	Requires schools to collect information on immigration status for all students
Public schools charge tuition to students who cannot prove lawful presence.	Tuition not mentioned.	Schools choose if they want to charge tuition to students who cannot prove legal status
Public schools deny enrollment to students who cannot prove lawful presence.	This is not mentioned specifically but the documentation provision implies undocumented students cannot enroll.	Schools can choose to deny enrollment only if the student is unable to pay tuition.

For more information about protecting undocumented student access to public school, check out the [Education for All - Tennessee](#) campaign.