



# Ensuring College Access Para Todos: A guide for advising immigrant Students

The College Access Para Todos initiative of the Latin American Coalition

[www.latinamericancoalition.org](http://www.latinamericancoalition.org)

Adelante Education Coalition

[www.AdelanteNC.org](http://www.AdelanteNC.org)



**La COALICIÓN**  
Latin American Coalition



This guide is a work in progress and is always being edited and perfected by readers like you. If you spot an error, please email [lwilliams@latinamericancoalition.org](mailto:lwilliams@latinamericancoalition.org)

# Preface

## Our Mission

The Adelante Education Coalition is a collaboration of multiple organizations from across North Carolina that work on education issues affecting Latino and migrant students and their families in North Carolina. The coalition's members represent many non-profit sectors including advocacy, public policy, community organizing and education. We are working together to ensure that North Carolina has a high quality K-12 and post-secondary public education system where students will succeed and excel without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, language, culture, socio-economic or immigration status.



## Thank You

Thank you to Educators for Fair Consideration, National Korean American Service and Education Consortium and the Korean Resource Center for being at the forefront of this issue and sharing guidance, information and resources.

Thank you to the Latin American Coalition for consolidating resources and publishing this guide.

Thank you to the counselors and teachers who make a difference in the lives of immigrant students every day.

## How to Use this Guide

This guide was designed to help counselors and educators better support immigrant students in reaching their full potential. Please contact the Adelante Education Coalition if you would like to host an in-person training for teachers, counselors or students..

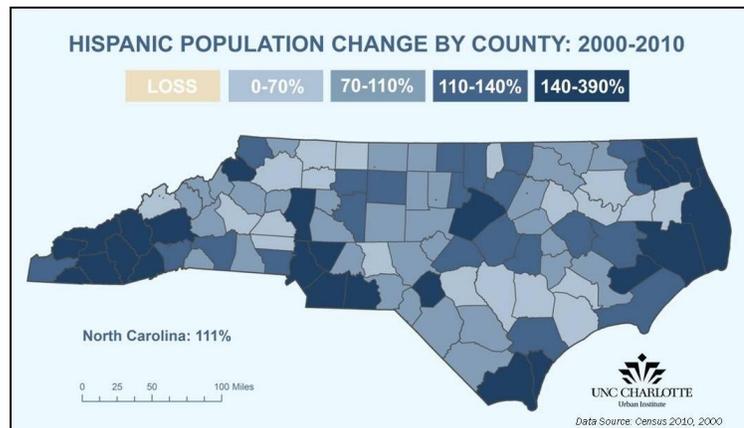


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# Background

Public education is one of our democracy's greatest experiments. As our world, economy and connectedness evolve, so must our policies and practices. We must continue to treat equitable access to education as a core value and heighten our awareness about how to protect that access for future generations.



The Adelante Education Coalition is particularly excited and concerned about the opportunities and challenges posed to us by our changing community. Will we be a community that values new comers and embraces what immigrants have to offer? Or will we shut our doors and close our blinds to progress? We are hopeful that North Carolina can be a place where diversity is valued and where all students can enjoy the same access to a great education.

## Demographic Shifts

Over the past two decades the Hispanic population in North Carolina has grown by 1042 percent. North Carolina has the 6th fastest growing Latino population in the US, according to the 2010 US Census. Along with that, the Latino children population grew by 156%. While counties like Mecklenburg, Wake, Durham, Forsyth and Guilford counties have experienced the highest growth in Latino population, rural counties like Duplin, Lee, Sampson and Montgomery have the highest number of Latinos as a percentage of their whole population.

There are 194,000 Latino students in North Carolina's public schools. In the 2010-2011 school year, NC public high schools graduated 68.8% of their Hispanic students and only 48.1% of their Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. Those numbers vary drastically by county. The Latino graduation rate in Burke County Schools is 89% while in Yancey County, only 33.3% of Latinos graduate with their cohort. Nationwide, Latino youth have the lowest college enrollment numbers of any ethnic group at only 37% (as compared to 49% of Caucasian students and 40% of African-American students) and in North Carolina, only 5% of Latinos go on to college. This is one of the lowest rates in the nation.



## Challenges

Immigrant students and their families face many barriers on the path to academic success and post-secondary education. Immigrant parents, who face language and cultural barriers and may have limited education themselves, are often less equipped to guide their children through high school and post-secondary education systems, or to communicate effectively with teachers and administrators.



Additionally, mixed status families, where some members of the family are documented and others are not, face social isolation and fear of separation through deportation. Worse still, often both immigrant parents and school employees are misinformed about options for their students, resulting in the misunderstanding of systemic barriers and the perpetuation of myths and half-truths.

Confronted with a new language and a new culture, immigrant students often struggle to keep up with their native-born, English-speaking counterparts and are often left behind.

The most devastating consequence of this confluence of hurdles and circumstances is the epidemic of hopelessness that is pervasive among Latino youth. Believing that they cannot fulfill their dream of attending college, many undocumented immigrant students give up on their academic goals and in many cases drop out of high school. Consequently, Latino and immigrant students are disenfranchised from seeking options and opportunities available for post-secondary education, particularly if they lack documentation status.

### **What does it mean to be undocumented?**

In 2008, Latinos comprised 20% of public school enrollments in the US. The Pew Hispanic Center has found that 17% of Latino students nationwide are immigrants and that 7% of Latino children are undocumented.

There are many misconceptions about what it means to be an undocumented immigrant student. Though this guide is not meant to combat the myths about undocumented immigration, it is important for educators to have some basic understanding about what it means to be undocumented.



- Undocumented students are foreign nationals who came to the US without immigration documentation or overstayed their visas.
- About 65,000 undocumented students graduate from US high schools each year. Only 5-10% of these graduates go to college.
- Many students don't know they're undocumented until they begin the college process.

- Undocumented students don't qualify for state or federal grants or loans, even if their parents pay taxes. Without a social security number, they have limited options for employment to pay for college.
- Undocumented students in North Carolina are not eligible for in-state tuition unlike in other states such as California, Illinois or New Mexico.
- Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for federal assistance programs such as welfare and Medicaid. They are often eligible for free/reduced lunch and SAT waivers.
- Current immigration law severely limits the ways undocumented immigrants can adjust their immigration status. For most students who may have entered without documentation, they would have to go back to their country of origin and wait 10 years before being granted a visa to come back to the US.

Many highly qualified students graduate each year, but, due to lack of information and resources, few go to college. We can change that.

### What does an undocumented student look like?

Can you tell if any of the students below are undocumented? Of course not. But many people make assumptions about where people come from and how they came to this country. The reality is that undocumented students can be from anywhere.



# Developing More Inclusive Advising

## Immigrant students need our support

Teachers and counselors are some of the greatest influences on a student of any background or documentation status. Educational professionals spend more time with students than nearly any other adult in their life and have the potential to make the biggest impact in their lives.

Many teachers and counselors feel conflicted about supporting undocumented students and may have conflicted feelings about immigration in general. It is important to note how that personal conflict may influence how you or a colleague might treat a particular student based on his or her immigration status. There are many resources in North Carolina for getting more information on immigration and immigration reform.

As an educator, you know better than almost anyone else that we need to support these students because:

- Immigrant students are an important part of our nation's future.
- We want our best and our brightest students to attend college and be able to contribute meaningfully to our country.
- Undocumented students who are college-ready have proven they can succeed and can overcome challenges.
- Immigrant students affirm our belief in the value of hard work.
- Immigrant students are powerful role models.
- Under federal law, all students--regardless of citizenship or residency--are entitled to a K-12 education, including college counseling services.
- We've already invested in these students' educations.

## The Golden Rules to Uncovering Dreams

Through our work, we have seen how misunderstanding and misinformation have played a role in leaving immigrant children behind. Although it is against school policy to ask about documentation status, educators can be inclusive by providing the same information to everyone, regardless of documentation status. Educators don't have to know a student's documentation status in order to serve them effectively. The most important thing is to build a relationship with the student that fosters trust and a feeling of safety. If the student trusts you, s/he will feel more comfortable disclosing details about his/her immigration status, which will then enable you to better support his/her needs.

Some tips for more inclusive advising:



### Rule #1: Words Matter

Be aware of your language and make an effort to be inclusive. Do not use words like illegal or alien, or other derogatory terms to describe immigrant students. This language only perpetuates a culture of discrimination towards immigrants and will make immigrant students uncomfortable talking to you about college or their future if they are undocumented.

### Rule #2: Know the Facts

Keep up with state policies and laws. North Carolina allows undocumented students to attend public institutions, but they have to pay out of state tuition. Certain immigrant students, such as those with Temporary Protective Status, do not qualify for in-state tuition. South Carolina no longer accepts undocumented students at public institutions but private schools are still an option. There are thirteen states that do allow undocumented students to access in-state tuition. There are also

many scholarships that students can apply for, regardless of their documentation status.

### **Rule #3: Understand Cultural Barriers**

Immigrant students come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Keep in mind that even families that were educated in their home countries have to adjust to a completely different process in the US. Immigrant students, who are the first in their family to attend college, often receive little support from their family in tackling the application process, often because parents are unsure how to support them. Cultural norms and economic strains may also lead the family to consider working more important than pursuing a degree. Regardless, families should be included as much as possible in decision making and the discussion of students' options. Having materials and parent meetings that are accessible in different languages and that allow the parents to learn about the college process in a non-threatening environment is essential. Parent support groups are also helpful in empowering the parents with the appropriate knowledge so they can support their students.



### **Rule #4: Nothing is Impossible**

Encourage your students to search for all opportunities. Undocumented students can go to college, but some options and services will not be available to them, such as federal financial aid or work

study. Keep up to date on the status of the DREAM Act and know about scholarships that are accessible to all students, regardless of documentation status. The appendix of this guide lists scholarships and universities that offer such.



### **Rule #5 ESL Teachers Are Essential**

ESL teachers are well connected to immigrant students, and often serve as the first point of contact for recent immigrants. It is important to build relationships and share information about college opportunities with ESL teachers, so they will know how to help you assist their students.

### **Rule #6: Reach Out as Early as Possible**

We all know that early preparation for college is essential for success, but it is even more imperative for immigrant students to get a head start. As early as 9th grade, students should know that they have a better chance of receiving scholarships if they maintain good grades from the beginning of their high school career, and that they can prepare for college entrance exams by taking challenging courses. Students should take advantage of taking community college and online courses that are free in high school. Also, students should consider schools like CATO Middle College which may give them enough credits to defer some college costs later on. Because immigrant students without residency status do not qualify for in-state tuition, even community colleges can be financially out of reach. Tuition rates for out-of-state residents are about four times as much as tuition for in-state residents.

### **Rule #7: Do Not Give Information to a Student That You're Unsure About**

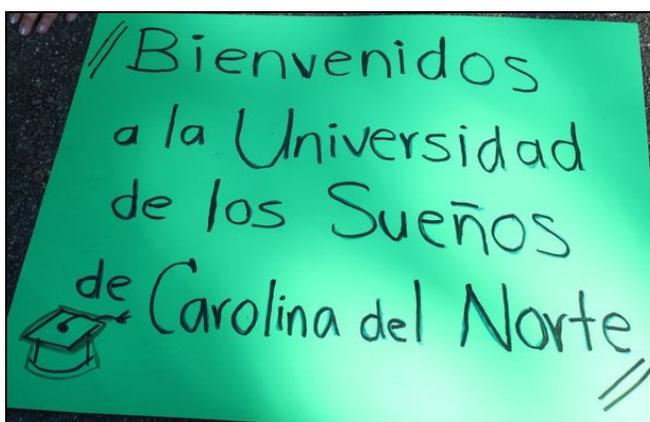
Myths and false information about college access are prevalent in immigrant communities. Please do not pass on information unless you are sure it is correct. Be aware that some admissions counselors might not be fully aware of the current universities policies regarding undocumented students. Make sure you encourage students to ask several different admissions representatives to get the correct information. If an answer you receive doesn't sound right, keep asking.

# The High School Road Map for Applying to College

## Start Early

As a high school counselor you are already aware of the college application process and how important early preparation is to success. Because undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid or in-state benefits, they depend

solely on private aid and scholarships. It is important to motivate students to do their best as early as possible, as only a few missteps early on can lower their chances of getting merit-based scholarships. The key to their success is preparation and support. The following is a guide to helping immigrant students prepare through each year in high school. Much of this is information you already know and probably are already doing but we have decided to include it at the insistence of students we work with. In our work with hundreds of immigrant students, we have found that a handful of missteps early on or the delaying of taking certain courses or the SAT or ACT exams can be detrimental to a student's success.



## 9th Grade

Have your students create an account on CFNC.org. Here they can create a "Plan of Study" that they can share with you to help them stay on track. They



can also use the site's online tools to help develop their study skills and to explore interests and careers.

Encourage students to start a college savings account. Undocumented students will benefit from saving as much as possible to help pay for college costs. These costs can include everything from expenses to visit schools and application fees to paying for out of state tuition and living expenses during school. Every little bit will help.

Stress the importance of developing and maintaining good grades as well as keeping in touch with you about their progress as their grades will determine their eligibility for merit-based scholarships.

Encourage students to enroll in challenging courses. Honors courses and AP or IB courses will help prepare students for college entrance exams like the ACT/SAT and they can boost their weighted GPA. Taking AP or community college courses can give students college credits, reducing the costs towards earning a degree.

Have students compile a list of preferred colleges and investigate college entrance requirements, so they can plan accordingly.

## 10th Grade

Continue supporting students in their progress. Offer resources for tutoring if they need help with certain subjects or if their grades start to fall.

Encourage students to start preparing for the PSAT so they can take it in October of their junior year. Although undocumented students cannot qualify for the National Merit Scholarship because of residency requirements, the PSAT is a great way to evaluate their strengths and needs to pre-



pare for the SAT. The PSAT also connects them to colleges and universities and students can always advertise their percentile standings on applications for scholarships or schools.



Advise students on the possibility of attending CATO Middle College or how to prepare to be eligible for

Governor's School, or how to enroll in other types of academic enrichment programs or camps that focus on music, arts and sciences. Unfortunately, unless the parents or legal guardians of the students are permanent residents, undocumented students are not eligible to attend the NC School of Science and Mathematics.

Enroll students in AP and other honors-level courses for junior year, to gain college credit.

Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities and to take leadership positions. If at all possible, students should consider shadowing different professions, an unpaid internship (they may not be eligible for paid internships) and volunteer opportunities to help them explore their interests and gain valuable work experience.



Encourage students to read and write as much as possible. These are important skills to develop that will help them with college placement tests, as well as their academics in high school.

## 11th Grade

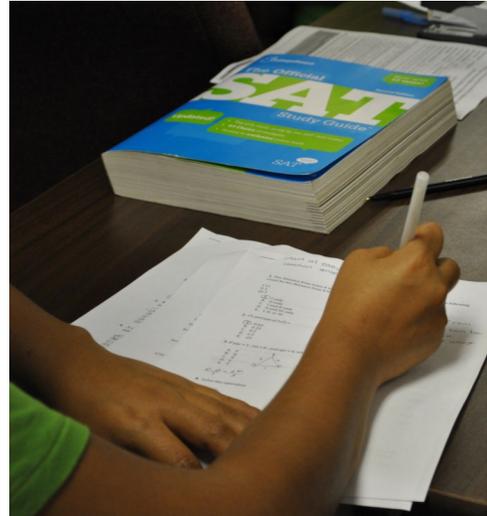
### FALL Semester

Colleges focus on grades from junior year. Stress the importance of doing as well as possible. Look

over his or her academic record with the student and talk about ways to improve.

Make sure students are taking challenging courses. Not only can they receive college credit, but colleges will consider how difficult their courses are.

Continue to make sure students are involved in school and community activities. If you see they have an interest, encourage them to explore and develop it.



Make sure they are aware of the timelines for important tests including the PSAT, SAT I and II, ACT and AP exams

Explain the importance of taking these exams. Doing well on these exams can provide them with more scholarship opportunities.

Offer resources on how to get ready for exams. There are free test prep resources on CFNC.org, CollegeBoard.org, and many other sites.

Make sure students research the admission requirements for the colleges they are interested in and visit schools. Encourage them to set up appointments to meet with admissions counselors.

### **SPRING Semester**

Advise students to choose classes for their senior year that will provide them with a strong transcript.

Encourage students to look for a summer internship (again, students may not be eligible for a paid position) or volunteer placement.

Students should take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring semester for the first time so they can take it again if needed at the beginning of their senior year.

Encourage students to talk to their teachers about writing letters of recommendations for applications in the fall.

## Summer Between Junior and Senior Years

Have students continue to work on their application essays and review the application procedures for the colleges they plan to apply to.

Students should also start arranging college tours.

## 12th Grade

### FALL Semester

Many students entering senior year might have some anxiety about their final year. They might feel unprepared to make decisions about college and they might feel a lot of pressure to measure up to the “perfect” student that will win all the scholarships. Encourage students to do their best, and if possible talk to other students who are in college that are also undocumented.



Make sure students check their transcripts to make sure they have all the credits they need to get into the colleges they are interested in. Have them find out from the colleges whether they need official copies of transcripts.

Have students register for the October or November SAT or ACT if they plan to retake one of them.

Most early decision and early action applications are due between October 1 and November 1, if students are interested in that option. Students may have a better chance of receiving institutional scholarships if they apply early to a college or university.

Encourage students to continue working on scholarship applications and essays for applications. Make sure students keep in mind deadlines and suggest

methods to organize their college/scholarship search and application process. Microsoft excel has a template for college and scholarship list.

### **SPRING Semester**

Have paper copies of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as undocumented students cannot file one online. Undocumented students should submit a paper copy to each school they apply, to see if they would be eligible for private institutional aid.



Let students know the difference between an official transcript and a copy, so they know the process of sending them to schools. Also make sure students keep a few copies of their transcript, in case they need to send one to another school later on.

Ensure students know that their parents should file taxes early so they can submit financial aid information. Even if a student is undocumented, s/he and his/her family can and should still pay taxes with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN).

Encourage students to contact the admissions offices to which colleges they applied, to ensure they receive all of the student's paperwork.

Make sure students have completed scholarship applications early so they will know if they have funding by the summer.

Inform students how to make a decision about a school and paying a non-refundable deposit that holds their place in the freshman class.

Make sure students take AP and IB exams, as most schools would have made decisions by then.

# Tips and Tricks for Applications

## Basic Guidelines to Assist Immigrant Students with Applications

These guidelines are adapted from the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium and the Korean Resource Center.

While it is possible for undocumented immigrant students to attend post-

secondary educational institutions, the higher education system was not designed with these students in mind. Applications have dozens of questions that don't apply to undocumented immigrant students. Admissions officers may even assume the student is a citizen, Legal Permanent Resident, on a student visa and so on.

There are several things undocumented immigrant students should keep in mind when applying for colleges.

**Do not lie.** Students may feel confused when asked to list their immigration status on the application, and since none of the choices are “undocumented,” students may erroneously choose “Permanent Resident” or “I am in the process of becoming a “Permanent Resident.” Whether intentional or not, lying about immigration status could make the student deportable, and may count against her/him if there is a future opportunity for adjusting their status.



**Don't Mention Status Unless Necessary.**

Whenever possible, students should not mention their immigration status or show evidence that they are undocumented. This information may confuse or create bias in an admissions representative or prompt them to give the student incorrect information. Almost every application will ask for a Social Security Number or visa status, but unless it is an official government document, like the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), you do not have to provide one. Simply leave the question blank, or enter all zeroes for the Social Security Number. Do not, however, enter 123456789 or any other number as this may be construed as intentional misidentification.

In North Carolina...  
**Campbell University is the only college that doesn't accept undocumented students.**  
**Community Colleges require undocumented students wait until all documented students have registered before signing up for classes.**  
**All public universities charge out of state tuition to undocumented students.**

**Undocumented Students Are Not International Students.** Watch out for signs that the admissions office is categorizing the student as an “international student (legal foreign student).” Being categorized in this way will require that the student apply for a certain type of visa that he or she most likely will not qualify for. When this happens, try to rectify it. The student may have to say that s/he is undocumented.

**Apply On Paper.** Online applications are hard to complete because schools use an automated system that refuses blank answers for some values, such as a Social Security Number. Ultimately, if the online application does not work, file the paper application or call the school and ask how to continue the application process.

### **Navigating Admissions**

If an undocumented student applies to community colleges, the schools may require the student to appear in person at their offices to turn in the applica-



tion. When the student turns in the application, admission officers will review the application to ensure that it is complete. If the student's application is incomplete, admission officers may ask the student clarifying questions.

If the student does not qualify for in-state tuition, the student should say that s/he does not hold a B-2 or F1 visa because that is what the admissions office is most concerned about. An undocumented student should not tell the admissions office that s/he is undocumented until

all other options are exhausted.

An undocumented immigrant student should *never* show admission officers her/his original passport. Instead, the student should prepare a photocopy of the first page (the one with a picture) and present it if they request an ID.

## After the Student Applies

Some admissions offices will send an undocumented immigrant student applicant a letter or email asking him/her to complete the remaining information. Often, they ask the student for proof that s/he has applied to become a Permanent Resident, along with other documents. However, failing to provide such proof should not affect admissions.

In North Carolina, if an undocumented student is accepted to a community college, s/he must wait until all documented students have registered before signing up for classes.

## Additional Tips

- For the SAT, students without a state-issued ID will have to fill out a verification form. They need to get the form notarized by a school official to vouch for their identity. This form is used on the day of the test.

- Apply in person to schools. Many schools are able to treat students more equitably when they go in person to apply. Encourage students to go to schools and ask questions, or at least call schools and research about policies concerning undocumented students.



- If you don't ask, you won't know. Have students ask as many questions as possible to admissions counselors and financial aid representatives. It never hurts to apply to a school or scholarship. You never know what they could say. The school could be looking for someone just like the student and want to offer them a scholarship. They'll never know if they don't apply.
- Have students keep track of their extracurricular activities, log volunteer hours in an Excel document, and tailor resumes to each school or scholarship. Have students look at the mission of each school or organization and make sure the application is in line with what they are looking for.
- Read directions. This may sound obvious, but many students assume they know what an application is asking for. Remind students that it is important to read directions carefully.
- Proofread applications. Remind students that they should have someone review and revise their applications and essays to reduce and hopefully eliminate errors. Immaculate applications and essays win scholarships.

# Scholarships and Financial Aid

## Money Matters

Once accepted to college, the greatest challenge to immigrant students is paying for it. Because certain immigrant students may not qualify for federal financial aid, they must obtain funds personally or from private scholarships or donors. It is important to stress that the search for scholarships can be difficult and time-intensive but it is well worth the effort. In addition, considering and applying to private colleges can open doors for undocumented students because they often have more financial freedom and discretion when giving scholarships.

Educators for Fair Consideration offer the following advice:

## Applying for Scholarships

Scholarships are the primary way for undocumented students to pay for college. Helping students identify scholarships they are eligible for and writing a strong personal essay is vital to their success in college.

Encourage students to put a lot of time and energy into scholarship applications. Ask students to consider how long they would have to work for the

### Costs Calculator

#### Community College

In-state: \$66.50 per credit  
Out-of-state: \$258.50 per credit

#### Public University

In-State: \$1,621 per 12 credits  
Out-of-state: \$7,503 per 12 credits

**Almost 4 times as much!**

amount of money and let them know that applying for scholarships takes less time than earning \$80,000.

Make sure students research and apply to scholarships early---ideally starting in the spring of junior year.

Find as many scholarships as possible that do not require citizenship. Local scholarships are often great options.

Strongly encourage students to apply to every single scholarship they can.

Make sure students are very explicit in talking about their story and financial need.

## **Scholarship Sources**

Go to [www.e4fc.org](http://www.e4fc.org) to review a large number of scholarships that don't require proof of citizenship or permanent residency status.

Search the internet for scholarships specific to the student's background. There are scholarships available for Latino, African and Asian students, to name a few.

More opportunities are listed in the appendix of this guide.

## **Sample Questions to Ask About Scholarship Requirements**

In order to determine if your student qualifies for a particular scholarship, you can ask the following questions.

“Are residency requirements fixed?” or “Can students who do not meet the residency requirement still apply?” Note: Students with pending family petitions usually have a form called I-130 (Petition for Alien Relative). Although it might take years for this petition to become current, some scholarships have accepted the I-130 as proof of residency.

“Can students use an ITIN (Individual Tax Identification Number) instead of a SSN (Social Security Number)?” Scholarship awards can be processed with just

the student's name and address. If a scholarship specifically requests a SSN, ask if it is possible to submit an ITIN instead.

## Private School Scholarships

Private universities are expensive but can often provide additional support through institutional grants and scholarships. They also have greater discretion in granting scholarships.

Check with each school individually to see if undocumented students are eligible to apply for institutional scholarships and if a paper FAFSA or CSS Profile should be submitted to determine financial need.

### Sample Questions for Undocumented Students to Ask Private Schools

- Do you offer any institutional scholarships for undocumented students? What about private scholarships?
- What are the names of these scholarships and how much money do they provide?
- Are these scholarships only for incoming freshman?
- Do you have any scholarships for transfer students?
- What is the application process for these scholarships? (Deadlines, essays, letters of recommendation, etc.?)
- Do you require that the student submit a paper FAFSA?
- Are there certain qualifications needed to apply for these scholarships (i.e. GPA, SAT/ACT scores or community service requirements)?
- Are these scholarships available to the student for the entire time the student attends your school? What if it takes 5 years for the student to graduate?
- What does the student need to do to keep the scholarship?
- Can the student lose the scholarship money if he/she gets poor grades?

- Is there a website or brochure outlining more information about these scholarships?
- How will the student know if they are awarded one of these scholarships?
- Anything else we should know when helping undocumented students apply to your school?

## **Other Sources of Financial Aid**

### *Matched Savings Program*

Undocumented students are eligible for matched savings programs, known as Individual Development Accounts (IDA).

IDAs allow individuals with jobs to get \$2 for every \$1 they save. So, if they save \$2,000, then they get a total of \$6,000!

These funds can be used towards education, starting a business, or buying a house

Usually, IDAs offer financial management courses, or may require students to complete them..

IDA programs are available around the nation, so do an internet search to find the closest one to you.

Start with organizations that work around community economic development.

See Opportunity Fund's IDA program as example: <http://www.opportunityfund.org/about/our-programs/ida>

### *Loans*

Some students may be able to take out loans to pay for college. This may not be the most advisable route, however, as the loans would not be subsidized.

Whenever giving advice, you should ask yourself first, "would I advise a family member to do this?"

# Appendix: Additional Resources

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can undocumented students go to college in the United States?**

There is no federal law that states that undocumented students cannot go to college. However, every state and private institution has its own policies regarding undocumented students.

### **Are undocumented students eligible for financial aid?**

Undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid, but they are eligible for many scholarships.

Private institutions have more freedom in granting private financial funding to students regardless of documentation status.

### **Can undocumented students take the SAT or ACT?**

Yes! Undocumented students can definitely take the SAT or ACT. A good GPA and SAT or ACT score could land a nice scholarship for an undocumented student. Preparation is essential to earning a good score and they will need a verification form to serve as a identification document on the day of the test.

### **Do undocumented students qualify for scholarships?**

Undocumented students qualify for some scholarships. Certain scholarships do not have a residency or citizenship requirement. It is important to research scholarship requirements carefully.

**All the applications ask for a Social Security Number. How do undocumented students complete them?**

Most applications will ask for a Social Security Number but this does not mean that a Social Security Number is required to apply. Undocumented students can still complete the application by leaving the question blank or by entering all zeros. For online applications that may not let you move on to the next page without entering a SSN, you may have to fill out a paper version.

**Should undocumented male students sign up for the Selective Service?**

Yes. Undocumented males between the ages of 18 and 26 are legally required to register with the Selective Service. Failure to do so prevents you from applying for student loans, federal aid programs and becoming a naturalized individual if the DREAM Act or any sort of comprehensive immigration reform is passed into law. There are also fines and jail time associated with failing to register.

When applying for residency one of the things they will look at is whether you registered for the selective service and when you chose to do it. The earlier you register, the better.

**What do undocumented students need to do in high school?**

Since most undocumented students face financial barriers to going to college, it is important for them to do well in high school to be able to win scholarships to help pay for school. They need to get good grades, take high level courses and take the SAT.

**Can undocumented students gain legal status through going to a university?**

Currently, most undocumented students that entered the country without inspection or VISA cannot change their status unless they leave the country and apply for a visa through the embassy. If they are over the age of 18 and 6 months, the students may incur a 10 year bar from entering the US before s/he can apply for a VISA. Undocumented students that are out of status but entered with a VISA may have a way to change their status but they should consult with an attorney or accredited immigration representative about their op-

tions. \*This information has been intended to clarify the situation undocumented students face and in no way should substitute for legal advice.

**What should I do if an undocumented student reveals his/her status to me?**

A student's immigration status should be treated no differently than his/her eligibility for free or reduced lunch or any other disclosure s/he may make. It is important to listen to the student and help him/her in finding resources for college. Obviously, it is not ok to disclose his/her status to someone else.

**I'm really frustrated by the lack of opportunities for immigrant students.**

**What can I do?**

Join the fight. Help students establish an Immigrant Rights club at school. Organize outreach at the school to educate students. Let students know you are a safe staff member to talk to about their problems. Volunteer with the Adelante Education Coalition!

## Definitions for Common Immigration Related Terms

These are definitions for common terms relating to undocumented students, government policies and higher education.

**Citizen:** An individual born in the United States, an individual whose parent is a U.S. citizen, a former immigrant who has been naturalized as a U.S. citizen, or an individual born in Puerto Rico, Guam or the US Virgin Islands.

**Documented immigrant:** An immigrant with a visa, Temporary Protected Status or Permanent Residency Status. Although some immigrants are documented, they may not qualify for federal financial aid if they are not permanent residents.

**Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act:** Refers to the proposed bipartisan federal legislation, which would give certain undocumented immigrant youth a pathway to citizenship if they join the military or attend two years of college.

**END (Education Not Deportation):** Refers to a campaign to end the deportation of DREAM Act eligible undocumented students.

**First Generation College Student:** A student who is the first in their family to attend a college or university.

**Green Card:** A green card holder or Permanent Resident is someone who has been granted authorization to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis. As proof of that status, a person is granted a Permanent Resident card, commonly called a "Green Card." You can become a Permanent Resident several different ways. Most individuals are sponsored by a family member or employer in the United States. Other individuals may become permanent residents through refugee or asylee status or other humanitarian programs. Green Cards are hard to come by, the application process is time intensive and not everyone will qualify for it.

**Immigrant:** An immigrant who has been granted the right by the US Citizenship and Immigration Service to reside permanently in the United States and to

work without restrictions in the United States. Also known as a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR). Some documented immigrants may eventually be issued a "green card" (USCIS Form I-551), which is the evidence of the immigrant's LPR status.

**ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number):** An ITIN is a tax processing number issued by the Internal Revenue Service. It is a nine-digit number that always begins with the number 9 and has a range of 70-88 in the fourth and fifth digit. ITINs are for federal tax reporting only, and are not intended to serve any other purpose. IRS issues ITINs to help individuals comply with the U.S. tax laws, and to provide a means to efficiently process and account for tax returns and payments for those not eligible for Social Security Numbers (SSNs). An ITIN does not authorize work in the U.S. or provide eligibility for Social Security benefits or the Earned Income Tax Credit. Application for an ITIN <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw7.pdf>

**Mixed Status Family:** A term that refers to a family unit where some parents and/or children may be citizens or Permanent Residents and some may be undocumented.

**Non-immigrant:** An immigrant who has been granted the right by the USCIS to reside temporarily in the United States, usually either as a tourist or a student. Some non-immigrant statuses are allowed to be employed in the United States, and others are not. Some non-immigrant statuses have rigid time limits for the immigrant's stay in the United States, while others do not. Each non-immigrant status has rules and guidelines, which must be followed in order for the non-immigrant to remain "in status."

**Legal Permanent Resident (LPR):** see "**Green Card**" above

**Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982):** The U.S. Supreme Court in *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), invalidated a Texas law authorizing school districts to bar undocumented immigrant students from public elementary and secondary schools. The Court stated that undocumented immigrant students have the same right to free public education as U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents under the Fourteenth Amendment. Undocumented immigrant students

are obligated, as are all other students, to attend school until they reach the age mandated by state law. Further, public schools and school personnel are prohibited under *Plyler* from adopting policies or taking actions that would deny student access to education based on their immigration status.

**Social Security Number (SSN):** A nine-digit number issued to U.S. citizens, permanent residents and temporary (working) residents under section 205(c)(2) of the Social Security Act. The number is issued to an individual by the Social Security Administration and its primary purpose is to track individuals for taxation purposes.

**Undocumented:** A status that refers to an immigrant who has entered the United States without a visa, or an immigrant who entered the United States with a visa but who has fallen "out of status."

# Resources

## **National Organizations**

Educators for Fair Consideration, [www.e4fc.org](http://www.e4fc.org)

National Council de La Raza, [www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)

## **State Organizations**

Adelante! Education Coalition, [www.adelantenc.org](http://www.adelantenc.org)

College Foundation of North Carolina, [www.cfnc.org](http://www.cfnc.org)

NC Justice Center, [www.ncjustice.org](http://www.ncjustice.org)

NC Society of Hispanic Professionals, [www.thencshp.org](http://www.thencshp.org)

## **East/Triangle**

AMEXCAN, [amexcan@gmail.com](mailto:amexcan@gmail.com)

Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate Program, [BlueRibbonMentors.org](http://BlueRibbonMentors.org)

El Centro Hispano, [www.elcentronc.org](http://www.elcentronc.org)

El Pueblo, Inc., [www.elpueblo.org](http://www.elpueblo.org)

NC DREAM Team, [www.ncdreamteam.org](http://www.ncdreamteam.org)

NC Latino Coalition, [www.iafsoutheast.com/nc\\_latino\\_coalition.html](http://www.iafsoutheast.com/nc_latino_coalition.html)

Student Action With Farmworkers, [www.saf-unite.org](http://www.saf-unite.org)

## **Triad**

El Cambio

## **Piedmont**

Action NC, [www.actionnc.org](http://www.actionnc.org)

Latin American Coalition, [www.latinamericancoalition.org](http://www.latinamericancoalition.org)

## **West**

Center for Participatory Change, [www.cpcwnc.org](http://www.cpcwnc.org)

Coalicion de Organizaciones Latino-Americana, [www.colawnc.org](http://www.colawnc.org)

## **Scholarship Resources**

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard's Scholarship List (for US and Non-US citizens), [http://roybal-allard.house.gov/UploadedFiles/2008\\_Scholarship\\_Guide.pdf](http://roybal-allard.house.gov/UploadedFiles/2008_Scholarship_Guide.pdf)

Latin American Women's Association (Awards Scholarships and offers educational resources), <http://www.lawanc.org/>

Mexican American Legal Defense Education Fund, [http://maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/2008\\_Scholarship\\_List.pdf](http://maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/2008_Scholarship_List.pdf)

Selected Funding Opportunities Open to Non-US Citizens: [www.iup.edu/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=56807](http://www.iup.edu/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=56807)

Searchable database of merit aid at each college: <http://www.meritaid.org> (contact colleges individually to find out their policies about awarding merit scholarships to non-resident immigrant students).

Scholarship Scams to Avoid: <http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/lisa.jsp>

# Popular Scholarships for Undocumented Students

Name of Scholarship	Award Amount	Deadline	Requirements	Citizenship Requirements
Best Buy Scholarship Program	\$1,000	Feb 16	high school students grades 9-12	None Listed open to international and non-citizen students who fill the guideline requirements and are attending schools in the US
Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics Essay Contest	\$500-\$5000	December	Full-time undergraduate juniors and seniors at accredited four-year colleges and universities in the United States. The program is open to Black, Hispanic and Native American sophomores and juniors from all majors who are interested in financial services and have a 3.5 GPA minimum.	None Listed None Listed, site states that applicants must 'reside in the United States'.
J.P. Morgan Launching Leaders Undergraduate Scholarship	up to \$15,000	deadlines posted in Fall	Open to Graduate and Undergraduate applicants with a cumulative GPA above 2.80.	None Listed None Listed, site states that applicants must 'reside in the United States'.
La Unidad Latina Foundation	\$250 to \$1000	March	Open graduates of NC high schools (within the past 2 years) with a four-year cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better on a 4.0 scale (3.5 on a 5.0 scale).	SSN optional on application, omitting SSN will not affect the review of your application
NCSHP- North Carolina Hispanic College Fund-General Scholarships	varies	January	Applicant must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time student, in a four-year or two-year institution in the U.S. or U.S. territories, and demonstrate a verifiable need for financial support. At least one parent must be of Hispanic ancestry. Recipients must also be available to attend the 31st National USHLI Conference in Chicago, IL, February 14-17, 2013	
US Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI) Dr. Juan Andrade Scholarship for Young Hispanic Leaders	\$500-\$1000	December		Social Security OR ITIN#

Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation (HENAAC) Scholars Program	\$500-\$5,000	21-Apr	<p>Applicants must be engineering, math, computer science, or material science majors, and must have an overall GPA of 3.0. In addition, applicants must have a history of academic achievement and community service.</p> <p>The first and most important qualification for a Davis-Putter Scholarship is active participation in struggles for civil rights, economic justice, international solidarity or other progressive issues. We also evaluate the applicant's financial need and ability to perform academically at the college level. Davis-Putter scholars are both graduate and undergraduate students and must be enrolled in an accredited school and receiving college credit for the time period covered by their grant.</p>	All students are encouraged to apply
Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund	up to \$10,000	April 1st	<p>To be eligible, you must be enrolled full time in a Bachelor's degree program at a 4-year college or university in the United States, Canada, or Mexico at the time you submit the application. Plus, we'll need to see that you're making satisfactory progress toward an undergraduate degree in computer science, computer engineering, or a related technical discipline such as electrical engineering, math, or physics—and that you demonstrate an interest in computer science. Because the scholarship is merit based, you must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average out of a possible 4.0, or a 4.0 cumulative grade point average out of a possible 5.0.</p>	<p>Although citizenship is not a consideration, applicants must be living in the United States and planning to enroll in school in the US in order to apply. There is a strong preference for grantees who plan on staying in the US and building the movement here.</p>
Microsoft Minority Scholarship				<p>If you are currently studying in North America and meet our criteria for scholarship eligibility, you can apply regardless of your citizenship.</p>

# For Teachers and Counselors



**La COALICIÓN**  
Latin American Coalition

## The Golden Rules For Inclusive Advising

Through our work, we have seen how misunderstanding and misinformation have played a role in leaving immigrant students behind. Although it is against school policy to ask about documentation status, educators can be inclusive by providing the same information to everyone, regardless of status. Educators don't have to know a student's documentation status in order to serve them effectively. The most important thing is to build a relationship with the student that fosters trust and a feeling of safety. If the student trusts you, s/he will feel more comfortable disclosing details about his/her immigration status, which will then enable you to better support his/her needs.

Follow these tips for more inclusive advising:

### Rule #1: Words Matter

Be aware of your language and make an effort to be inclusive. Do not use words like illegal or alien, or other derogatory terms to describe immigrant students. This language only perpetuates a culture of discrimination towards immigrants and will make undocumented students uncomfortable talking to you about college or their future if they are undocumented.

### Rule #2: Know the Facts

Keep up with state policies and laws. North Carolina allows undocumented students to attend public universities, but they have to pay out of state tuition. South Carolina no longer accepts undocumented students at public institutions but private schools are still an option. There are many states that do allow undocumented students to access in-state tuition. There are also many scholarships that students can apply for, regardless of their documentation status.

### Rule #3: Understand Cultural Barriers

Immigrant students come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Keep in mind that even families that were educated in their home countries have to adjust to a completely different process in the US. Immigrant students, who are the first in their family to attend college, often receive little support from their family in tackling the application process, often because parents are unsure how to support them. Cultural norms and economic strains may also lead the family to consider working more important than pursuing a degree. Regardless, families should be included as much as possible in



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decision making and the discussion of students' options. Having materials and parent meetings that are accessible in different languages and that allow the parents to learn about the college process in a non-threatening environment is essential. Parent support groups are also helpful in empowering the parents with the appropriate knowledge so they can support their students.

**Rule #4: Nothing is Impossible**

Encourage your students to search for all opportunities. Undocumented students can go to college, but some options and services will not be available to them, such as federal financial aid or work study. Keep up to date on the status of the DREAM Act and know about scholarships that are accessible to all students, regardless of documentation status. The appendix of this guide lists scholarships and universities that offer such.

**Rule #5: ESL Teachers Are Essential**

ESL teachers are well connected to immigrant students, and often serve as the first point of contact for recent immigrants. It is important to build relationships and share information about college opportunities with ESL teachers, so they will know how to help you assist their students.

**Rule #6: Reach Out as Early as Possible**

We all know that early preparation for college is essential for success, but it is even more imperative for immigrant students to get a head start. As early as 9th grade, students should know that they have a better chance of receiving scholarships if they maintain good grades from the beginning of their high school career, and that they can prepare for college entrance exams by taking challenging courses. Students should take advantage of taking community college and online courses that are free in high school. Also, students should consider schools like CATO Middle College which may give them enough credits to defer some college costs later on. Because immigrant students without residency status do not qualify for in-state tuition, even community colleges can be financially out of reach. Tuition rates for out-of-state residents are about four times as much as tuition for in-state residents.

**Rule #7: Do Not Give Information to a Student That You're Unsure About**

Myths and false information about college access are prevalent in immigrant communities. Please do not pass on information unless you are sure it is correct. Be aware that some admissions counselors might not be fully aware of the current universities policies regarding undocumented students. Make sure you encourage students to ask several different admissions representatives to get the correct information.

**Rule #8: Use Your Community Resources**

There are people in our community that specialize in this issue. Don't be afraid to reach out for support! For more information regarding the College Access Para Todos program or the Latin American Coalition, please email [williams@latinamericancoalition.org](mailto:williams@latinamericancoalition.org) or call 704-941-2542. Student Ambassadors are available for trainings and outreach at your school!

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## Tips for Immigrant Students Who DREAM of College

Through our work, we have seen how misunderstanding and misinformation have played a role in discouraging immigrant students from pursuing higher education. Getting the facts right and knowing where to turn for support can be difficult and confusing for an immigrant student. That's why the Latin American Coalition has a program called College Access Para Todos focused directly on supporting immigrant students in their dreams of a college education. The following are some tips to follow when starting your college search process.

### Tip #1: Words Matter

You are a person, not an "illegal" or an "alien." Don't refer to yourself or anyone else that way. Undocumented immigrants have to go up against many misconceptions and stereotypes. Derogatory words used against immigrants only reinforce those stereotypes. You are a human being with aspirations of a better life and future. That is not illegal.

### Tip #2: Know the Facts

Undocumented students CAN go to college in North Carolina. We have seen so many students assume that their immigration status means that they have no future. This is not true. Don't let a teacher, guidance counselor or any one else tell you differently.



### Tip #3: Start Early

While it is true that undocumented students can go to public universities in North Carolina, they are not eligible for in-state tuition, subsidized loans or federal financial aid. This presents the biggest challenge to students. This is why students should plan for college as early as 8th grade, focusing on building a great GPA and participating in as many extracurricular activities as possible. One slip up early on can set a student back—but make sure you keep trying and ask your teacher for tutoring where possible. Create goals for yourself and keep on track. Also, be sure to take the SAT and ACT as early as possible to give yourself enough time to retake them, if needed.

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Johnson C. Smith Scholarship Recipients

#### **Tip #4: Apply and Ask**

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#### **Tip #5: Don't Lie**

While it is not always advisable to come out as undocumented during your application process, never lie to an official or on an application. Lying on a government form could cost you the chance to adjust your status later in life if the DREAM Act passes. You can enter zeros for your SSN on an automated form or file a paper application.

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#### **Tip #7: Be Your Own Hype Squad**

Document everything you do outside of school— whether it's helping at a soup kitchen, volunteering at church or doing roadside clean up. Don't be afraid to brag about your accomplishments in your college essays! You are the only one who can let the college know who you are and what you have achieved. Rest assured that other students will be doing this, so you might as well too! And let's face it, you're awesome!

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# Addendum: Deferred Action

## What is Deferred Action?

Deferred action is a discretionary determination to defer removal action of an individual as an act of prosecutorial discretion. Deferred action does not confer lawful status upon an individual. In addition, although an individual whose case is deferred will not be considered to be accruing unlawful presence in the United States during the period deferred action is in effect, deferred action does not excuse individuals of any previous or subsequent periods of unlawful presence. Under existing regulations, an individual whose case has been deferred is eligible to receive employment authorization for the period of deferred action, provided he or she can demonstrate "an economic necessity for employment." DHS can terminate or renew deferred action at any time at the agency's discretion.

On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security announced that certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several key guidelines may request consideration of deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal, and would then be eligible for work authorization.

Individuals who can demonstrate through verifiable documentation that they meet these guidelines will be considered for deferred action. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis under the guidelines set forth in the Secretary of Homeland Security's memorandum.

## Who Qualifies?

You may request consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals if you:

- Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
- Came to the United States before reaching your 16th birthday;

- Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;
- Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making your request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS;
- Entered without inspection before June 15, 2012, or your lawful immigration status expired as of June 15, 2012;
- Are currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and
- Have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

### How does this new policy affect the ability to go to school in NC?

North Carolina does not have an in-state tuition policy for undocumented immigrants and unfortunately this new deferred action policy will not do anything to change that. That means that most schools will treat students with deferred action as if they are undocumented and will not give them in-state tuition or allow them to qualify for state or federal financial aid. The only benefit is being eligible for a worker's permit, not having to worry about being deported, and possibly qualifying for a driver's license. Though these are not direct benefits to education, they have indirect positive influences on the ability to pursue education.

### How can I apply? Who can help me apply?

Information is listed on the [uscis.gov/childhoodarrivals](http://uscis.gov/childhoodarrivals) page for how to apply. To get help applying you may contact the Latin American Coalition, the North Carolina Justice Center, El Cambio, or any other organization near you. They will either directly be able to help you apply or help you to find someone who is a trustworthy aid in helping with the application.

# Addendum: TPS Students

## What is TPS?

TPS refers to Temporary Protective Status. The Secretary of Homeland Security may designate a foreign country for TPS due to conditions in the country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately. USCIS may grant TPS to eligible nationals of certain countries (or parts of countries), who are already in the United States. Eligible individuals without nationality who last resided in the designated country may also be granted TPS.

The Secretary may designate a country for TPS due to the following temporary conditions in the country:

- Ongoing armed conflict (such as civil war)
- An environmental disaster (such as earthquake or hurricane), or an epidemic
- Other extraordinary and temporary conditions

During a designated period, individuals who are TPS beneficiaries or who are found preliminarily eligible for TPS upon initial review of their cases (*prima facie* eligible):

- Are not removable from the United States
- Can obtain an employment authorization document (EAD)
- May be granted travel authorization

Once granted TPS, an individual also cannot be detained by DHS on the basis of his or her immigration status in the United States.

## Changes regarding TPS and in-state tuition

TPS students are now eligible for in-state tuition for state colleges and universities in North Carolina.