



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 30, 2025

Illegal-alien Des Moines Schools Chief Quits. Reports: He didn't Receive Ph.D. as Claimed.

Ian Roberts, the illegal-alien who ran schools in Des Moines, Iowa, until Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrested him last week, has quit his job.

Suspended without pay after his arrest with a loaded weapon, Roberts resigned today, his lawyers told reporters.

Two media outlets have confirmed that Roberts did not receive the doctorate he claimed to have earned.

ICE arrested the school superintendent, an illegal alien from Guyana, in a targeted enforcement last week linked to his final order of deportation issued a year ago. Despite not having work authorization, Roberts collected a salary of nearly \$300,000 annually.



AP Images
Ian Roberts in 2020

Des Moines superintendent did not receive the doctoral degree he frequently claimed
<https://t.co/9w3PtGPcTo>

— Des Moines Register (@DMRegister) [September 30, 2025](#)

The Arrest

Trouble began for the illegal alien [when ICE collared him](#) for being in the country illegally, having been given an order of deportation in May 2024.

Roberts is “a criminal illegal alien from Guyana” who was arrested while possessing “a loaded handgun, \$3,000 in cash and a fixed blade hunting knife,” the Department of Homeland Security reported.

He was not authorized to work in the United States, and received a final order of deportation in May 2024. He entered the United States on a student visa in 1999.

The city School Board chairwoman, Jackie Norris, former chief of staff for former First Lady Michelle Obama, [confirmed that Roberts lied](#) about being a citizen on his application for the lucrative super’s post. Norris claimed that vetting by a subcontractor of the city’s headhunting company did not report problems with Roberts’ past. The School Board suspended Roberts without pay.

He also lost his license to be a school superintendent. Because “you no longer possess legal presence in the United States,” the Iowa Board of Education Examiners [wrote to Roberts](#), “you [are] not able to hold a license” to be a superintendent.

Aside from a salary of \$270,000, the [city also paid](#) 14 percent of that figure, almost \$40,000, into a tax-sheltered annuity. He also received a \$600 per month car allowance.



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No Ph.D.

Yet aside from his lie about his citizenship, Roberts lied about his education. He did not, as he claimed, earn a doctorate from Morgan State University, as KCCI8 and the *Des Moines Register* disclosed.

“Roberts began his teaching career in 2001 at Baltimore City Public Schools, where he worked as a teacher for five years, a resident principal for one year, and a principal for two years,” the [TV station reported](#):

During this time, he also attended Morgan State University from Fall 2002 to Spring 2007, pursuing a doctorate degree, though the university confirmed he did not complete the program.

“The superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools did not obtain a doctoral degree from a Maryland university, as he has claimed for many years,” the [newspaper reported](#):

Ian Andre Roberts, who was arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Friday, Sept. 26 and faces deportation, has long stated that he received a doctoral degree from Morgan State University in Baltimore. But a university spokesperson told the *Des Moines Register* on Monday that Roberts did not obtain a degree from the school, despite attending Morgan State from the fall of 2002 through the spring of 2007.

And despite not having citizenship, [he registered](#) to vote in Maryland in 2012.

The thing that never happens happened again.

Only Americans should vote in American elections.

Pass the SAVE Act. <https://t.co/X55LoSHWwn>

— Mike Lee (@SenMikeLee) [September 29, 2025](#)

Career Over

Effective immediately, his attorney Alfredo Parrish said, Roberts is resigning from the super’s post and sending a letter to the Des Moines school board.

“Dr. Roberts has authorized me to send this letter announcing his immediate resignation from his position as superintendent of Des Moines Public Schools,” the letter [reproduced by](#) KCCI8 says:

Out of concern for his 30,000 students, Dr. Roberts does not want to distract the Board, educators, and staff from focusing on educating DMPS’s students.

Again, Roberts is not a “Dr.,” as the newspaper and television station revealed.

As for his immigration case, [KCCI8 published](#) a letter from a former attorney that claimed Roberts’ immigration case “has reached a successful resolution.” What that claim means is unclear.

During a news conference today, attorneys for Dr. Ian Roberts shared a letter they say was



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sent to Roberts from his former attorney.

"I am pleased to report that your case has reached a successful resolution," the letter reads.

More: <https://t.co/E4H6EgfZBh> pic.twitter.com/MuvsJoGE7i

— KCCI News (@KCCINews) [September 30, 2025](#)

The station reported that attorney Parrish will file a motion to reopen his immigration case.

"As we go through this process, step by step, we are going to be working on leaving no stone unturned," Parrish said.

Because of the letter he received from his former attorney, "he was under the impression" that the case was resolved, Parrish said.



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