



**State Board of Education of Resolution
To Recognize the Importance of Removing All Police From D.C. Public and Charter Schools
SR20-10**

WHEREAS, this historic moment spurred by the murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police reflects the urgent need for a new vision of safety, that does not involve police, for the District of Columbia’s roughly 90,000 students;

WHEREAS, policing in the United States has systematically targeted, through deadly and brutal force, people of color—particularly Black people—in this country and is rooted in the legacy of slave patrols, lynching, and Jim Crow laws;

WHEREAS, the proliferation of law enforcement in our nation’s schools is a pressing and alarming issue that reinforces and accelerates the school-to-prison pipeline;

WHEREAS, more than a quarter of a million young people are arrested or referred to law enforcement in their schools each year with increasing investments in school budgets towards school policing, surveillance, suspensions and expulsions, harsh discipline, and arrests, in lieu of counseling, educational resources, and physical improvements to classrooms and school structures;¹

WHEREAS, the presence of police officers, security personnel, guns, restraints, handcuffs, and/or metal detectors in and around D.C. schools creates hostile teaching and learning environments;

WHEREAS, students of color across the country are assaulted by school police officers at a rate of one assault per week;

WHEREAS, D.C. Public Schools spent over \$20 million dollars on school policing in fiscal year 2019 and is projected to spend \$23 million dollars on school policing in fiscal year 2020;²

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Police Department’s largest contract is with D.C. public schools to police and surveil students;³

WHEREAS, 92% of school-based arrests in D.C. are of Black youth and Black girls in D.C are 30 times more likely to be arrested by school police than white youth of any gender identity;⁴

¹ Mary Ellen Flannery, *The School-to-Prison Pipeline: Time to Shut it Down*, neaToday (Jan. 5, 2020), <https://neatoday.org/2015/01/05/school-prison-pipeline-time-shut/>

² DC Public Schools Responses to FY2019 Performance Oversight Questions, Q 11(b), at https://dccouncil.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/dcps_Part1.pdf

³ MPD FY2021 Proposed Budget Plan, Table FA-04, Division 2300. Total budget for that division for FY2020 was \$34 million but approx. \$23 million is the DCPS security contract, https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/fa_mpd_chapter_2021m.pdf

⁴ 2019 DC School Report Card indicates that there were 338 total arrests of students across the District – 312 of the arrests were of Black students and 26 of the arrests were of Latino students. (104 of the arrests were for students with disabilities); Rights4Girls, Georgetown Juvenile Justice Initiative, *Beyond The Walls: A Look at Girls in D.C.’s Juvenile Justice System* (Mar. 2018), <https://rights4girls.org/wp-content/uploads/r4g/2018/03/BeyondTheWalls-Final.pdf>





WHEREAS, there are nearly twice the amount of police and security officers in D.C. schools than there are mental health professionals and, because of this, 74% of Black youth do not have the mental health supports they need;⁵

WHEREAS, criminalizing students of color—particularly Black students and students with disabilities— is antithetical to the values the District of Columbia seeks to uphold;

WHEREAS, research indicates that police presence in schools does not make students safer and does not prevent school shootings;⁶

WHEREAS, research has long proven that reduced classroom sizes, restorative justice practices, engaging culturally-relevant curriculum, and mental health supports, do create safe, healthy, and joyful learning environments for all students;

WHEREAS, the Minneapolis Public School Board’s historic, unanimous vote to remove police from schools; the Portland Superintendent’s decision to remove police officers from schools; and school boards in Denver, Oakland, and Madison passing resolutions to remove police from schools demonstrates that a police free schools future is both possible and necessary;

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2020, the Council of the District of Columbia preliminarily approved the shifting of contracts associated with school security at DC Public Schools from the purview of the Washington Metropolitan Police Department to the DC Public School system in an effort to spur community-driven reimagination of safety and systems that affirm the lives of every DC student, teacher and family; and

WHEREAS, Black and Brown young people have long called for the end of policing in schools.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, to protect the safety and humanity of students of color and create supportive and nurturing school learning environments, the D.C. State Board of Education recommends that:

- The Deputy Mayor of Education initiate a process beginning in the 2020-2021 school year and allots adequate time (no less than 6 months as indicated by school leadership to be the minimum time needed) for each school to develop an adequate plan for alternative systems that maintain a safe and supportive learning environment in place of security provided through the contract with MPD;
- The planning process must include substantive input from Black and Brown led youth organizations, school leaders and key staff, families and school LSAT members, DCPS and Public Charter School LEAs, student health experts and community-based violence

⁵ Qubilah Huddleston, Alyssa Noth, *DC Students Deserve Empathy and Greater Mental Health Support, Not Policing and Punishment*, DC Fiscal Policy Institute Blog (Jun. 24, 2020), <https://www.dcfpi.org/all/dc-students-deserve-empathy-and-greater-mental-health-support-not-policing-and-punishment/>

⁶ *Police in Schools Are Not the Answer to School Shootings* (Advancement Project, March 2018).





prevention professionals in order to cocreate recommendations for a community-driven reimagination of safety and systems that affirm the lives of every DC student, teacher and family. Space for the voice of secondary students should be prominent in this process and should be deliberate in inclusion of Special education and ELL students and staff;

- Alternatives to be considered to create a safer, healthier and more equitable school environment should include (but are not limited to):
 - the full expansion of the school based mental health program,
 - expanding the use of community violence interrupters within schools and the broader community,
 - training educators in social emotional learning and transformative justice approaches, and
 - investing in the well-being and continued development of D.C. educators to reduce the reliance of long-term substitutes and enhance the overall learning experience for the District's 90,000 students;
- LEA leaders cease any ongoing negotiations with the Metropolitan Police Department and private companies for providing security services to D.C. schools beyond FY 2021 and The District of Columbia refrain from soliciting any funds from the federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office or similar federal or state programs to fund policing and criminalizing infrastructure in schools; and
- Acting on resulting recommendations from a citywide, cross-sector working group and under the leadership of each LEA, stakeholders at each school – including the principal, teachers, staff and students – should be given the autonomy, time and resources to develop school-based procedural and budgetary transition plans that (1) remove School Resource Officers, armed security personnel and policing bodies from D.C. schools and (2) redirects full cost savings to the implementation of its alternatives.

Date Adopted: _____ July 15, 2020 _____

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Rwa", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

