No Police in Schools
A Vision for Safe and Supportive Schools in CA

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Linnea Nelson
Policing in the United States is rooted in white supremacy -- slave patrols and later the enforcement of segregation.

- **1948**: A security unit designed to patrol newly integrated schools was the beginning of LA School Police.
- **1970**: The U.S. only had 200 school police nationwide.
- **2021**: The U.S. has more than 40,000 school police officers.

School police are concentrated in areas serving more students of color and lower-income communities.
Cops and No Counselors
How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students

Previous ACLU Reports and Work
- The Right to Remain a Student (2016)
- Bullies in Blue (2017)
- Here to Learn (2018)
- Cops and No Counselors (2019)
- Our Right to Resources (2020)

LINKS IN THE FINAL SLIDE
Statewide Young People’s Taskforce

YOUTH TASK FORCE ON POLICE-FREE SCHOOLS

THE YOUNG PEOPLE WILL WIN
Decades of Struggle by Youth and Organizers

- For almost a decade, Black Organizing Project has been fighting to eliminate school police in Oakland.
- In Los Angeles, advocates have worked for decades to stop criminalizing students, including eliminating truancy, stopping random searches, implementing PBIS, banning pepper spray, and eliminating school police.
- Campaigns to remove school police have and continue to be run in: Fremont, Fresno, Hollister, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Stockton, Moreno Valley, Kern County, San Diego, Pomona, San Jose, Ventura, Claremont, and South San Francisco, among others.
Data Sources

1. 2017-18 data from the U.S. Dept of Ed’s Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)

2. 2019 data from the Racial and Identity Profiling Act of 2015 (RIPA)

3. 2012-2020 data from Stockton Unified School District
Civil Rights Data Collection
Rates of School Referrals to Law Enforcement

- Black and Native American students and students with disabilities are disproportionately referred to police in all schools.
- Rates dramatically increase at schools with assigned law enforcement.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rate of Referral in Schools without Assigned Law Enforcement</th>
<th>Rate of Referral in Schools with Assigned Law Enforcement</th>
<th>Increased Likelihood of Referral in Schools with Law Enforcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students*</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.5x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latine*</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>4.4x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native*</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>3.8x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aslan</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>7.4x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black*</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>4.7x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White*</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>4.4x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Disabilities (IDEA)*</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>4.6x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*indicates statistically significant difference at p>0.05 or better.
Rates of Arrests in Schools

- Students across all categories are more likely to be arrested in schools with assigned law enforcement.
- Although the sample size is small, Native Americans are 35x more likely to be arrested when in a school with law enforcement than in a school without.
Baldwin Park Unified

- From 2010-2017, district had no police on staff
- In 2016, district reported 114 referrals to police
- District hired 6 officers in 2017
- In 2017-18, district reported 347 referrals to police (3x increase)
- Critically, arrests fell from 70 to 52 in that time, suggesting that staff were calling police for issues that did not warrant police intervention and should have been handled by staff
- On Feb 2021, BPUSD Board disbanded school police department
Racial and Identity Profiling Act
History and Context

- Passed in 2015 led by dozens of groups, including ACLU, Youth Justice Coalition, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, PICO CA, Reform California, Dignity and Power Now, and others.
- Will be implemented over many years. Currently, the 15 largest law enforcement agencies are reporting. The number will grow.
- Data is collected and reported about each police “stop,” including those in schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California Highway Patrol</th>
<th>San Diego County Sheriff’s Department</th>
<th>Oakland Police Department</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department</td>
<td>San Diego Police Department</td>
<td>Orange County Sheriff’s Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Police Department</td>
<td>San Francisco Police Department</td>
<td>Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverside County Sheriff’s Department</td>
<td>Fresno Police Department</td>
<td>Sacramento Police Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department</td>
<td>Long Beach Police Department</td>
<td>San Jose Police Department</td>
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Between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, the 15 largest law enforcement agencies in California collected data on nearly 4 million vehicle and pedestrian stops. RIPA defines a stop as a detention or search.
Findings

- 15 largest agencies stopped 2,602 students aged 5-19
- 9% or 241 stops were of children 12 or younger, 26 stops were children under 9
- Black students are 7.6% of the population but 26% of students stopped
- Students referred to law enforcement for trivial or absurd reasons.

A review of the list of “offenses” cited by police reveals numerous actions that appear patently trivial—or even absurd—as a justification for calling police to campus to confront a child or youth. These offenses include:

- Vandalism
- Send false fire alarm
- Offensive words in a public place or at school
- Annoying phone calls
- Loitering at school
- Display in public, imitation firearm
- Minor attending a prizefight
- Minor buying smoking paraphernalia
- Willful disturbance of a school zone
- Loud/unreasonable noise at school
- Gambling
Findings

- Staff may call police for school policy violation, ed code violation, or “reasonable suspicion for violating a crime. Black and Latine students more likely to be stopped for suspicion of violating a crime.
- Black students more likely to receive harsher actions during and after stops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5. Results of Student Stops by Race</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Police Actions During Student Stop by Race</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handcuffed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latine</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Stockton Unified School District Data
For almost a decade, the Stockton Education Equity Coalition (SEEC) has been centering equity for students in its advocacy to challenge systems of power that are rooted in oppression.

Was forced to sue Stockton USD in 2016 to get the data through Public Record Act requests.
Findings: Suspensions & Expulsions

- From 2015-2019, Black students were consistently suspended at 2 to 2½ times their rate of enrollment in Stockton USD.
- During that same period, Black students were also expelled at rates 3½ to 4½ times their rate of enrollment.
Findings: School Police Contact

- Native American students were booked or cited by Stockton USD police at five times their rate of enrollment in school, and Black students were booked or cited at nearly three times their rate of enrollment.
- From July to September 2020, 66% of school requests for Stockton USD police assistance were for “welfare checks.”
Among 265 school requests resolved with “NPA” (no subsequent police action), the most common reason was Welfare Check (34.34%).

Among all 92 school requests for police assistance for “Welfare Check,” 31 (98.91%) were resolved with “NPA” (no subsequent police action), and 1 resolved through police counseling the student (“Counsel”).
Central Valley Data

Federal and state data reveals most of Central Valley's counties and districts have several times as many police in schools in social workers. And hundreds of thousands of students are in schools with cops and no counselors in the region.

There are several districts where Black and Indigenous students are far more likely to be referred to law enforcement, including:

- **Hanford Joint Union High** (overall rate 43 students referred per 1,000, Black students 112 per 1,000)
- **Lemoore Union High** (overall rate 26 per 1,000 referred, Black students 99 per 1,000 and Native American students 44 per 1,000)
- **Delano Joint Union High** (overall rate 19 per 1,000, Black students 125 per 1,000)
- **Dos Palos Oro Loma Joint Union** (overall rate 11 per 1,000, Black students 59 per 1,000 and Native American students 50 per 1,000)
Student Mental Health & Wellness

- Surveyed over 1,200 students across California
- Confirmed that students are facing high levels of stress and trauma and need mental health resources rather than policing

66% of students reported that their mental health was negatively impacted by the pandemic
54% of students reported experiencing a decrease in mental health support at their schools in the past year
57% of students reported not having access to a counselor or therapist in the past year
51% of students were overwhelmed by virtual learning
31% of students experienced the loss of a loved one
Feeling useless knowing that my friends and family are going through hard times and I can't do anything... while also struggling through things myself and my grades going downhill real bad I still don't care at this point. I find it pointless.
LAUSD Survey Results
Los Angeles Student Survey Results

- Students Deserve surveyed 5,730 students in 2020
- 87% of respondents supported defunding the police

Black students are 3x as likely as white students to report being followed by school police

Black students are 4x as likely as white students to report being racially profiled by school police

Figure 9. Where Should Funds for School Police be Reallocated?
No schools in California should have a permanent police officer. Specifically, LEAs should not be able to create their own police departments or reserve forces, nor should they coordinate with any outside law enforcement agency to station law enforcement on a school campus.

- School staff should never call a police officer to campus unless there is an imminent danger of serious physical injury or death to a person on school property.
- Should not replace law enforcement with surveillance and other school hardening measures.
- Should invest in resources that will create a better and more supportive vision of schools. Dignity in Schools California Framework for Abolishing Police in Schools: https://dignityinschools-ca.org/state-policy-framework-dsc-ca/
Timeline of Youth Liberty Squad Advocacy for #CounselorsNotCops

MAY 2019  Students create their banners to display at their school: “Counselors Not Cops,” “Students not Suspects” and “Resources not Police Forces.”

OCT 2019  ACLU gathers over 200 students statewide for a multiday youth advocacy institute. Students learn about the ACLU’s #CounselorsNotCops and student de—criminalization campaigns.

FEB 2020  Students present at the California Association of School Counselors (CASC) conference about student mental health as a civil right.

APR 2020  Students create and administer a survey about the impact of COVID—19 on student mental health. Over 600 students across the state complete the survey.

MAY 2020  Students partner with CASC for California’s first—ever Student Mental Health Week. Students submit a letter and survey results to the Governor, State Superintendent, and other state officials with the support of more than 35 organizations and over 60 schools.

JUNE 2020  Student Anthony Alvarez testifies in the California Senate Education Committee about student mental health and #CounselorsNotCops.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUG 2020</td>
<td>Students present to the California Department of Education’s Student Mental Health Policy Workgroup.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEP 2020</td>
<td>Students submit advocacy letter to LAUSD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT 2020</td>
<td>Students launch their petition for #CounselorsNotCops and #ArtsNotArrests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAN 2021</td>
<td>Students deliver their petition to state officials with thousands of signatures. Students host separate meeting with representatives from the California Senate, Assembly, and State Board of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEB 2021</td>
<td>Students host the Power to the Youth summit with over 350 student attendees. Students Deserve and Youth Justice Coalition join to present on police–free schools. Student Angelina Duran creates #BreaktheStigma sticker sent to over 100 students across the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APR 2021</td>
<td>Students administer their 2021 student wellness survey and receive hundreds of responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY 2021</td>
<td>Students present survey findings for Student Mental Health Week 2021.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
May 7, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor
State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Tony Thurmond, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dr Nadine Burke Harris, California Surgeon General
California Health and Human Services
1600 North Street, Room 450
Sacramento, CA 95814

CC: First Partner, Jennifer Siebel Newsom

Dear Governor Newsom, Superintendent Thurmond, and Dr. Harris,

We applaud your leadership during COVID-19 and all that you do for us fellow Californians. We understand that you are receiving these letters daily and that you too could be experiencing struggles with your mental well-being. We therefore took the liberty to include some emojis to brighten your day. 😊

We are the Youth Liberty Squad, a group of High School aged youth, founded by the ACLU of Southern California. We are taking part in California’s first “Student Mental Health Week” (SMHW) with thousands of students and educators. We are working with the California Association of School Counselors to make this happen. This is long overdue, yet it comes at a most critical time. In anticipation of this day, we mobilized over 640 students to complete a survey to share the impact of COVID-19 on our mental well-being. The survey reached students across 60 schools and 40 districts and is one of the most significant projects to check-in on how students are feeling conducted by any organization in California. We reached back out to students and have the sign-on support of our peers at over 100 schools for this letter (see attachment). We also have the support of X organizations and leaders like Y and Z for our letter. We are reaching out to you because you are the leaders who have the most influence on the educational policy impacting us six million public school students, and we hope and expect a response.

We understand that you are dealing with many unprecedented emergencies right now, but through the information gathered in our survey in which we asked students to recommend solutions, we would like to present ways in which problems affecting students can be resolved. We also connected with educators and advocates for input. Here is a list of suggestions for your offices to consider prioritizing student success and wellbeing:

- Commencement: High school seniors have a great deal of uncertainty and fear that is compounding with anxiety. We have been deprived of a moment we and our families – particularly for families with students who are the first to graduate from high school – have looked forward to for years through graduation, and we are still figuring out if we will have any ceremony at all. Consider delivering a virtual commencement address to the Class of 2020 to provide encouragement and assurance.
- Invest in virtual tutors and other forms of supports such as “sufficient resources for the summer months to provide school meals and to address the significant learning loss that has occurred”
- Urge colleges to support flexible planning when considering the impact on college admissions and anxiety about the fall. After this hectic time, schools should be allowed time to transition.
- Issue a letter in support of Student Mental Health Week and acknowledge access to school-based mental health a civil rights issue.
- Host a town hall on student mental wellness. Invite students to speak at the forefront. We are happy to help you organize this and can recommend other student organizations that should be engaged.
- Issue a directive calling on districts to stop spending LCAP funds intended for high-needs students on law enforcement. A report by Pomona Student Union Youth Organizers and other/some of the signatories of this letter found over 40% of districts in Southern California are illegally spending LCAP funds. Direct them to spend money on school-based mental health and counselors, not cops.
- Continue to address the digital divide and inequalities that have been exposed in the transition to distance learning. Consider the impact on students experiencing homelessness and the 1.1 million students who are English learners in the state.

https://www.schoolcounselor-ca.org/Files/Letter%20to%20Governor%20Newsom%205-08-20.pdf
Having more than one counselor for every 600+ students.

Ability to participate in extracurriculars.

Having social workers on campus.

I don’t have hands on teacher assistance.

After-school tutoring opportunities.

Social interaction with peers.

Access to school counselors/teachers.

Getting ready regularly and having routine.

Access to multiple counselors on campus.

Missing friends.

School event cancellations.

Heavy, inconsistent workloads.

Family/home issues.

Lack of access to school counselors/teachers.

Less socialization with friends.

Clubs/sports being cancelled.

Lack of hands on learning.

Unhealthy sleep schedule.

Distractions/connection issues with zoom calls.

Stressed/fatigued.

Worries about college (SAT, ACT, applications).

#COUNSELORNOTCOPS
#ARTSNOTARRESTS
Meeting with State Board of Education about Student Mental Health
Call to Action

● Read the report here: https://aclusocal.org/no-police-in-schools

● Support a local campaign to defund school police:
  ○ Los Angeles: https://www.schoolslastudentsdeserve.com/
    ■ #EndRandomSearches
  ○ Pomona: https://www.genteorganizada.org/
  ○ Central Valley: https://www.cvmb.org/
  ○ Stockton: email seecoalition@gmail.com
  ○ Oakland: http://blackorganizingproject.org
  ○ Antelope Valley: https://cancelthecontract.com/

● Support AB 610, which will eliminate most mandatory notification to law enforcement: ksher@acluca.org
Call to Action: Support Assembly Bill 610

Will eliminate the requirement that schools notify law enforcement for certain student behavior such as an assault or minor possession of cannabis or alcohol.

- Involving law enforcement in the response to common child and adolescent school-related misbehavior contributes to racial inequities in academic achievement and the school-to-prison pipeline.
- A student’s interaction with law enforcement decreases their likelihood of completing high school while increasing the likelihood that they will have contact with the criminal legal system.
- This bill restores flexibility to educators to decide when law enforcement should be notified.

Fact Sheet
Links and Resources

- The Right to Remain a Student (2016)
  - aclunc.org/publications/right-remain-student-how-ca-school-policies-fail-protect-and-serve

- Here to Learn (2018)
  - aclusocal.org/en/here-to-learn

- Cops and No Counselors (2019)
  - aclu.org/report/cops-and-no-counselors

- Our Right to Resources (2020)
  - Report: aclusocal.org/en/publications/right-to-resources
  - Toolkit: aclusocal.org/en/campaigns/righttoresources

- No Police in Schools (2021)
  - aclusocal.org/no-police-in-schools

- State of Student Wellness (2021)
  - aclucalaction.org/sw

- STUDENT KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: WWW.MYSCHOOLMYRIGHTS.COM

Follow Youth Liberty Squad
  Instagram: instagram.com/youthlibertysquad/

Follow Arts Justice Council
  Instagram: instagram.com/artsjustice_ca/
Question and Answer