



# WHY WE NEED TO REMOVE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS FROM PROVIDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

and end a cycle of racist and arbitrary school discipline practices, break the Providence School-to-Prison Pipeline, and build schools that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

# The Harm:

## POLICE TRAUMATIZE STUDENTS

Youth of color report higher stress levels as a result of contact with police, which can lead to adverse mental health outcomes such as symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress.

## POLICE PUSH US OUT OF SCHOOL

Schools with police are more likely to suspend, expel and arrest students, which disproportionately impacts Black and Brown students, LGBTQ+ students, and students with disabilities.

**Black students make up 16% of overall Providence Public School enrollment and 30% of all student arrests.**

This is serious: students are twice as likely to drop out of high school after being arrested for the first time.



## **POLICE DON'T MAKE US SAFER**

A review of 40 years of evaluations of police in schools shows school police have no positive impact on school safety.

**"As a student of color I've always had to be cautious about who or what makes me feel safe. A middle-aged white man with a pistol and no basic understanding of what it means to be me, was not one of those things."**

**~ PPSD student**

## **POLICE NEGATIVELY IMPACT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

A study of 2.5 million students showed that the presence of school police leads to an increase in disciplinary actions, a decrease in high school graduation rates and a decrease in college enrollment rates. In New York City, an increase in the number of school police officers correlated with worse test scores for Black students.

# How we got here:

Police were first introduced into schools in the early 50's under the pretext to protect school property after the beginnings of integration. As Black and Brown students began to organize to fight racist Jim Crow Laws from the North to the South,

**school police acted as agents of the state to suppress the growing power of student movements and to maintain the power of White-dominated institutions.**

Police were later placed in schools in increasing numbers as a response to school shootings from Columbine, Sandyhook, and Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School.

**But while each of these school shootings were committed by White students in majority White suburban schools, Black and Brown students would be increasingly criminalized and physically brutalized by the increased presence of police in their schools.**

# WE DEMAND MORE SUPPORTIVE AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN OUR SCHOOLS

Guidance Counselors

Educators, Staff,  
and Administrators

Art Therapy

Restorative  
Justice

Mental Health  
Supports

of Color

Mentors

Student empowerment  
and decision making

DEFUND THE  
POLICE  
Nurses

A Quiet Place  
to Reflect

Social Workers

Adults to Listen



"Students should not have to feel alone because they have no one to listen to them."

-former PPSD student

Social, emotional and mental health supports are vital:

- About 72 percent of children in the U.S. will have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lives such as witnessing violence, experiencing abuse, or experiencing the loss of a loved one.
- Students are 21 times more likely to seek support in school than anywhere else.

"If somebody had just tried to understand why I was doing what I was doing instead of trying to judge me for it, punish me for it, or abandon me for it, I think it could have made a difference."

-former PPSD Student

### **Schools that employ more mental health professionals see**

- improved attendance rates
- lower rates of suspension and expulsion
- improved academic achievement and career preparation
- improved graduation rates
- improved school safety



# TAKE ACTION

**COUNSELORS  
NOT GOPS**



RETHINK SCHOOL SAFETY.

Sign this petition: [bit.ly/PSU CNC](https://bit.ly/PSU_CNC)

Go here to send an email to

to Education Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green at

[angelica.infantegreen@ride.ri.gov](mailto:angelica.infantegreen@ride.ri.gov) and

PPSD Superintendent Harrison Peters at

[Superintendent@ppsd.org](mailto:Superintendent@ppsd.org)

and other city and state officials

**Both links will be in our bio!**

**Follow us @pvdstudentunion**



# Sources

Advancement Project. Police in Schools are Not the Answer to School Shootings. 2018.  
<https://advancementproject.org/resources/police-schools-not-answer-school-shootings/>

American Public Health Association. "Addressing Law Enforcement Violence as a Public Health Issue." Policy Number 201811. November 13, 2018. <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/29/law-enforcement-violence>.

American Civil Liberties Union. Cops and No Counselors: How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff is Harming Students. March 4th, 2019.  
<https://www.aclu.org/report/cops-and-no-counselors>

ACLU Pennsylvania. "What Education Leaders Need to Know about School Policing," November 15, 2019.  
<https://www.aclupa.org/en/publications/what-education-leaders-need-know-about-school-policing>.

Center for Youth and Community Leadership in Education at Roger Williams University. Providence Public Schools Preliminary Arrest Data. June, 2020.

DeVylder J, Oh HY, Nam B, Sharpe TL, Lehmann M, Link BG. Prevalence, demographic variation and psychological correlates of exposure to police victimisation in four US cities. *Epidemiol Psychiatr Sci*. 2017.

Satinsky, Sara. "Stress on the Streets (SOS): Race, Policing, Health, and Increasing Trust not Trauma." Human Impact Partners. December 8, 2015.  
<https://humanimpact.org/stress-on-the-streets-sos-race-policing-health-and-increasing-trust-not-trauma-in-ohio/>

Stern and Petrosino. "What Do We Know About the Effects of School-Based Law Enforcement on School Safety?" <https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/JPRC-Police-Schools-Brief.pdf>

Sweeten, Gary. "Who Will Graduate? Disruption of High School Education by Arrest and Court Involvement." *Justice Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (December 2006): 462-80.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418820600985313>.