



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

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Resolution to Support Reform of the Division of School Safety

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WHEREAS, the New York City Department of Education is responsible for all interactions students have with adults in our school buildings in order to promote a positive school climate;

WHEREAS, the on September 17, 1998, the New York City Department of Education entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to create a joint school security program¹;

WHEREAS, recent actions of officers in the New York Police Department and its history of disparate policing based on zip code and racial demographic run directly counter to the Department of Education's vision of Equity and Excellence for All;

WHEREAS, there are over three times as many police officers as social workers in New York City public school buildings, and almost twice as many police officers as guidance counselors²;

WHEREAS, NYC has 1.1 million students and over 5,000 school safety agents and over 100 police officers, a ratio of 1 safety agent or police officer to 220 students. For perspective, Los Angeles, the second largest school district in the nation, has over 600,000 students, but just 500 combined police and school safety officers³, a ratio of 1 officer to 1,200 students;

¹ <https://cdn-blob-prd.azureedge.net/prd-pws/docs/default-source/default-document-library/nypd-doe-mou.pdf>

² <https://www.nyclu.org/en/press-releases/new-report-shows-shortage-counselors-over-policing-and-discriminatory-discipline>

³ <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/15609>

WHEREAS, the presence of police officers in schools has contributed to the criminalization of young people in New York City, especially students of color, immigrant students, Muslim students, queer students, and students with disabilities;

WHEREAS, the presence of police officers in schools imposes a climate of fear and intimidation in school communities, especially among Black students (who also experience police violence and harassment in their neighborhoods), that inhibits schools from providing a nurturing, inspiring, and rigorous learning experience;

WHEREAS, Minneapolis Board of Education voted to terminate its contract with the police department for school resource officers⁴;

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WHEREAS, Mayor Bill de Blasio previously rejected a proposal by the School Diversity Advisory Group to study moving the Division of School Safety back to the Department of Education⁵;

WHEREAS, since Mayor Bill de Blasio took office in 2014, the school safety division budget has grown over 25%, according to figures from the Independent Budget Office⁶;

WHEREAS, funding for School Safety is \$427.3 million in the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget, an increase of \$19.7 million from the Fiscal 2020 Adopted Budget. Though this increase is entirely to support the increased cost of existing staff due to collective bargaining agreements and there is no budgeted increase in headcount, a total of \$303.8 million is budgeted to go directly to the NYPD⁷;

WHEREAS, the Mayor has outlined more than \$800 million in cuts to the New York City DOE budget for Fiscal Year 2021;

WHEREAS, the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget excludes \$1.3 million for Restorative Justice and \$1.8 million for social emotional supports;

⁴ <https://www.startribune.com/mpls-school-board-ends-contract-with-police-for-school-resource-officers/570967942/>

⁵

<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2019/6/10/21108327/a-big-deal-or-not-enough-what-to-know-about-the-diversity-recommendations-de-blasio-just-embraced>

⁶ <https://ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/education-indicators-budgets-2020.pdf>

⁷ <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/04/040-DOE.pdf>

WHEREAS, positive approaches to school climate and discipline include training in trauma-informed practices; child and adolescent development and psychology; comprehensive youth development practices and programming; conflict resolution and peer mediation; de-escalation techniques; violence prevention and intervention; intergroup and interethnic conflict, intervention and truce-building strategies; bias-based and sexual harassment and sexual violence; working with youth with disabilities or physical, emotional, or mental conditions; working with LGBTQ and gender non-conforming youth; cultural competencies (including understanding and addressing racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, adultism/ageism, and other implicit and explicit biases); the impacts of arrest, court, detention, incarceration and/or deportation on youth life chances; effective strategies for building safe schools without relying on suppression; restorative and transformative justice practices; school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports; and/or other positive approaches to school climate and discipline; and

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WHEREAS, harsh and punitive policing on students is inconsistent with the underlying educational mission of schools.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New York City Department of Education should immediately terminate its Memorandum of Understanding contract with the New York City Police Department; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that members of the New York City Police Department, or any other police force, should enter New York City schools only to address threats to physical safety;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the budget for and oversight of the Division of School Safety should be returned to the Department of Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that School Safety Agents be retrained, and that mandates be implemented for additional certification, for current and future Agents, that reflect a level of care, compassion and understanding that results in anti-racist service that reinforces productive approaches and positive outcomes for all of our students, especially our Black students.