

Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation

FACT SHEET on POLICE IN SCHOOLS

Action: Contact your local school board member(s). Tell your school board to eliminate the School Resource Officers in your schools.

School-to-Prison Facts:

- **Police occupy our schools:** Nationwide, 70% of public secondary schools and 30% of primary schools have armed school resource officers (SROs).
 - In North Carolina, over 90% of high school students attend a school with a SRO, compared with two-thirds nationally.
- **Arrests soar with police:** Schools with police reported 3.5 times as many arrests as schools without police.
- **Black arrests are disproportionately high:** Black students, only 16 percent of school enrollment, account for 33 percent of arrests nationwide.
- **Black girls** in North Carolina are 8 times more likely to suffer arrests than are white girls.
- **Minor Incidents spark arrests:** police arrest students most often for minor infractions like disorderly conduct or fighting, incidents previously handled by school administrators.
- **Arrests for minor incidents lead to major consequences:** Suspension from school, falling behind academically, prohibition from school athletics, dropping out of school, loss of college scholarships, problems in obtaining jobs, prison, and deportation for undocumented students.
- **Police cause physical injury and emotional trauma:** SRO's in North Carolina have used Tasers and pepper spray, and other physical force to send students to the hospital.
- **Police (SROs) train to arrest not counsel:** Most localities do not require SROs to have any experience or training to work with children or youth.
- **Police with a high school education earn more than most college-educated teachers.**
- **Use of taxpayer dollars to pay the high costs for school police** have limited funds for nurses, counselors, and other more critical school needs.
- **Reducing police dominance in schools is proving successful:**
 - The Denver public schools first limited the ability of the police to charge students and in June 2020 eliminated the contract with police.

- The San Francisco public schools reduced inappropriate police intervention.
- Birmingham, AL (Jefferson County) introduced a graduated referral plan to reduce court referrals.
- Atlanta's (Clayton County) agreement among officials reduced referrals by 47%.
- A Florida law discourages student arrests for minor fights and disturbances.
- Minneapolis on June 2, 2020 eliminated police from public schools.
- Portland Oregon on June 4, 2020 discontinued the regular presence of SROs.

Additional Resources:

ACLU 2020: <https://www.aclu.org/blog/racial-justice/race-and-inequality-education/racial-disparities-student-arrests-epidemic>

Mann, Angela et al. "Cops & No Counselors: How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students." *ACLU* (2019).

Langberg, Jason, Barbara Fedders, and Drew Kukorowski. "Law enforcement officers in Wake County schools: The human, educational, and financial costs." *Advocates for Children's Services* (2011): 1-21.

-----Stinson Sr, Philip Matthew, and Adam M. Watkins. "The nature of crime by school resource officers: Implications for SRO programs." *Sage Open* 4, no. 1 (2014): 2158244014521821.

Youth, Positive, and Justice Initiative Brief. "Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline." (2019).

Turner, E. O., and A. J. Beneke. "'Softening' school resource officers: the extension of police presence in schools in an era of Black Lives Matter, school shootings, and rising inequality." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 23, no. 2 (2020): 221-240.

"From Push Out to Lock Up North Carolina's Accelerated School-to-Prison Pipeline," *Action for Children North Carolina*, https://ncchild.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/2013_STPP-FINAL.pdf: 8-10.

Lindsay, C.A., V. Lee, and T. Lloyd. "The Prevalence of Police Officers in Schools," *Urban Institute* (2018)

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/prevalence-police-officers-us-schools>