

Deputies/Sheriffs in Schools: Outcomes & Accountability

LA County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission Presentation

by Dr. Amir Whitaker
Senior Policy Counsel



100 **ACLU**
SoCal

Presentation Available At: www.tinyurl.com/aclusrds

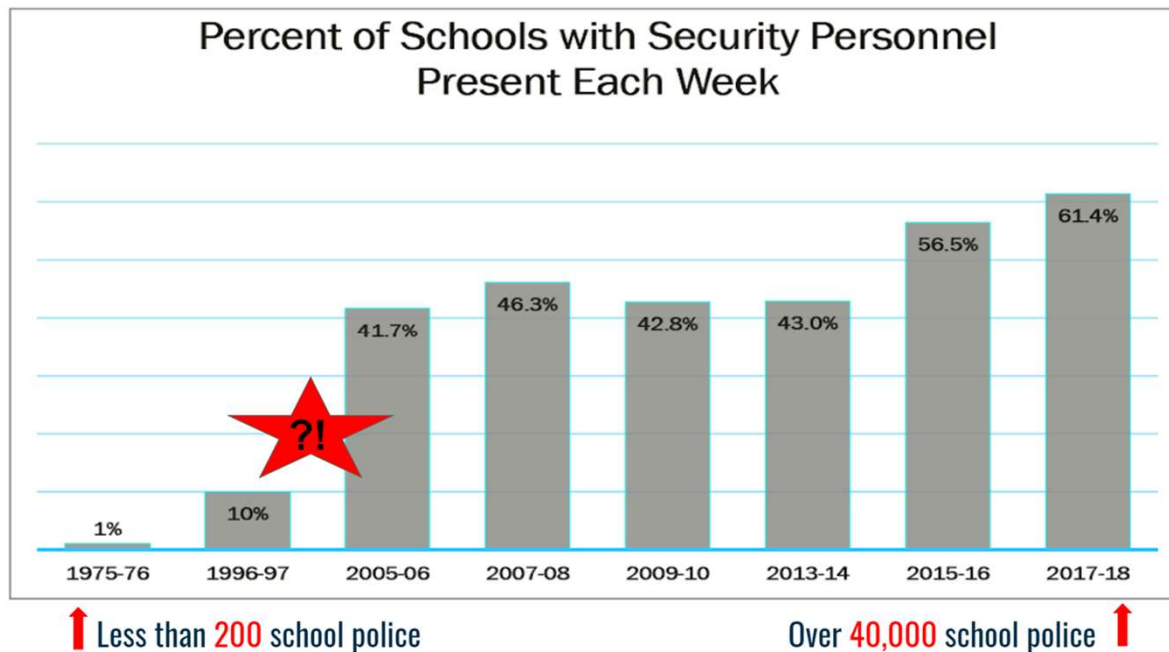
EXPERIENCE & PERSPECTIVE

- Speaking from Personal, Professional, and Research Experience
 - Credentialed Teacher across three states (CA, FL, NJ)
 - UCLA Researcher before ACLU
 - Authored several reports with SRO data
 - Represented students/families in STPP
 - Survivor of “School-to-Prison Pipeline”
 - Arrested, Pushed/Dropped out of School



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- **1948-** A security unit designed to patrol newly integrated schools was the beginning of LA School Police
- **1975-** Only 1% of schools had SROs in 1975
- **2005-** 42% of schools have officers
- **2020-** 67% of school have officers



MISSION
DRIFT?

Meet an **SRO** School Resource Officer

PROTECTOR – MENTOR – EDUCATOR

An **SRO (School Resource Officer)** is a career law enforcement officer who is assigned to work in collaboration with one or more schools. SROs are assigned by their employing police department, agency or sheriff's department to this specific, community-oriented patrol duty. Unlike a security guard, an SRO is a sworn law enforcement officer with the authority to make an arrest.

- An SRO is a first responder** who is integrated into a district's emergency planning.
- An SRO can be a mentor or counselor** for students.
- An SRO is the first line of defense** in a school. Most SROs are armed.
- An SRO is a sworn police officer** with authority to investigate and make arrests.
- An SRO is an informal educator** who can help provide important information to students, parents and staff.
- An SRO can assist and monitor a crisis situation to keep students and school employees safe** before additional law enforcement arrive.

As of 2017, there were **less than 200 SROs in New York**.^{*} This number is **on the rise** as schools add officers in response to increased threats of school violence and the number of deadly incidents reported across the nation.

An SRO doesn't sit behind a desk. They are present in hallways and cafeterias to **interact with students and build relationships** in the school community.

A successful SRO program is focused on building healthy relationships between law enforcement and members of the school district to benefit individual students and the greater community.

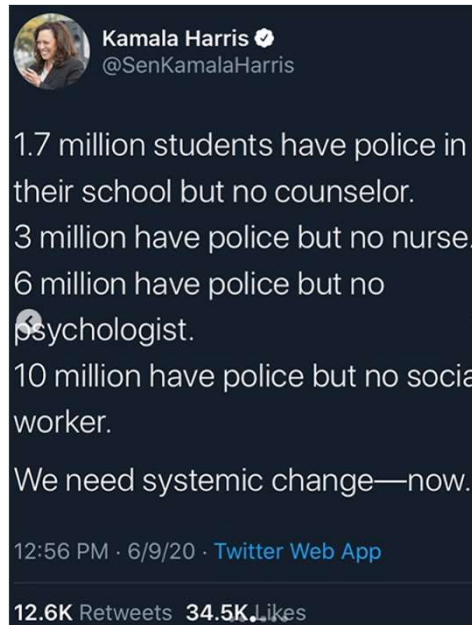
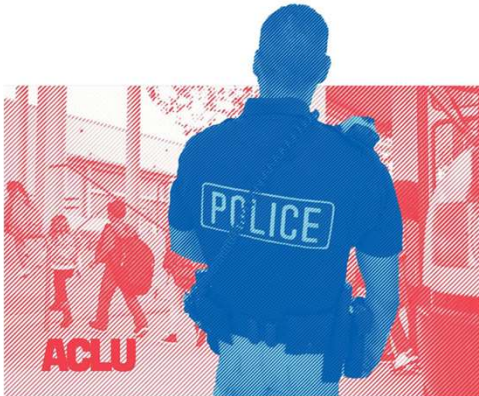
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^{*} New York State Sheriff's Association

CAPITAL REGION BOCES

Cops and No Counselors

How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students



SCHOOL POLICE, MENTAL HEALTH ACROSS Los Angeles County

421,647 Students or 30% are enrolled in Schools with Police but no Nurse, Counselor, Social Worker, and/or Psychologist.
72,473 Students have a Police and no Counselor
83,432 Students have a Police and no Nurse
107,596 Students have a Police and no Psychologist
400,891 Students have a Police and no Social Worker

www.aclusocal.org/edjustice

aclu.org/report/cops-and-no-counselors



Federal Legislation for '[Counseling not Criminalization](#)'

9 STUDIES ON SRD/SRO IMPACT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

- There is **no conclusive evidence** that the presence of school-based law enforcement has a positive effect on students' perceptions of safety in schools. ([WestEd, 2018](#))
- School policing strategies have no overall effects on **crime** or **discipline**
 - A 3-year study found school police have no impact on bullying
- This study found that police frequently searched & alienated students, increased surveillance & harmed school climate
- The presence of school police can lead to poorer academic achievement, particularly among Black boys
- Research finds a correlation between school police & higher rates of exclusionary discipline among students of color
- Schools with police see increases in student arrests by as much as 400 percent
- A study found Texas schools receiving federal funding for police between 1999– 2008 experienced a...
 - 2.5% decrease in graduation rates, 4% decrease in college enrollment rates, and 6% increase in middle school discipline rates
- Students with disabilities and LGBTQ students are also disproportionately arrested and harmed by school police
- **CASUALTIES INCREASE WITH SCHOOL POLICE!**
 - Study looked at 133 cases of school shootings and attempted school shootings from **1980 to 2019** [new study](#)

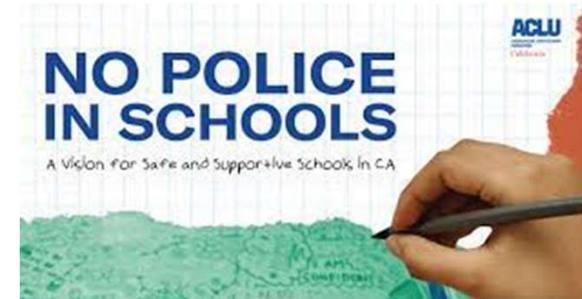
<https://www.endzerotolerance.org/single-post/2019/03/11/Research-on-the-Impact-of-School-Policing>

Arrests in Schools with Law Enforcement

Table 2.
Average Arrest Rates (per 1000 students) in Schools with and without Assigned Law Enforcement by Racial/Ethnic Group and Disability

	Rate of Arrest in Schools without Assigned Law Enforcement	Rate of Arrest in Schools with Assigned Law Enforcement	Increased Likelihood of Arrest in Schools with Law Enforcement
All Students*	0.11	0.68	6.2x
Latine*	0.10	0.69	6.9x
Asian	0.03	0.13	4.3x
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0.07	0.48	
Black*	0.26	1.93	7.4x
White*	0.11	0.86	7.8x
Two or More Races	0.16	1.18	7.5x
Students with Disabilities (IDEA)*	0.29	1.39	4.8x

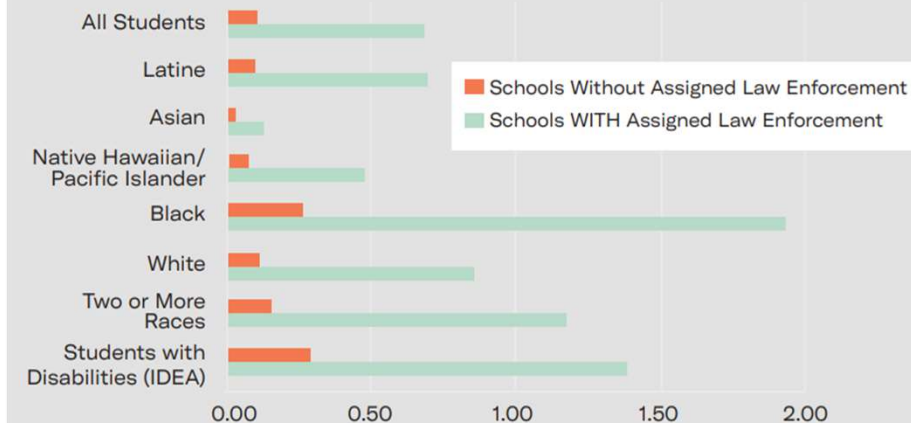
- Examined state (RIPA) and federal data
- Students across all categories are **more likely to be arrested** in schools with assigned law enforcement



No Police in Schools Report (2021)

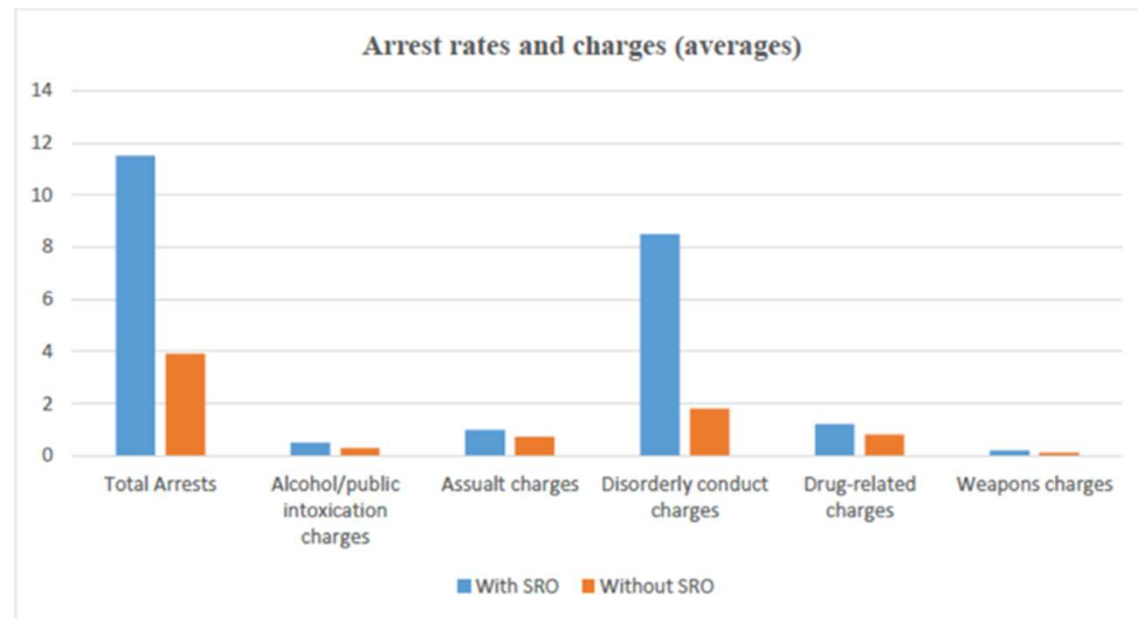
aclusocal.org/no-police-in-schools

Figure 1.
Arrest Rates in Schools With and Without Assigned Law Enforcement



Baldwin Park Unified (BPU) **CASE STUDY** (from report)

- 2010-2017: BPU had no police on staff
- 2016: BPU reported 114 referrals to police
- BPU hired 6 officers in 2017
- 2017-18: BPU reported 347 referrals to police (3x increase)
- Arrests fell from 70 to 52 in that time.
 - Suggest that staff were calling police for issues that did not warrant police intervention & should have been handled by staff
- Feb 2021: [Board disbanded school police department](#)



U.S. CCR 2019 *Beyond Suspensions: Examining School Discipline Policies and Connections*

CALIFORNIA RIPA DATA

Table 4.

Police Actions During Student Stop by Race⁶²

	Handcuffed	Patrol Car Detention	No Action	Student Searched	Property Searched	Property Siezed
All Students	16%	12%	34%	29%	18%	13%
Asian	11%	13%	47%	26%	18%	11%
Black	27%	14%	34%	33%	20%	8%
Latine	11%	9%	35%	27%	14%	17%
White	12%	15%	30%	24%	21%	15%

- Staff 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

- Districts across 5 counties **only** arrested SWD
 - Glenn, San Benito, Mariposa, Shasta, Mono
- Mendocino and Santa Cruz county district **only** arrested Latinx students
- Humboldt County districts **only** arrested Black students
- Almost 30 school districts in California **only** arrested SWD
 - Including Berkeley Unified, Tracy Joint Unified, Alameda Unified
- 10 school districts **only** arrested Black students
- This is **DISCRIMINATORY**

Table 5.

Results of Student Stops by Race

	Warning	Citation	Custodial Arrest w/o Warrant	Psychiatric Hold	Referred to Administrator	Referred to School Counselor
All Students	5%	36%	15%	12%	26%	12%
Asian	5%	13%	8%	37%	11%	21%
Black	4%	34%	20%	7%	26%	14%
Latine	4%	44%	13%	12%	25%	12%
White	4%	30%	12%	16%	29%	13%

TABLE A7

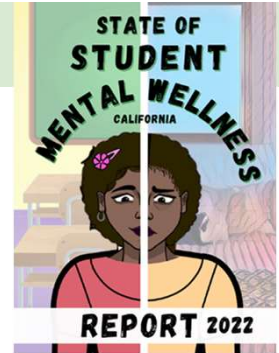
List of 25+ Common Student Behaviors Leading to School Arrests

CRIMINAL CHARGE	STUDENT BEHAVIOR
Disrupting school	<u>Spraying perfume;</u> ¹¹⁸ <u>fake burping;</u> <u>fake fart spray;</u> ¹¹⁹ <u>refusing to change a t-shirt depicting a hunting rifle;</u> ¹²⁰ <u>not following instructions;</u> ¹²¹ <u>criticizing a police officer</u> ¹²²
Disorderly conduct	<u>arguing;</u> ¹²³ <u>documenting bullying;</u> ¹²⁴ <u>Kicking a trashcan;</u> ¹²⁵ <u>cursing;</u> <u>refusing to leave the lunchroom</u> ¹²⁶
Assault	<u>Throwing a paper airplane;</u> ¹²⁷ <u>throwing a baby carrot;</u> ¹²⁸ <u>throwing skittles;</u> ¹²⁹ <u>fake fart spray</u> ¹³⁰
Weapons	<u>Science experiment (volcano);</u> ¹³¹ <u>science experiment;</u> ¹³² <u>paring knife;</u> ¹³³ <u>children's knife;</u> ¹³⁴
Battery on a police officer	<u>Five year-old with ADHD had a tantrum</u> ¹³⁵
Terroristic threats	<u>Eight year-old with a disability made a threatening statement to a teacher</u> ¹³⁶
Drug possession	<u>Carrying a maple leaf</u> ¹³⁷
Petit larceny	<u>Taking a milk carton</u> ¹³⁸
Felony forgery	<u>Buying lunch with a fake \$2 bill</u> ¹³⁹
Indecent exposure	<u>Wearing saggy pants</u> ¹⁴⁰

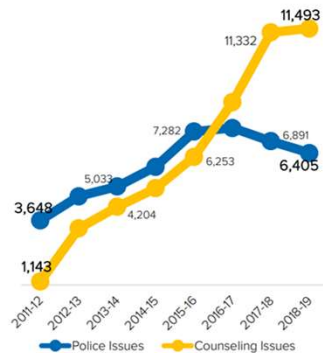
Table extracted from <https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline/bullies-blue>

THE CRIMINALIZATION OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

- [UCLA Report confirms](#) LAUSD SROs most commonly called for mental health
- School police should NOT be first to respond to student mental health or suicide
- Police Responding to mental health = **Trauma + Stigma**



POLICE ISSUES VS. COUNSELING ISSUES
LAUSD 2011-2019



TOP TEN REPORTED ISSUES ON ISTAR
LAUSD 2018-2019



"I don't trust anyone. I tried talking to friends. What did they do? For example a friend called the cops on me because I told her about mental state. I just can't trust anyone. Neither friends, teachers, even people close to me. I don't trust because what will they do? Nothing." **11th Grade**

"[A] friend she called the cops they came to talk with me now. I don't talk to her any more. I can't trust any more including whoever is reading this" **10th Grade**



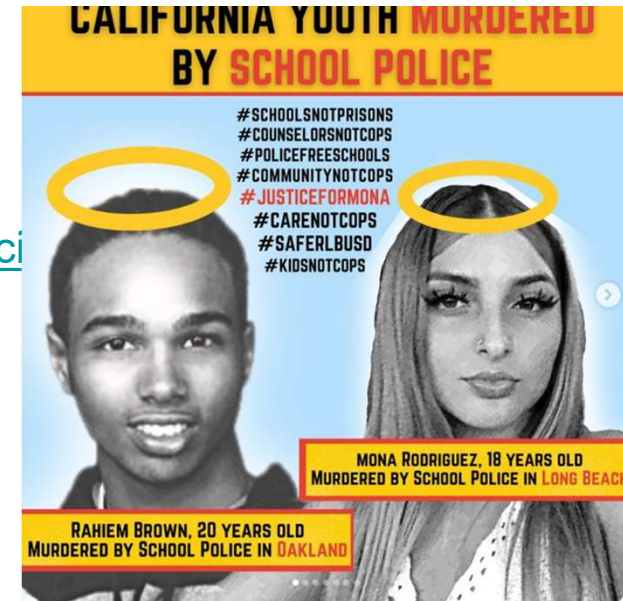
Example of what NOT to do (LAUSD) ----->



How does the LASAR app work? The app is for non-emergency school related issues where users select one of eight categories, like a school shooting threat, drug use, or vandalism. They can upload a photo or video of an incident, and the app also tracks their location. Those reports go directly to the L.A. School Police Department (LASPD) where a commander decides what to do with them and whether to deploy any officers, mental health counselors, etc.

Links, Reports, Resources

- The Right to Remain a Student (2016)
 - aclunc.org/publications/right-remain-student-how-ca-school-police-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 (2022)
 - [https://aclucalaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022_State_of](https://aclucalaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022_State_of_Student_Wellness.pdf) [ellne](#)



Even when officers “‘Highly trained to work with students’”....

