



Maryland Coalition for Justice and Police Accountability

# REPLACE POLICE WITH STUDENT SUPPORTS

## COUNSELOR NOT COPS: TO KEEP SCHOOLS SAFE, REPLACE POLICE WITH STUDENT SUPPORTS

Every Maryland school district utilizes school police in spite of evidence that police presence criminalizes students for minor behaviors without addressing serious safety threats, needlessly perpetuating the school-to-prison pipeline.

## There is No Reliable Evidence that School Police Keep Students and Educators Safe

- Research has not shown that police presence reduces school shootings or other violence.<sup>1</sup>
- One study found that an increase in school police presence did not decrease any category of school-based offenses.<sup>2</sup>
- Students' perception that school police treat them unfairly can have a counterproductive effect on student behavior.<sup>3</sup>
- School police have made Black students feel less safe because of over-policing and racialized police violence.<sup>4</sup>

## Police Presence in Schools Increases Student Arrests for Minor Offenses

- In national studies, students in schools with a police officer are five times more likely to be arrested for disorderly conduct and twice as likely to be referred to law enforcement for run-

of-the-mill fistfights than students in schools without one.<sup>3</sup>

- In Maryland, approximately 70% of school arrests are for fistfights without weapons and offenses like disruption/disrespect, alcohol/tobacco, and trespassing. The remainder are mostly for simple drug possession.<sup>5</sup>

## School Policing Disproportionately Harms Black Students, and Students with Disabilities

- In Maryland, Black students receive 56% of school-based arrests statewide despite representing only about a third of the student population, even though data demonstrates that Black students

**A coalition of over 75 groups from across the state are calling on Maryland legislators to support strong, renewed demands for police reform and accountability:**

- 1 Repeal in full the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights.
- 2 Reform the Public Information Act to allow disclosure of all complaints of police misconduct.
- 3 Establish a statewide use of force policy that will prevent officers from using force unless it is necessary.
- 4 **Remove school resource officers from schools.**
- 5 Return control of the Baltimore City Police Department to Baltimore City residents.

**POLICE-FREE SCHOOLS**

misbehave at the same rate as their peers.<sup>5</sup>

- In Maryland, students with Individual Education Programs (IEP) receive 23% of school-based arrests\* despite comprising 12% of the student population.<sup>5</sup>

## What are Effective Measures for Keeping Schools Safe?

Educators, researchers, and law enforcement have found that strategies to support students' positive behavior and strengthen relationships among students, staff, and parents are effective for keeping schools safe. Proven and promising strategies include:

- Restorative approaches<sup>6, 7, 8</sup>
- Trauma-informed approaches<sup>9, 10</sup>
- Provision of wraparound services, including through community schools<sup>11</sup>
- Special education planning and implementation<sup>12, 13</sup>
- Hiring of mental health specialists, counselors, and community resource coordinators<sup>9, 10, 14</sup>

**If Maryland redirected the \$10 million per year it currently invests in school police, it could support districts to successfully implement these alternatives.**

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\*This figure does not capture all arrests of students with disabilities; 229 school-based arrests, or 7% of all such arrests in the state, involved students with disabilities who have 504 Plans instead of IEPs.

Find more information about the five necessary police reforms in Maryland, and the more than 75 organizations calling for them: [aclu-md.org/reimaginepolicing](https://aclu-md.org/reimaginepolicing)

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