

Let's Invest In Our Students, Not Arrest Them!

- The mental health crisis amongst students in the United States has led to an increase in school violence, a decline in academic performance, and a decline in student well-being overall.
- According to the CDC, 33% of high school students reported that they experienced poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic and 44% reported that they persistently felt sad or hopeless during 2021.



What Can Schools Do?

- Schools play a critical role in ensuring that students have access to adequate resources. A 2018 study shows that school-based mental health services are the primary source of treatment for many low-income and minority students.
- Positive school environments also benefit student mental health. CDC results display that adolescents who felt connected to adults and peers at school had significantly less reports of poor mental health or suicidal ideation.

Counselors Not Cops!

- Evidence shows that school-based mental health services improve school environments and reduce violence, yet most schools have better access to armed police officers than psychologists.
- School police contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline by increasing student arrests, especially for students of color and disabled students.
- Holistic supports such as restorative justice, which works to reconnect students with their community, have proven to be more effective in lessening disciplinary infractions and improving student-wellbeing.

What is MCPS Doing?

- MCPS instated the CEO 2.0 model, which attempts to combine policing with holistic approaches, despite law enforcement's history of racial profiling and abuse and the pleading of fearful students.

Montgomery County schools fail to meet national recommendations for the number of counselors or school psychologists, however, bringing police back is being prioritized over providing mental health support for students.

What Do Students Need?

Young People for Progress, along with other community organizations, is advocating for the following changes:

1. **Complete removal of police from schools**
2. **Fully staffed counselors and social workers**
3. **Restorative justice programs in every school**

Sources:

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