



**A RESOLUTION
-TO-
DENOUNCE AND MITIGATE THE OVERREACH OF POLICE ACTIVITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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WHEREAS, in the wake of the 2020 “Black Lives Matter” protests, Santa Rosa City School Board members voted to terminate the use of SROs (School Resource Officers) on public school properties, under the grounds of excessive use of juvenile policing.

WHEREAS, a recent incident at Montgomery High School has reignited the debate around SROs throughout Sonoma County while not taking into account the trauma from the Covid years and returning to the interactive school environment after a long absence.

WHEREAS, students have repeatedly asked for more adult presence in the form of on-campus mental health resources, social workers, and restorative justice facilitators (which have a proven record of success in Santa Rosa – though not yet fully implemented or given sufficient financial support) and have yet to ask for a return to SROs

WHEREAS, students across Sonoma County have now taken to the streets to demand more involvement in how safety is defined on their campuses.

CONCERNED, the priority of funding schools has turned to SRO programs instead of support staff such as counselors, school psychologists, social workers, restorative justice facilitators, etc. which as a result has negatively impacted student well-being and contributed to the rise of violence in school campuses, as well as the disproportionate referrals to law enforcement for students of color with the highest rates of referrals among Black, Native American/American Indian, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander girls.

EMPHASIZING, a report conducted by the Sonoma County Youth Action Coalition in December 2020, found roughly 74% of students surveyed have had uncomfortable interactions with SROs while at school; cited study by the US Department of Education that over 60% of referrals to law enforcement SROs are towards Hispanic students; and a lack of regard towards students with mental or learning disabilities.

EMPHASIZING, an article published by the Bohemian states, “SRO deployment is not correlated with a reduction in school crimes. Instead, SROs have been shown to disproportionately detain and arrest Black and brown students, while failing to defend schools against attacks.”

EMPHASIZING, if schools are to be safe environments, a consideration that police do not represent safety to our marginalized communities must be acknowledged as only 54% of SROs are trained in interacting with students with disabilities, and fewer than 40% have received training in understanding child trauma and further contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline.

¹ “COPS AND NO COUNSELORS How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students.” *ACLU*, <https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline/cops-and-no-counselors>.

² “The Case to Defund the Sonoma Valley SRO Program.” <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nv3oeEjOFlvA06yuRk7srPV-6svStEuC/view>.

³ Giotis, Michael. “Open Mic: Campus Cops Wouldn’t Fix Santa Rosa Schools’ Problems.” *The Bohemian*, March 7, 2023. <https://bohemian.com/open-mic-campus-cops/>.

⁴ Venet, Alex S. 2021. *Equity-Centered Trauma-Informed Education*. W.W. Norton & Company.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sonoma County Democratic Party hereby fully supports the California Democratic Party platform *and advocates for the replacement of sworn peace officers in schools with qualified non-police personnel who are trained to work with children and teenagers, who understand that the use of force against students is unacceptable, who recognize and address persistent issues of bias such as institutional racism and ableism in all school systems, and who understand the need for increased empathy over potential atypical reactions from students with disabilities; have schools recognize and eliminate policies and practices that feed the unjust school-to-prison pipeline: including institutional racism and ableism, zero tolerance policies, criminalizing childhood behavior, use of law enforcement with students of color and students with disabilities, the use of exclusionary punishment such as detentions, suspensions, expulsions, and the use of any type of student restraint procedures and devices*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sonoma County Democratic Party joins other community organizations in calling for student advisory councils to be formed to directly engage administrators and school boards on the issue of student safety.

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sonoma County Democratic Party advocates for and centers the voices of our youth who demand immediate changes to be made in regards to further funding mental health services in schools and by any means providing additional support for teachers, counselors, and all other school staff with the necessary resources to address adverse childhood trauma and incorporation of trauma-informed practices that promote equity and justice for all students.

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sonoma County Democratic Party hereby recommends that candidates endorsed by the SCDP support the resolution that no SROs be allowed on school campuses and will continue to advocate for student and support services as outlined in the California State Democratic Party platform.

Appendix

ACLU's full report and recommendations on "Cops and No Counselors"

https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf

The Sonoma County Democratic Party (SCDP / Sonoma County Democratic Central Committee) is the official governing body of the Democratic Party in Sonoma County. The SCDP works in cooperation with the California Democratic Party (CDP) and the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Public meetings of the Sonoma County Democratic Party are open to all registered Democrats.

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