

**DRAFT: RESOLUTION REGARDING PROPER VERSUS IMPROPER  
USES OF FORCE, SRO'S AND POLICE  
BY THE WAUKEGAN COMMUNITY UNIT #60 SCHOOL DISTRICT**

June 18, 2020

WHEREAS, the Board of Education should welcome data and peer-reviewed studies in making determinations that affect the well-being of students and all members of the educational environment in Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District; and

WHEREAS, the President of the Board of Education expressed an interest in reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding with the local law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the PURPOSE of a community advisory committee is to provide advice and guidance to the Board of Education from voices other than those of the superintendent; and

WHEREAS, across the country at this time there is a rising awareness of the abuse of police authority; and

WHEREAS, improper actions by SROs and by safety officers or security staff demonstrate abuses of power and governmental authority by the Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District through its employees and the agents to whom the School District has conferred authority; and

WHEREAS, students of color have been **victims of improper use of force by law enforcement officers who answer to the administrators of Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District** or to the Waukegan Police Department; and

WHEREAS, “there is *no evidence to show that expanding law enforcement by adding SROs actually results in safer schools,*” (emphasis added) according to Marc Schindler, head of the Justice Policy Institute in an NPR report by Cheryl Corley on March 18, 2018; and

WHEREAS, that report continues, “Schindler says research shows [that police in schools] bring plenty of unintended consequences for students. He says that includes higher rate of suspensions, expulsions and arrests that funnel kids into the criminal justice system. That’s especially true, he says, in schools attended predominantly by students of color;” and

WHEREAS, “increasing investments in school resource officers does not lead to safer schools;” according to [a Brookings Institution] study (<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2018/11/08/does-more-policing-make-middle-schools-safer/>); and

WHEREAS, according to the Brookings Institution study, whether students feel safer in schools with SROs was more predictable based on student experiences at school. For example, “females,

African-American students, and students who have experienced various forms of school violence, such as fights, arguments, bullying, or religious teasing, reported feeling less safe in schools, even though SROs were present;” and

WHEREAS, “there are also countless viral videos from around the country of SROs physically abusing youth for minor incidents, some of which have led to lawsuits and now permeate the minds of young adolescents;” quoted from Brookings Institution, and

WHEREAS, at **Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District a safety officer pushed a student into a wall** on February 19, 2020, with no apparent consequence to the officer who was in no danger at the time of that officer’s aggression, according to the narrative (where the safety officer escalated the tension of the situation and had provoked the student into a physical altercation with the officer); and

WHEREAS, **physical aggression by an officer** resulted in a suspension for the student but no consequence to the officer; “Student \_\_\_ was in ### at bell for advisory and then walked out with a friend to get into room ###. \_\_\_ said no, go to class, and student proceeded to walk down 8<sup>th</sup> hall. I told student no, bell rang, he needed to get into class. Security saw, and **blocked his way** and said go to class. Student then said fuck off, \_\_\_ to security. Father was notified of behavior and that referral would be submitted,” stated the administrator who made the report for January 17, 2020; and

WHEREAS, teachers escalate problems by use of security staff and force instead of use of classroom management skills; for example, an administrator narrated in the February 18, 2020, suspension report, “Student would not comply with a reasonable request to move his seat in order to avoid the distraction of where he was sitting. He was asked multiple times and chose not to follow teacher instructions. A security guard came in the room to help with the situation. As he was removing the student from the class, the student said \_\_\_[expletive] two times;” (no information is included in the report to explain what prompted the guard to enter the room or what steps were being taken to remove the student) and

WHEREAS, an officer in plainclothes on a WPS campus who did not self-identify as a police officer furtively followed a parent and that parent’s companion to gather intelligence about their private conversation and reported it to the dean as a threat against the dean that could be used in a police report; and

WHEREAS, on March 2, 2020, school staff involved “security” in a matter involving disrespect noting after disrespectful comments were made, “I asked her to leave the classroom, quite calmly. She got up, slammed the door and walked out. I called security to bring her down, because she was hanging out in \_\_\_ doorway. . . . Asked security to get my green slip, but they never did.” Weekly Suspension Reports; and

WHEREAS, a student skipping class should not trigger the use of safety officers and may not be a security issue, but March 4, 2020, a student was hiding underneath a lunch table; “she was skipping . . . science class. Security made multiple attempts to get student to come out from underneath the table. . .” Weekly Suspension Reports; and

WHEREAS, officers who work within Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District have continually acted either on their own initiative or at the direction of administrators or school staff in ways that are **deleterious to the educational environment of students**; and

WHEREAS, “Nationwide, black students made up 17 percent of enrollment in schools that referred students to law enforcement, but were 26 percent of students who were referred, the analysis found. Referrals, which are more common than arrests, are broadly defined as any time a student is reported to any law enforcement agency or official ‘regardless of whether official action is taken,’ according to the federal data set. Referrals can include citations, court referrals, and, in some cases, arrests;” reported Education Week, January, 2017; and

WHEREAS, that report from Education Week goes on to state, “All of these findings mirror a host of **persistent disparities for students of color, including higher rates of school suspension**, less exposure to experienced educators, and lower likelihood of access to rigorous coursework” (emphasis added); and

WHEREAS, Education Week on June 17, 2016, presented data that “Black and Latino students are still more likely to be suspended, more likely to attend schools with high concentrations of inexperienced teachers, and less likely to have access to rigorous and advanced coursework than their white peers, according to the data released today by the U.S. Department of Education;” and

WHEREAS, the Illinois State Board of Education has demanded that Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District address with a proposal the disparities in suspensions that are revealed by the data showing disproportionality in exclusion from the classroom suffered by Black boys; and

WHEREAS, Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District as a governmental public body continues to work more cooperatively with the Waukegan Police Department than with the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee as reflected in signature forms for the release of directory information that are provided on an opt-out basis for law enforcement yet not at all provided for the community committee that advocates for students, parents, guardians, and families of this community; and

WHEREAS, this Board of Education and its administration, in defiance of the School Code, have refused to answer questions asked internally by the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee about policies and practices of information-sharing with the Waukegan Police Department; and

WHEREAS, the FOIA officer has, in defiance of the Freedom of Information Act, denied requests regarding the policies and practices of information-sharing with the Waukegan Police Department; and

WHEREAS, Black boys have been recipients of a disproportionate amount of discipline by administrators of Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District; and

WHEREAS, Black boys who are students at Waukegan Community Unit #60 School District have been consistently shown to perform below grade-level and below the state standards; and

WHEREAS, administrators for the school district have offered no guidelines for police officers who serve in the district; and

WHEREAS, parents and guardians are not advised as to the legal result to them and their children of waiving their privacy through the release of information to the police department; and

WHEREAS, the mistreatment of students as inmates instead of as students creates an atmosphere that is not conducive to learning; and

WHEREAS, costs of SRO's take resources from education and, as reported in CS Monitor on January 27, 2017, and as a review of any budget in a district that pays police officers as SRO's; and

WHEREAS, most of the incidents included herein represent evidence of a culture that welcomes force, abuse, and intolerance toward students (as administrators made notes of these incidents not in reports or complaints regarding staff but in reports of student misbehavior) in documenting suspensions; and

WHEREAS, the consistent hiring of teachers whose explicit fear of Black and Brown students adds to an intolerably racist environment that is exacerbated by the aggressively prisonlike administration of the entire district;

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee respectfully requests that the Board of Education:**

1. Review internally and with PTAC on a line-by-line basis all memoranda of understanding with law enforcement agencies; and
2. Work with the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee to develop goals and guidelines for any information-sharing with law enforcement agencies; and
3. Direct the administration to remove authorization any security or safety workers from access to Infinite Campus or any student records or information; and
4. Impose clear guidelines, limitations, and boundaries for all administrators regarding the use of security or safety personnel of any type; and

5. Direct its administrators to explain with specificity the practical effect of the release of directory information to the Waukegan Police Department or to any law enforcement agency to which parents or guardians agree by failing to opt-out—in particular, the administrators should identify a range of situations for which that release would be required for the school district or for the government to effectively serve the community; and
6. Direct administrators to work with PTAC to establish training requirements for all safety personnel; and
7. Direct administrators to provide supplemental academic enrichment programs dedicated to Black and Brown students on all campuses that maintain security or safety workers; and
8. Provide that the funds toward supplemental academic enrichment programs match, at a minimum, the funds expended toward security or safety; and
9. Remove all security personnel whose work has devolved into henchmen for principals or administrators—thus eroding trust with students; and
10. Direct the administration to require all officers that come to campus for any reason to wear police uniforms on campus and not “soft clothes” or khakis and polo shirts that have police department insignia.