

Resolution 2021R-003

By Directors Phillips and Taylor

WHEREAS, The Milwaukee Public Schools for many years has contracted with the Milwaukee Police Department for School Resource Officers (SROs), the original intent of which was that they would be deployed in schools to respond proactively in the event of an emergencies or other situations requiring a police presence; and

WHEREAS, Milwaukee Public Schools and the Milwaukee Police Department have been collaborating since 2005 to provide a police presence at high schools between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. to provide dedicated patrol and presence at such school-related events as dismissal, social/sports events, gatherings of outsiders, etc.; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Statutes, §119.55, Youth service centers, truancy abatement and burglary suppression, states as follows,

(1) (a) The [school] board shall establish one or more youth service centers for the counseling of children who are taken into custody under s. 938.19 (1) (d) 10. for being absent from school without an acceptable excuse under s. 118.15. The board shall contract with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee for the operation of the centers.

(b) The board shall establish 2 youth service centers under par. (a).

(2) The board shall pay the city a sum sufficient to pay the costs of salaries and fringe benefits of 4 law enforcement officers to work on truancy abatement and burglary suppression on a full-time basis.

WHEREAS, The Milwaukee Board of School Directors has declared that, as part of the vision of the Milwaukee Public Schools (Board Governance Policy BG 1.01 and Administrative Policy 1.01)

Schools will be safe, welcoming, well-maintained, and accessible community centers meeting the needs of all. Relevant, rigorous, and successful instructional programs will be recognized and replicated. The district and its schools will collaborate with students, families, and the community for the benefit of all; and

WHEREAS, Of 74,633 students in MPS in 2018-19, 89.9% (approximately 67,095) were students of color; and

WHEREAS, Research has shown that Black students are disproportionately more likely to come into contact with police in their neighborhoods than are other students; and

WHEREAS, Research has also shown that increased exposure of our students to police can have an effect on student performance due to the implications of the police presence that already exists in the communities in which they live; and

WHEREAS, The recent violent deaths of Alvin Cole, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, all African-American citizens, has re-ignited long-time fears and resentments about the attitudes of police departments across the United States toward African-Americans and other peoples of color; and

WHEREAS, Research has long proven that reduced classroom sizes, restorative practices, engaging culturally relevant curriculum, and mental health supports, do create safe, healthy, and joyful learning environments;

WHEREAS, In May of 2015, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors adopted Resolution 1516R-001, otherwise known as the Black Lives Matter Resolution, directing that

- our district and schools and classrooms create safe spaces for dialog and support on issues faced in communities and schools related to policing, the educational process, and improving school safety;
- quality restorative justice practices be expanded and deepened district-wide, with the goal of training all staff in those practices;
- the district create an advisory council comprising community, parents, educators, and student to assist in reviewing, strengthening, and creating curriculum and policy related to the issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement, the efforts to derail the school-to-prison pipeline, the broader historical experience of the Black community, and present schooling experience;
- the above advisory council shall assist in implementing policy and curriculum and establishing quality dialog with staff, parents, students, and community;
- student leaders of all types be called on to participate in advancing this discussion and implementation;
- the effort includes discussions of biases, racial microaggressions, school-wide data on race and discipline, fears, cultural ignorance, and stereotypes of Black youth; and be it
- these discussions lead to training of school staffs in methods of de-escalation, mindfulness, creating a culture of trust, and cultural relevance;
- one of the goals of this process is be to strengthen bringing community into our schools and to strengthen schools as centers of support for communities; and
- the district reviews its programs that may be contributing to unfair, unequal power relationships with community and school policing;

WHEREAS; In July of 2019, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors adopted Resolution 1920R-001, regarding Restorative Practices, directing that

- MPS shall train all staff and students in selected cohort schools over a five-year period in restorative mindset and the use and application of Restorative Practices and ongoing training will continue to be offered to other interested district staff; a
- That MPS shall develop a centrally located Restorative Practices Team, comprising four full-time Restorative Practice Coaches, who work in coordination with the Equity Specialist, the Violence Prevention Team and the departments of Black & Latino Male Achievement, Curriculum & Instruction, Research, Assessment & Data, School Safety, Strategic Partnerships & Customer Service and Student Services to support a cohort of schools in implementing a whole-school approach, to provide training and coaching in the use of materials and resources;
- That this team shall collaborate with the Equity Specialist, the Violence Prevention Team and the departments of Black & Latino Male Achievement, Curriculum & Instruction, Research, Assessment & Data, School Safety, Strategic Partnerships & Customer Service and Student Services to review and develop discipline practices, policies, and procedures that shall incorporate the restorative framework in all of our systems related to behavior, culture, and classroom and school management; and

WHEREAS; we are uncertain of the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the MPS district's funding and are requiring the prioritization of funding towards resources needed to make schools safe; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Milwaukee Board of School Directors terminates immediately all contracts with the Milwaukee Police Department for the services of School Resource Officers and other personnel; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Milwaukee Board of School Directors directs the Superintendent to cease any further negotiations with the Milwaukee Police Department for the services of School Resource Officers and other personnel; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That that the Board of Directors directs the Superintendent to cease any contracts to buy or maintain criminalizing equipment including metal detectors, facial recognition software and social media monitoring software

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Milwaukee Board of School Directors directs the Superintendent to develop recommendations for utilizing money previous allocated for contract for serving and protecting the safety of the District's students, with implementation to begin immediately with the 2020-21 school year; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That this plan is to be developed in cooperation with the advisory council established by the Black Lives Matter Resolution, the MPS Restorative Practices team, the City of Milwaukee's Office of Violence Prevention, community partners such as the Running Rebels Violence Free Zone teams, and any other community-based organizations who may provide valuable input into the process; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Superintendent is to present these recommendations to the Board for its approval by the August 2020 board cycle; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board directs its Governmental Relations Services to lobby the Wisconsin Legislature and the Governor to repeal Wis. Stat. §119.55.

*June 11, 2020*