No Police in Schools:

A Vision for Safe and Supportive Schools in CA

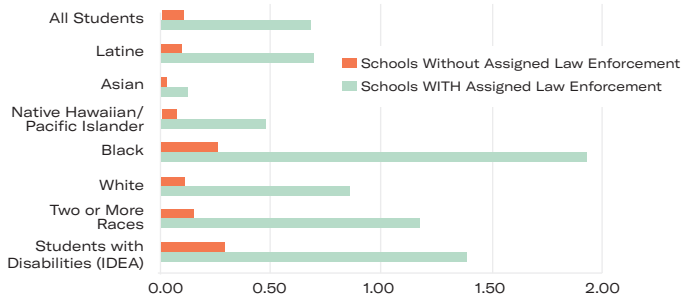
ACLU AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATIONS California

Read the full report at **aclusocal.org/no-police-in-schools**

Over the past few decades, police have become a dominant fixture in California schools. Their presence has devastating and discriminatory impacts on tens of thousands of California students. Policing in the U.S. has historical roots in slave patrols, which violently abducted Black people who escaped enslavement, and in the forced dislocation of Indigenous youth to "boarding schools" designed to erase their cultural ties. As communities across the country came together to reevaluate the role of police in enacting racism in the wake of George Floyd's murder by police officers, youth activists continued to advocate to remove police from schools. Since then, school districts in Oakland, Los Angeles, Pomona, and Claremont, among others, have fully eliminated or made progress towards eliminating school police.

The report, "No Police in Schools," analyzes school police data from the U.S. Department of Education's 2017-18 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), the 2019 California Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) Stops dataset, and data from Stockton Unified School District on police in schools. The data conclusively show harmful and discriminatory policing patterns in schools. School police contribute to the criminalization of tens of thousands of California students, resulting in school pushout and harmful contact with juvenile carceral systems for many. Critically, the data suggest that schools underreport the number of assigned law enforcement officers, so these problems are likely even more severe.

Figure 1.
Arrest Rates in Schools With and Without Assigned Law Enforcement



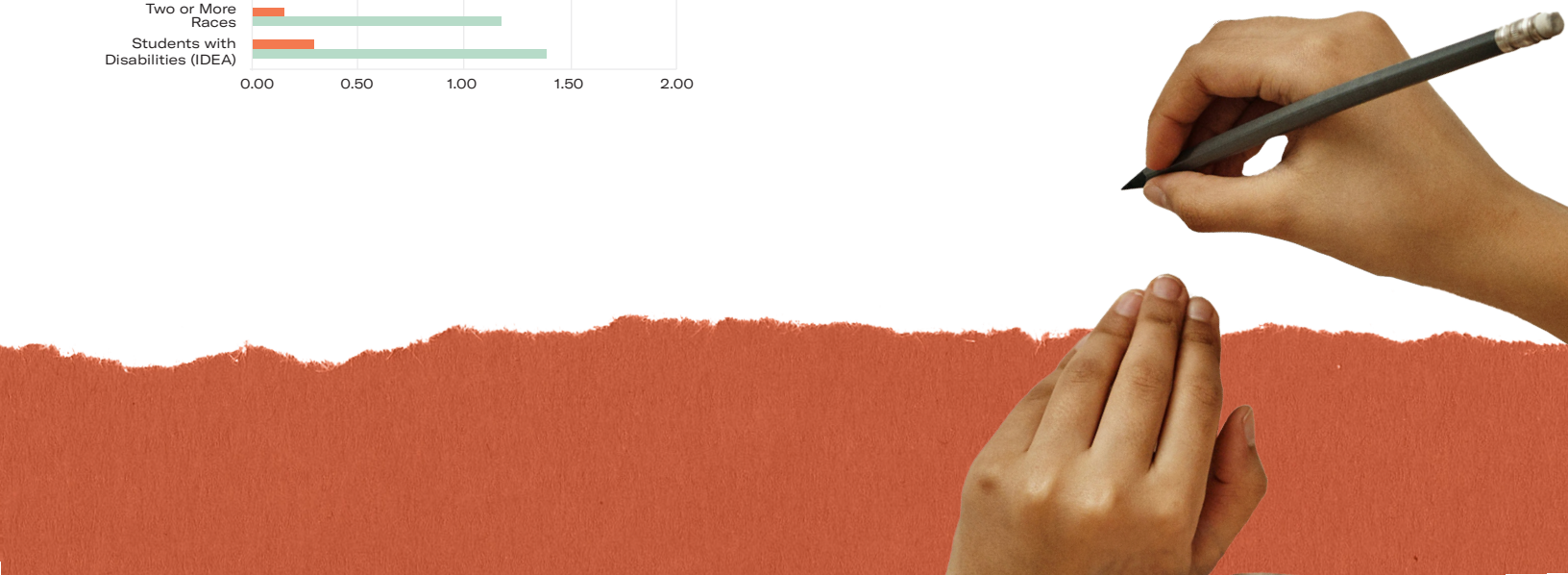
KEY FINDINGS

Students were far more vulnerable to arrest and referrals to police in schools with assigned law enforcement than in schools without.

- Black students' arrest rates are **7.4x** higher in schools with assigned law enforcement than in schools without, and their law enforcement referral rates are **4.7x** higher.
- Latine students' arrest rates are **6.9x** higher in schools with assigned law enforcement than in schools without, and their law enforcement referral rates are **4.4x** higher.
- Students with disabilities' arrest rates are **4.6x** higher in schools with assigned law enforcement than in schools without, and their law enforcement referral rates are **4.8x** higher.

School police disproportionately arrest and cite Black students, Latine boys, and students with disabilities.

- Black students are **3x** more likely to be referred to law enforcement compared to white students.
- Black girls are **6%** of California's female student population but **18%** of female student arrests.
- Latine boys are **28%** of California's students but **44%** of student arrests.
- Students with disabilities are **11%** of California's students but **26%** of student arrests.
- Black and Latine boys with disabilities are **5%** of California's students but **13%** of referrals to law enforcement and **15%** of school arrests.



TOP DISTRICTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT REFERRAL RATES

1. Dublin Unified
2. Moreno Valley Unified
3. Bret Harte Union High
4. Hanford Joint Union High
5. Upper Lake Unified
6. Sausalito Marin City
7. Santa Ynez Valley Union High
8. Apple Valley Unified
9. Chowchilla Union High
10. Lassen Union High

CASE STUDY: STOCKTON USD

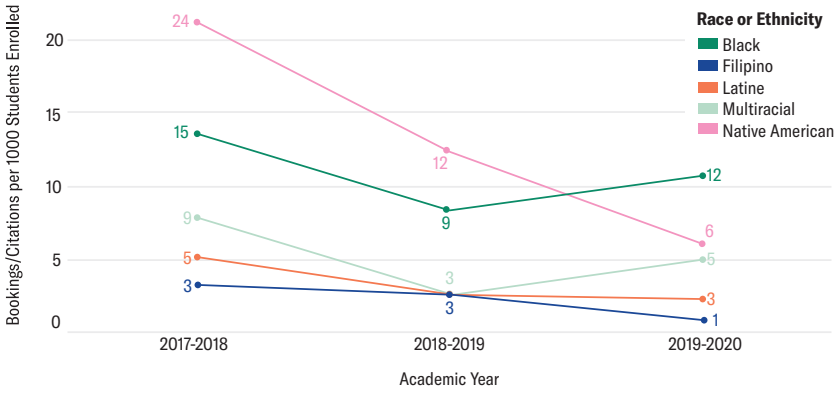
Stockton Unified School is instructive as a case study of the devastating and discriminatory impacts of school police. It took years of advocacy to obtain the data, and they show deep inequities in the district.

Figure 6.
Bookings/Citations per 1000 Students Enrolled, 2019-2020

Calculated by number of bookings and citations (from PRA data, Student Arrests and Referrals to Police) divided by students enrolled in that racial/ethnic group, times 1000 for academic year 2019-20. Total enrollment numbers pulled from CA Dataquest. This includes individuals who were booked/cited more than once. Rounded to nearest decimal point.

Data analysis by the Social Movement Support Lab.

Figure 7.
Yearly Trends: Bookings/Citations per 1000 Students Enrolled in Stockton USD by Race/Ethnicity, 2017-2020



From Student Arrests and Referrals to Police, PRA Data. Calculated as number of incidents/bookings per 1000 students enrolled in academic years 2017, 2018, and 2019. Total enrollment pulled from Dataquest. Numbers rounded to nearest whole number. Not all racial groups included for purposes of visualization.

Data analysis and visualization by the Social Movement Support Lab.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No school in California should have assigned law enforcement officers. School districts should not be able to create their own police departments or reserve forces, nor should they coordinate with any outside law enforcement agency to station law enforcement on a school campus.

To achieve justice for our youth and to provide them with the education they deserve, we must reevaluate the entire system: reimagining safety without police and school hardening measures, reinvesting in the positive supports that actually help our students, and fundamentally changing the culture of our schools.