



# DIGNITY IN SCHOOLS

Dignity in Schools Campaign-NY (DSC-NY) is a citywide multi-stakeholder coalition of 23 organizations working for education justice and an end to the school to prison pipeline. We believe that New York City has an opportunity to be a leader in the U.S. by investing in practices that support young people and divesting from practices that criminalize them. **Mayor Bill de Blasio's Fiscal Year 2020 preliminary budget proposes to grow the NYPD's School Safety Division by more than \$27 million from previous budget plans -- amounting to over \$314 million, the largest proposed budget for the division in its history. It costs the city over \$746 million a year to criminalize students<sup>1</sup>. New York can do better. DSC-NY has a vision for smarter, more just spending that positively impacts NYC's young people.**

## DSC-NY FY20 Budget Demands: Divest from NYPD and Invest in Support

### Guidance Counselors and Social Workers in Every School

Guidance counselors and social workers prevent and address behavioral issues, de-escalate crises, and resolve conflict. Currently the city only has 2,787 full-time guidance counselors and 1,279 full-time social workers, and many schools have no full-time guidance counselor or social worker. NYC is capable of ensuring **one social worker and one guidance counselor per 150 students for most schools, and one per 50 students for high needs schools.**

#### How to get there:

- In order to achieve these ratios, the DOE must hire 4,578 additional guidance counselors and 6,129 additional social workers over five years.
- DSC-NY recommends divesting from the NYPD's school safety budget, which is over \$300 million, and investing in guidance counselors and social workers.
- Five-year divestment plan:
  - \$162.3 million<sup>2</sup> more a year for five years
  - Hire guidance counselors: \$54.2 million more each year for five years
  - Hire social workers: \$108.1 million more each year for five years

### Citywide Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is proven to create positive school climates and reduce suspensions. In the 2017-2018 school year, 85.12% of students suspended were Black and Latinx, although Black and Latinx students made up only 66.5% of the student population. While the use of restorative practices in NYC schools has expanded over the last few years, **now is the time to embrace this approach that builds community and addresses harm as we work to end these racial disparities in discipline.**

#### How to get there:

- Signal a bold new approach to safety for all students and invest \$56.4 million more each year in schools:
  - \$30 million<sup>3</sup> to support and expand existing restorative justice initiatives citywide.
  - \$26.4 million<sup>4</sup> more every year over five years to allow schools to hire restorative justice (RJ) staff or support restorative justice efforts such as developing RJ curriculum with teachers and students, holding RJ classes and/or having a monthly RJ advisory (8.6% of the NYPD's school safety budget).

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<sup>1</sup> Urban Youth Collaborative. The \$746 Million a Year School-to-Prison Pipeline: The Ineffective, Discriminatory, and Costly Process of Criminalizing New York City Students (2017). Each year, an additional \$162.3 million would add roughly 2,100 counselors and social workers in schools. After 5 years, the total annual cost of the new staff would be \$811.4 million a year.

<sup>2</sup> Urban Youth Collaborative. The \$746 Million a Year School-to-Prison Pipeline: The Ineffective, Discriminatory, and Costly Process of Criminalizing New York City Students (2017). 39.

<sup>3</sup> The DOE estimates that it will cost \$30 million to support and expand existing restorative justice training and implementation citywide.

<sup>4</sup> \$120,000 per Restorative justice coordinator, which includes benefits and training. Each year, an additional \$26.4 million would add roughly 220 restorative coordinators in schools. After 5 years, the total annual cost of staff would be \$132 million a year.