Suspension of the Rules at First Reading/Adoption

Subject: Resolution No. 206-23A3

In Support of Black Lives in SFUSD and the Abolition of Armed Law Enforcement in Schools
#BlackLivesMatter #DefundThePolice #InvestInCommunities #BlackMindsMatter
- Commissioners Alison M. Collins, Mark Sanchez, and Jenny Lam

WHEREAS: In the wake of the brutal murder of Breonna Taylor on March 13, 2020 by Louisville, KY police officers and George Floyd by Minneapolis, MN police officers on May 25, 2020, and as a result of the persistent extrajudicial murders and deaths of innocent Black citizens in the United States at the hands of police officers, widespread national protests have erupted articulating demands for justice and an end anti-Black racism; and

WHEREAS: Specifically a demand to “Defund the Police” has emerged, referring at least in part to defunding armed response from law enforcement and investing in life affirming services to build healthy communities that include health services, housing and education and invest in community led and centered public safety; and

WHEREAS: On June 11, Mayor Breed announced a number of public safety reforms which prioritize: 1) demilitarizing the police; 2) ending the use of police in response to non-criminal activity; 3) addressing police bias and strengthening accountability; and 4) redirecting funding for racial equity. In service of these goals, the Mayor has pledged to redirect funding away from the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) and toward the Black community, and has directed the City to design a process for screening for bias in hiring and promotion of law enforcement officials; and

WHEREAS: For over a decade, Coleman Advocates for Children & Youth, SFUSD African American Parent Advisory Council leaders, the SFUSD Student Advisory Council, parents, students, educators and other community groups have pressured the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to address its role in the school to prison pipeline, specifically through its relationship with the SFPD through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that has often been debated and changed significantly each renewal to minimize the role of police on school campuses as a result of public outcry about harmful interactions between police and school communities, namely Thurgood Marshall Academic High School and Balboa High school; and

WHEREAS: The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has an obligation to promote the healthy development of each and every one of its students, which includes protecting them from the impact of systemic racism and violence to the greatest extent possible while they are at school; and

WHEREAS: SFUSD plays an integral role in shaping the lives of our youth, and thus our nation’s future; and

WHEREAS: SFUSD is deeply committed to affirming the lives of our students and has been changing our institutional culture to align with that commitment and undo the normalization of inferiority and bias, as evidenced by the Equity Studies Resolution, the Undocumented and Unafraid Resolution, and the Safe and Supportive Schools Resolution; and

WHEREAS: SFUSD has a long record of disproportionately suspending, expelling, involuntarily transferring and arresting and “pushing out” Black students, thereby involving them in the criminal justice system while students lose important time from the classroom; and
WHEREAS: During the 2016-17 and 2017-18 School Year, Black students made up less than 9% of the enrollment and yet made up 44% of arrests, citations, and detentions by SFPD; and

WHEREAS: The perpetuation of the school-to-prison pipeline is incompatible with our goal of creating safe, healthy, and equitable schools for all SFUSD students; and

WHEREAS: Evidenced by school districts across the country, there are multiple resources and pathways to ensuring school safety that the SFUSD has already began employing, such as Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice; and

WHEREAS: The City and County of San Francisco funds and supports youth violence prevention programs that are an alternative to police intervention, such as the School Unit of the Street Violence Intervention Program (SVIP), albeit at a funding level that is not adequate to serve all schools; and

WHEREAS: The overwhelming majority of the incidents that resulted in students being introduced into the criminal justice system at such a young age could have been more effectively addressed by school personnel, restorative practices, or other community-based services; and

WHEREAS: Calling the police on parents, giving out stay-away orders, and threatening parents with staff grievances have been used to intimidate and disenfranchise parents, and especially Black parents and parents of color from accessing their rights in California Education Codes Article 1. General Provisions [51100 - 51101] which states “parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools have the right and should have the opportunity, as mutually supportive and respectful partners in the education of their children within the public schools, to be informed by the school, and to participate in the education of their children” These rights also include the right to “a school environment for their child that is safe and supportive of learning.” and

WHEREAS: Despite these rights granted by the State of CA, Black families and families of color often express concern that they are not informed when their children are victims of school violence, they are not notified when staff investigates school discipline issues involving their children, their children do not feel physically, emotionally or culturally safe and valued in their schools, and they do not feel they are treated as “respectful partners in the education of their children”; and

WHEREAS: On May 20, 2020 the San Francisco Police Commission adopted Resolution 20-19 calling for revision to Department General Order 5.17 “Bias Free Policing Policy” which calls on members to use “critical decision-making skills to assess whether there is criminal conduct while being cognizant of racial and identity profiling, implicit bias and bias by proxy, which occurs when “individuals call the police and make false or ill-informed claims of misconduct about persons they dislike or are biased against based on explicit racial and identity profiling or implicit bias.”
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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board declares schools a sanctuary space from law enforcement and directs the Superintendent and all staff to not cooperate, facilitate the criminalization of any of our students, families or staff by federal, state or local law enforcement on school campuses; and to ensure the physical and emotional safety of our students, all staff are directed to do everything legally possible to protect children from witnessing or being subject to engagement with federal, state or local law enforcement on school grounds.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the SFUSD will not renew its MOU with SFPD and will provide clear sanctuary policy and protocols, that are developmentally appropriate, thoughtful of secondary trauma to youth being witness to engagement with law enforcement, with clear guidelines for what engagement with law enforcement looks like, in developmentally appropriate ways, and that respect the due process and human rights of children. These policies and protocols will be reviewed annually before schools start by all SFUSD staff, for engaging.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That SFUSD will not allow an armed presence of any kind on school grounds and recognize children have the right to go to school in environments that are not akin to prisons. In the event law enforcement is needed on school grounds, interactions will be limited as much as possible to only adult staff and scheduled before or after school, with no or as few children as possible present, and if students are involved, law enforcement will only be involved after parents/caregivers and the Public Defender’s office are notified.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board directs the Superintendent to reallocate any funds previously used to pay for law enforcement services of any kind be directed toward student support services such as school-based social workers, psychologists, restorative justice practitioners, or other mental or behavioral health professionals, as the budget supports, to meet the needs of students.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board directs the Superintendent to conduct a comprehensive review of SFUSD’s social-emotional supports, mental and behavioral health services, wraparound supports to meet students developmental needs, and specifically its support for implementation of restorative practices, at each school, and to report to the Board by December 31, 2020 in preparation for full implementation during the 2021-22 school year of a robust system of supports and restorative practices designed to ensure that each SFUSD school has adequate staff resources and training to handle conflict or other challenging behaviors, and to provide students with the support they need to thrive as positive community members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board will direct the Superintendent to lead a process, with parent and community input to revise the District School Safety Plan, without the current level of reliance on law enforcement to handle school conflicts at school sites between staff and parents or youth, with strategies for enhancing student learning, safety, and well-being within the SFUSD and to bring the plan back to the Board for final approval by the first Board Meeting in September.
FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education directs the superintendent to work with UESF, SEIU & UASF to recommend a racial bias and prejudice screening assessment tools to be administered to all employees for the purpose of guiding hiring decisions for new hires, evaluation and guiding professional development opportunities for all staff. The report of options considered and recommendations will be brought back to the Board of Education for final approval by December 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The Board of Education directs SFUSD labor relations to work with UESF to create a Community School Coordinator position to work with students, families and site staff to do needs assessment and coordinate district, city and community resources to support Safe and Supportive Schools.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That SFUSD, Department of Public Health (DPH), and Human Service Agency (HSA), will work together and establish the necessary liaisons to revise policies and protocols ensuring that students’ and families’ needs are met without police contact. This group will present findings and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and Board of Education so that policy and protocols across the city may be aligned to eliminate police contact with families for non-criminal activities and for many activities which may be better resolved without police or criminal justice contact.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board encourages the City and County of San Francisco to divest from policing and law enforcement and invest in additional community-based solutions, SFUSD and infrastructure that supports the health and wellness of our students, their families and communities. As a part of this infrastructure, the Board requests the City and County of SF provide adequate funding for SFUSD to fund Community School Coordinators who can bring needed district, community and city services to youth, families in the public schools that serve them. They will serve as liaisons with community-based violence prevention, mentoring and youth development organizations, public health agencies, mental health support services and district support staff including, but not limited to school-based social workers, psychologists, restorative justice practitioners, or other mental or behavioral health professionals within SFUSD.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board strongly encourages the City and County of San Francisco to redirect funds allocated to SFPD to dramatically increase funding and capacity of its existing Street Violence Intervention Program (SVIP Crisis Response Unit), Municipal Transit Assistance Program (MTAP), Ambassadors Program or another similar violence prevention programs, so that all school administrators in SFUSD have a non-law-enforcement resource they can call upon when situations at schools require a level of intervention and de-escalation that is beyond the training and capacity of school staff, and that the Board directs the Superintendent to direct site administrators to call upon this City-funded resources before contacting law enforcement whenever possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board strongly encourages the City and County of San Francisco to dramatically increase funding and capacity of neighborhood-based support services and social and emotional supports, so that they can actively partner with SFUSD schools in meeting the needs of our students. These resources include, but are not limited to organizations that address food and housing insecurity, mental health, youth development, and more.
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FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That SFUSD will work with the Public Defender's Office to inform both students and parents of their rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board requests the San Francisco Police Commission set policy and protocol about how to engage with school age children and parents and carry out their duties on school grounds in a developmentally appropriate and humanizing way including but not limited to: what calls for service to respond to, what constitutes abuse, and harassment, mandated reporting and consequences of failure to report for witnessing abuse (especially by fellow officers), the rights of children to a healthy and safe environment, and a code of conduct that guides their actions and is aligned with DGO 5.17 (listed above) which directs police officers use critical thinking to prevent their presence from being used by school staff as a proxy for individual bias, and directs the SPFD to educate and train all its officers and cadets on these policies and protocols.

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6/23/20