



ARISE

June 14, 2022

Opposition to House Bill #H8310

Hello, my name is Nancy Xiong and I am a lead organizer for the Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education (ARISE). I am a product of the Providence public school system and I am in opposition of the mandated two school resource officers (SRO's) in all public schools across Rhode Island.

There is no conclusive evidence that school resource officers make our schools any safer. Instead, the presence of SRO's has only been shown to lead to higher rates of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests. These punitive actions disproportionately impact Black and Brown students, LGBTQ+ students, and disabled students. In Providence Public Schools, the vast majority of arrests (about 92%) were of students of color. Black students make up 16% of overall PPSD enrollment and 30% of all student arrests. Nationally, Black students are arrested at a rate 3 times that of white students. In some states, they are 8 times as likely to be arrested. There are also over dozens of documented and, even more undocumented, incidents in the past decade in which SRO's have tasered, pepper sprayed, injured and used force on students to enact physical harm. All forms of violence, and criminalization of students must be stopped.

I stand in solidarity with PASS and their Counselors not Cops campaign because I believe that all students should have the right to safe, healthy, and equitable schools. Real safe, healthy and equitable schools promote and prioritize the mental health and well being of students through counselors, nurses and other social, emotional and physical health providers. Schools that employ these services see improved attendance rates, lower rates of suspensions and other disciplinary incidents, improved school safety and higher graduation rates. Without police in the halls.

In solidarity,

Nancy Xiong
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