

#CopsOutCPS IN PRACTICE:

**EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS' SCHOOL
RESOURCE OFFICER POLICY**

By:

Jackson Overton-Clark

jovertonclark@uchicago.edu



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Faculty Advisor: Maria Bautista
Public Policy Studies Preceptor: Kelsey Berryman

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ABSTRACT

School resource officers (SROs), police officers employed in public school districts as a part of school safety protocol, are widely criticized for their criminalization of student behavior and perpetuation of racist policing practices seen across the United States. In response to the #CopsOutCPS campaign to remove SROs from the Chicago Public School (CPS) district, CPS administration and the Illinois Board of Education passed a policy that allows individual schools to vote on their SRO status. Many previous studies have examined the criminalizing effect that the presence of SROs have on students, but there exists little research that explores what the absence of SROs means for a school. In this paper, I identify how CPS community members understand what removing SROs will do to their schools and their safety. I interview students, teachers, parents, administrators and local school council representatives from Chicago Public Schools to gauge their beliefs around school safety and what role, if any, SROs should have in it. I found that, while most interviewees were advocates for SRO removal, this sentiment was not unanimous. Those who believed the future of school safety involved SROs believed their role must drastically change. Participants also highlighted the role in which teachers play in surveillance and criminalization of student behavior and offered their alternatives to policing. Based on these findings, I offer recommendations for Chicago Public Schools and argue that the district should continue giving schools the choice in SRO status with the ultimate goal of making the SRO position obsolete through funding alternative school safety plans. The findings here may supplement the district's conversation on the future of school safety as the policy continues to take greater effect.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments2

Introduction..... 4

Literature Review..... 6

Background Context.....16

Data & Methods..... 19

Results/Findings..... 20

Policy Recommendations..... 45

Limitations/Future Research..... 48

Discussion/Conclusion..... 49

References.....54

Appendix..... 59

Introduction

The nation watched as a Black man lost his life by a knee on his neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds, reminding the world that police have “systematically inflicted violence against Black & Indigenous peoples across this continent” since the establishment of policing (Defund the Police 2022). When Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin killed George Floyd in the summer of 2020, the slogan “Defund The Police” emerged as a phrase rooted in a longtime call for city and federal governments to redirect money from police departments to alternative forms of community-based safety (Contreras 2022). While ignited by Floyd’s murder, the current movement is sustained by the hundreds of people who die from police violence every year. The movement’s supporters focus on removing police from their own institutions. Since police have a strong daily presence in many public schools nationally and create a level of constant surveillance not seen in most other social contexts, school districts have become a prominent location for anti-police campaigns (ILFPS 2022).

Sworn law enforcement officers, referred to as school resource officers (SROs), have been funded by the federal government for decades as an effort to increase school safety (Crosse et al. 2021). Today, as defined by the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, SROs work in collaboration with schools to educate students in crime and drug use prevention as well as train students in conflict resolution (James & McCallion 2013). However, in the context of the Defund The Police movement, SROs are criticized for linking students to the juvenile justice system, as they increase the criminalization of student behavior, especially of Black and brown students (Maddox 2016; Crosse et al. 2021).

The city of Chicago has become a prominent location for the fight against SRO deployment (ILFPS 2022) and, in 2020, the Illinois Board of Education passed a policy that

allows individual Chicago Public Schools to decide whether or not to keep their school resource officers (Masterson 2021). Plenty of research supports the beliefs of protesters who say that the use of SROs increases the criminalization of Chicago's students of color (Curran et al 2021; Morris 2021 Kupchik & Ward 2014; Gottfredson et al. 2020). However, little research has been done on how the absence of law enforcement affects students, as it is a fairly recent policy change that took effect in 2020. Therefore, in this paper, I aim to answer this question: What is the effect of the presence of school resource officers on the increased criminalization of student behavior, and subsequent feelings of student safety? More specific to the recent policy, how has the decision of select Chicago Public Schools to remove SROs affected the criminalization of their students and has it made them feel safer in their learning environment compared to their counterparts who chose to keep their officers? As my study progressed, my research was also led by the following question: How do CPS community members understand what removing SROs will do to their schools and their safety? The intention behind this additional question is to further understand the complexities around the movement to remove police and how opinions differ within and between interest groups (students, teachers, parents, administrators, etc.).

I argue for the continued removal of school resource officers from Chicago Public Schools and for the implementation of alternative measures for public school safety. Theories surrounding school safety evolved to include school resource officers as the primary security measure. However, over the past few decades since their implementation, SROs have garnered criticism for their criminalizing enforcement of zero tolerance policy and connection to the school-to-prison pipeline. For this specific Chicago context, this calls into question how a policy that allows school to replace the longtime security measure impacts the current CPS landscape.

To answer my research questions, I analyzed qualitative data from interviews I conducted with the Chicago Public School students, parents, administration and local school council (LSC) members. As the individuals most impacted by the new SRO policy and most directly involved in decision making, interviews with these CPS community members provided informative firsthand accounts crucial to analyzing the policy's effectiveness. I supplement the interviews with CPS Behavior Data detailing the reported use of exclusionary disciplinary and security measures, as well as reported incidents involving law enforcement.

Literature Review

What does it mean for schools to be safe?

Theories surrounding the questions of what makes school safe and the role in which law enforcement plays have been heavily debated over the past few decades. Many contend that school safety is heavily influenced by how American society views community safety. Professor David Garland (2001) posited that contemporary American society became more preoccupied with policing, punishment and imprisonment, shifting society away from being interested in rehabilitation to one that hoped to remove offenders completely. With public perceptions of failing schools and increasing school violence, there have been demands over the decades to treat schools similarly to the rest of society's violence (Bracy 2010).

As a result of these demands, surveillance and punishment became key components of school safety, causing a shift from inclusionary security measures to more exclusionary measures. Inclusionary measures (e.g. metal detectors) are thought to encourage students to behave in an orderly manner without singling out particular students while exclusionary measures (e.g. suspensions, expulsions) are more explicit, punitive and targeted towards those deemed dangerous (Kupchik & Ward 2014). Studies showed about 94% of American public

schools reporting controlled access to buildings, 81% reporting use of surveillance cameras, and 25% reporting use of drug-sniffing dogs (Mowen & Freng 2018). A significant amount also reported use of metal detectors, locker searches, and SROs (Mowen & Freng 2018). These physical measures are accompanied by the use of suspensions, expulsions and referrals of students to the juvenile justice system (Bracy 2010). While many public schools across the country still heavily rely on exclusionary discipline as a means of safety, it is important to understand how schools reached this point and how theories behind what keeps schools safe have evolved.

History of Zero Tolerance Policy In Schools

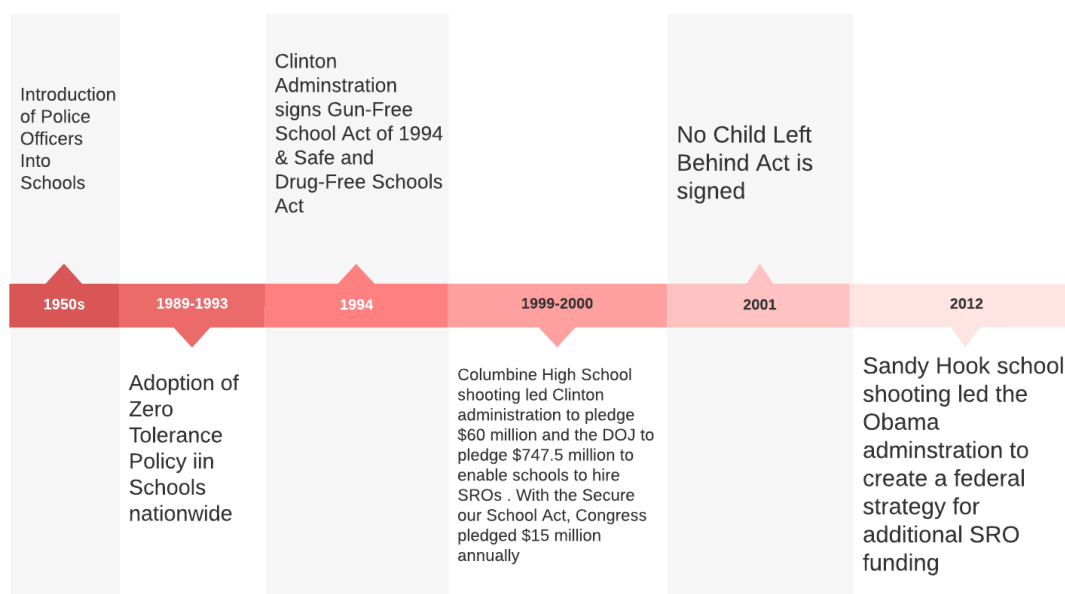
While the use of police officers in schools began in the 1950s, their use was not normalized until the 1990s when they accompanied a number of security measures that responded to the fears around firearms and gang violence in schools (Mckenna & White 2017). The U.S Department of Education tried to alleviate the parents' worries by assuring them that school personnel were competent in securing school grounds and providing alternatives to gangs (Robinson & Fuller 1996). The Department of Education understood that society's perception of public schools would only change if they took a no nonsense approach when dealing with gun violence. This approach ushered in the era of zero tolerance policy.

Zero tolerance was first adopted nationally during the 1989 school year for mandated expulsions for drugs, fighting and gang-related activity. By 1993, zero-tolerance policies expanded to schools across the country to include smoking and school disruption (Skiba & Knesting 2001). Zero tolerance leaned on the broken windows theory, the implication for crime prevention that relatively minor incidents that signal disruption cannot be ignored because such behavior leads to a breakdown of community control. The idea was that zero tolerance would

keep schools safe, appropriately denounce violent school behavior and serve as a deterrent to such behavior in the future (Skiba & Knesting 2001). This belief reached national policy when the Clinton administration signed the Gun-Free School Act of 1994, which mandated one year expulsion for possession of firearms and the referral of each law-violating student to the criminal or juvenile justice system. With the passing of this Act, school districts were given the option to adopt zero tolerance policy or lose their federal funds (Skiba & Knesting 2001; Maddox 2016).

State legislatures and local school districts eventually broadened the zero tolerance definition beyond that of federal mandates to include drugs, alcohol and fighting with similar punishments of suspensions, expulsions, and/or referrals to the juvenile justice system. Federal mandate soon followed with The Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act of 1994, which used block grants to encourage the criminal classification of school misconduct and increased school surveillance (Kupchik & Ward 2014). Legislation continued to expand zero tolerance as officials deemed it necessary once school shootings presented an additional danger on campus grounds.

Figure 1: Timeline of Federal SRO Funding



The Funding for SROs

The 1999 Columbine High School shooting intensified the use of zero tolerance as a means of keeping schools safe (Maddox 2016; Addington 2009). Schools became motivated to increase security due to the media coverage of Columbine and the fear it produced in students and parents. After witnessing graphic scenes of students running for their lives and bloody gunshot victims, a survey reported that 55% of parents reported fearing for their child's physical safety at school (Addington 2009). As a result, the federal government sprung into action to alleviate that concern. One year after Columbine, the Clinton administration pledged \$60 million to enable schools to hire law enforcement as school resource officers. The U.S Department of Justice additionally awarded \$747.5 million to fund and train SROs (Addington 2009). Congress also committed \$15 million per year to the national "Secure Our Schools" (SOS) Act so that municipalities could apply for federal funding for school safety grants. Additional federal support accompanied the presidential administration change in 2001. Receiving bipartisan support, President George Bush signed The No Child Left Behind Act, which aimed at improving student performance in primary and secondary schools with a focus on disadvantaged students. It included a provision that required states to work with school districts to identify "persistently dangerous schools" and mandate criminal referrals for students in possession of weapons (Kupchik & Ward 2014).

Grants were also given for security measures supplemental to SROs such as surveillance cameras and metal detectors that sought to limit access to schools as well as monitor students. President Clinton's initiatives for SROs were bolstered by President Barack Obama after the 2012 school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Obama unveiled a federal strategy for additional funding for school resource officers who would help

enforce zero tolerance policies across the country (Fisher & Hennessy 2016). As part of the Obama administration's effort, the Department of Justice awarded \$125 million in grants nationally, which included about \$45 million for 356 new school resource officer positions (Muller 2013). The decades worth of increased federal funding removed any possible financial restriction on the amount of SROs requested to be placed in any American public school district.

Zero Tolerance leads to School to Prison Pipeline

Accompanying the widespread implementation of zero tolerance policy and SROs was the criminalization of student misbehavior that may have previously been handled differently. While working within schools, SROs remain responsible to the organizational structure of police departments, meaning their actions on campus are destined to be influenced by that responsibility. In their role, officers are given jurisdiction to intervene even when student misbehavior is not illegal but still violates school rules (Fisher & Hennessy 2016). With the use of school resource officers under zero tolerance policy nationally, administrators can decide if student misbehavior, such as talking out of turn in class or tardiness, results in a simple warning or whether they will be suspended, expelled or referred to SROs for punishment. School resource officers are essentially the link between students and the juvenile justice system; by referring a student to a school resource officer, administrators are making it easier for students to get a juvenile record (Maddox 2016).

Research into the types of partnerships formed between administrators and SROs when handling student misbehavior suggested that these partnerships have large implications on students' feelings of safety in their school. Results of an ethnographic study of school administrators, officers and students implied that schools administrators and SROs partner in ways that compromise and reduce the legal rights of students, specifically with searching,

questioning and information sharing about students(Bracy 2010). In this study, ethnographic data collected from two mid-Atlantic high schools described instances of SROs being utilized for non-criminal rule enforcement, as determined by administration, despite it not being part of their official role. The study concluded that students' rights are seen as obstacles and SRO-administrator partnerships address students' rights in a very calculated manner that circumvents the law (Bracy 2010). Thus, this impingement on student rights through the use of law enforcement negatively impacts their safety and feeling towards SROs.

Studies examining the school-to-prison pipeline also found that SROs and the increased criminalization of student misbehavior was essential in its existence.(Fisher & Hennessy 2016; Pigott et al 2017; Morris 2021). Fisher & Hennessy's (2016) meta-analysis on quasi-experimental literature found a pattern consistent with the idea that the presence of SROs led to higher criminalization rates of students. However, not every study researching this topic reached the same conclusion. One study using School Survey on Crime and Safety data found that their results did not necessarily support the school-to-prison pipeline concept. It found that the quantity of SROs did not have a relationship with any amplifications of incident reporting to the police or student removal from the school (Pigott et al 2017). The authors acknowledged the limitations of the study and that they were not able to examine the racial aspect that heavily contributes to the school to prison pipeline and that "protocols need to be implemented in order to address these trends" (Pigott et al. 2017). The racial aspect is especially important for any examination of SROs in schools, as the school-to-prison pipeline has a disproportionate impact on students of color and students of color with disabilities, who are twice as likely to be suspended or referred to law enforcement (Morris 2021).

The presence of SROs has a different effect on different demographics of students, which some researchers claim explain the variation of students' feelings towards SROs. Research consistently found that students of color were more likely to suffer the consequences of increased exclusionary discipline measures, and that the criminalizing effect of SROs exacerbates racial inequality in school discipline and access to education (Curran et al 2021). Students of color were already disproportionately overrepresented in suspension and expulsion rates; Morris (2021) argued that the expanded use of SROs would exacerbate that. Multiple studies concluded that a greater SRO presence increased the amount of violent offenses reported for Black students but not white students and that schools serving non-White and/or poorer students were more likely to use exclusionary security practices (Kupchik & Ward 2014; Gottfredson et al. 2020).

Being disproportionately targeted within school districts, it is understandable that students of color would hold differing opinions than white students. Many studies examining student safety in schools have concluded that students who report higher levels of victimization or who attend schools with higher levels of disorder, notably Black students, tend to feel less safe. Results of latent class analysis align with the hypothesis that demographic characteristics showed a pattern in feelings of safety. However, there remains a debate as to whether the negative feelings of safety stem from interactions with SROs or simply their presence (Theriot et al 2016).

Student, Parent and Teacher Opinions on SROs

While many could agree that a zero tolerance mentality towards crime was ideal, the policy's actual implementation led to much controversy nationally. Zero tolerance policies were associated with suspensions and expulsions for relatively trivial incidents that, according to parent and student advocates, should not warrant the involvement of the juvenile justice system.

Some research highlighted the inconsistency of school discipline and the racial and socioeconomic disproportionality of who gets punished. Studies showed that, contrary to the goals of zero tolerance, both students and teachers in schools with stricter zero tolerance policies had lower feelings of safety at school (Huang & Cornell 2021). If zero tolerance leads to lower feelings of safety, it would have huge implications for school resource officers who help enforce zero tolerance and influence safety protocols.

Various studies hypothesized the effect that using school resource officers has on the disparities seen in students' feelings of safety. Research showed that some members of school communities felt safer with the presence of SROs. One study ran logistic regressions on data collected from a statewide assessment of high school students that suggested increased positive interactions between students and SROs was associated with increased willingness to report another student carrying a weapon, regardless of the race or ethnicity of the student reporting (Ball et al. 2022). In this case, the willingness to report danger to an officer was displayed as evidence for students feeling safe due to the presence of SROs. However, this study does not account for the effects of negative student interactions with SROs nor does it consider other methods to measure feelings of student safety. Instead of comparing the frequency in which positive or negative interactions occur in relation to one another, it focused on the singular event of reporting a weapon to an officer and equated that to students consistently feeling safe in their presence.

Further research using student survey and interview data finds neither increased interactions nor differing levels of comfort with SROs necessarily caused increased use of disciplinary measures on students. Yet in this setting, many of the perceived safety benefits provided by the use of SROs were seemingly mitigated by the heightened sense of danger that

interactions with SROs produced in students (Curran et al. 2021). The mere presence of SROs may produce fear in students, regardless of if SROs actually increased the criminalization of student behavior. The perception of SROs in schools was largely contingent on the specific community's perspective on police officers (Curran et al 2021). Students from communities of color, those disproportionately policed and more likely to be subjected to police violence, may fear police due to experience outside of school (Curran et al 2021).

It became increasingly clear that there existed both individuals who valued the use of SROs and those who felt unsafe with their use. Mowen & Freng (2018), using data collected from the National Center for Education Statistics of the United States Department of Education suggested that a disconnect exists between the families that schools serve and those who work there. Their findings from multi-level models indicated that implementing security measures such as SROs were related to decreased perceptions of safety by students and their families but not with other members of the school community. Mowen & Freng also found many teachers, administrators, politicians, and unaffiliated members of the public believed in the use of such security measures because of the need to protect students and improve public safety (Mowen & Freng 2018; Kupchik et al. 2015). However, differences between teacher and student perceptions of school safety must be further explored, as teachers tended to rate schools safer than their students.(Mowen & Freng 2018).

Controlling for elements that could diminish feelings of safety, such as victimization and neighborhood crime rates, students in learning environments with more security measures still tended to feel less safe. This remained constant across gender and socioeconomic status as well (Mowen & Freng 2018). Yet, this model also noted that positive opinions of safety did exist among families from higher socioeconomic backgrounds and those in private schools. When

exploring Chicago Public Schools, a district serving a disproportionate amount of low income families (*Chicago Public Schools*), it is important to note that opinions could differ drastically to those of higher socioeconomic families in private school.

Role of SROs

There is also a growing body of literature examining the roles in which SROs occupy in school communities and its connection to the criminalization of student behavior and feelings of student safety (Mckenna & White 2017; Benitez et al 2021; Morris 2021). The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act defines a school resource officer as a career law enforcement officer assigned to a local educational agency to “educate students in crime and illegal drug use prevention and safety; (B) develop or expand community justice initiatives for students; and (C) train students in conflict resolution, restorative justice, and crime and illegal drug use awareness” (James & McCallion 2013).

It has been argued that SROs occupy a new type of hybrid public servant that complicates any attempt to develop a uniform set of responsibilities for officers across school districts (James & McCallion 2013;McKenna & White 2017). Therefore, the role of an SROs is left to the interpretation of each school administration; they can be law enforcement, community liaisons, educators, or a combination of all three (James & McCallion 2013). This often resulted in role overload, in which an excessive amount of expectations were placed on individual officers, worsening their response to student misconduct (McKenna & White 2017).

SRO training tends to differ across school districts and often depends on what state laws require them to do. Across the country, some schools required SROs to follow strict zero tolerance policies while others allowed officers to use their discretion when determining a disciplinary course of action (Morris 2021). Schools using restorative measures saw their SROs

take on more of a mentorship role (Benitez et al. 2021). Schools where SROs prioritized the role of law enforcement were seen to develop a more punitive school disciplinary environment where the response to student misconduct was more likely to be criminalized, resulting in suspension, expulsion, ticket, or arrest (Mckenna & White 2017). As SROs use becomes more enforcement based, officers could perceive school security measures as environmental cues that schools are unsafe and therefore prioritize student discipline and control. These cues shift officers' mindsets to be completely geared toward their law enforcement role to create what they believe is a safe environment (Benitez et al 2021).

Background Context: Chicago Public Schools

School resource officer presence intensified in Chicago in 1991 when then-Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley required that every high school have two uniformed police officers. While Chicago police had occasionally patrolled the city's public schools prior to 1991, Daley's policy strengthened their presence within the district (CTU Research Department 2020). Over the past three decades of SRO use, many reports exposed the Chicago Police Department for their legacy of racism and violence within and outside of schools. The 2017 Department of Justice (DOJ) report established a pattern & practice of racism and violence within the Chicago Police Department (Cops Out CPS 2020) .

A Shriver Center on Poverty Law report confirmed the pattern shown in the DOJ report also persists within Chicago schools. The report detailed how school resource officers deployed in CPS operate with little oversight and accountability for their actions, leading to poor outcomes particularly for students of color (Shriver Center on Poverty Law 2017). This not only impaired students' ability to learn but also increased their likelihood to be linked to the criminal punishment system (Shriver Center on Poverty Law 2017). Consistent with the pattern of

violence and racism seen in the DOJ report, #CopsOutCPS reported that, as of 2020, SROs in Chicago Public Schools have a combined total of 2,354 misconduct complaint records on file against them (CTU Research Department 2020).

Since 2020, students, teacher unions and select local school council members have pushed Chicago Public Schools to end their \$33 million contract with the Chicago Police Department and become a leader in the efforts to remove SROs from campuses nationwide (Parrish 2021). They also advocated for reallocating money from the police contract and implementing alternatives to police, ones that prioritize student mental health and restorative justice. The movement #CopsOutCPS calculated that the \$33 million allotted to 180 SROs in CPS in 2020 could fund positions for 317 social workers, 314 school psychologists, or 322 nurses (Cops Out CPS 2020).

The grassroots movement around removing school resource officers predated the district's serious consideration of alternative safety measures. By 2019, however, a federal consent decree to reform the Chicago Police Department led the Chicago Public School district to rethink the role of police in schools. The murder of George Floyd and protests that occurred nationally in 2020 renewed the urgency in student activists' demands to end policing in their schools, leaving Chicago Public Schools and the Illinois Board of Education with a critical decision (Spoto 2021; Pomeroy and Peña 2022).

Months later, the Illinois Board of Education voted 4-2 in favor of a policy that allows individual schools to decide whether or not they want to keep their school resource officers. While only 17 schools voted to remove officers in 2020, another 31 schools followed their lead in 2021 (Pomeroy and Peña 2022). That year, the Board of Education approved a one-year, \$11 million contract with the Chicago Police Department (Masterson 2021). In 2022, of the 41

schools voting on officers, only one additional school voted to remove both officers. The newest contract with the Chicago Police Department stands at \$10.2 million, a significant decrease from two years ago. Now, as a result of schools voting their SROs out, the district reports that there are 59 officers assigned to 40 schools compared to 180 officers assigned district-wide in June 2020 (Pomeroy and Peña 2022). Although the reports signal a decrease in law enforcement district-wide, most of the majority Black schools kept their schools resource officers. For example, in the first vote in 2020 where 17 schools removed officers, only two of them had a predominantly Black student body (Karp 2020). This is important to note considering that Black students are disproportionately the target of criminalization by SROs. (Kupchik & Ward 2014; Gottfredson et al. 2020).

With this policy, those who decide to remove SROs from campus grounds are able to put that money towards “more supportive/proactive supports for students such as restorative justice or culture and climate building”(Matterson 2021). Jadine Chou, Chicago Public Schools’ Chief of Safety and Security, said that the district has “invested nearly \$3.8 million toward alternatives to police, with about \$2.9 million going to staffing and the rest toward programming and professional development” (Pomeroy and Peña 2022). However, it is the decision of local school councils (LSCs) to consider the district’s recommendations and implement their own safety plans. Those schools without LSCs rely on community meetings with administrators, staff and parents to make such decisions (Spoto 2021).

Over two years after CPS empowered local schools councils to make the decision to keep or remove police, momentum to remove officers from campuses appears to have slowed, as shown by the fact that only one school voted to remove them in 2022. Because the district has

released few details about the impact, it is difficult to tell if this new approach to safety is working as planned.

Methods

Data Collection & Sources

In order to measure the effect of this new SRO policy, I use data collected both from school community members whose schools kept their school resource officers and those who did not. While this comparison does not account for all factors affecting criminalization and safety, such as individual school policies or differences in leadership, the data begins to highlight how the presence and absence of SROs affects the criminalization of student behavior and how a school's SRO status affects general feelings of safety. I also collected data from those who wanted to keep SROs and those who wished to remove them to better analyze how CPS community members understand what removing SROs will do to their schools and safety.

I conducted ten interviews with various members of the Chicago Public School district community including students, teachers, parents, administrators, researchers and local school council members. Aside from Jadine Chou, the CPS Chief of Safety and Security, and the two students interviewed, many of the remaining interviewees provided perspectives from more than one interest group. The two local school council members, for example, are a CPS parent and former CPS teacher, respectively. The interviewee who provides most of the teacher perspective is a former SRO and current assistant principal. A few of the researchers, who studied the effects of school resource officers on student safety, were also teachers or parents in Chicago Public Schools or in other urban school districts. Interviewees were asked questions about their experience in relation to their school, interactions and opinions about SROs, and personal feelings of safety (Interview Questions in Appendix).

In order to find enough interviewees, the study relied on snowball sampling, where selected respondents were based on the recommendations of prior respondents. As a result, it became a potential source of bias because it relied on respondents' discretion on who I should interview next. Therefore, perspectives given from this smaller sample size of interviewees may not fully represent the opinions across the district.

It is particularly important to gauge feelings surrounding school resource officers, especially when the use of SROs affects every interest group (students, teachers, parents, administrations, LSC members, etc) differently. Multiple qualitative and quantitative studies have previously explored SRO use, criminalization of student behavior and feelings of safety, but little has been researched on these topics in the absence of school resource officers.

Data Analysis

The analysis for this study is based in grounded theory in order to create hypotheses from the data collected. First, all qualitative data collected were coded using NVivo, the qualitative data analysis computer software, in order to find common themes across each transcript. I created a codebook (Table 1) based around topics most prevalent in the interview process. Categories aimed to separate student perspectives from other community perspectives (parent, teacher, admin, LSCs). By doing so, I was able to examine how opinions around SRO use differ between and within interest groups as well as find recurring themes between all interviewees. This method proves to be the most effective in finding common themes across all of the qualitative data.

Results/Findings

The interviews reveal the complicated landscape surrounding the policy decision to let individual schools vote on their SRO status. While criminalization of student behavior has

decreased district-wide, it became apparent that there was not a general consensus on the reason why. The #CopsOutCPS movement mentioned throughout multiple interviews with students, teachers, LSC members and parents was generally effective in leading CPS to this policy, although select interviewees noted the difficulties of working with CPS administration once the policy was passed. In terms of how those within Chicago Public School communities understand what removing SROs will do to schools and safety, there existed disagreement within and between groups on if school resource officers should exist at all. Students were primarily anti-SRO and mentioned the roles that teachers and principals play in surveillance and involvement of law enforcement. Other interest groups (parents, teachers, administrators, LSC members) had a greater variety of opinions. However, virtually no interviewee believed SRO should exist in its current form. Those who supported the removal of SROs mentioned their safety alternatives and how they believe the police contract should be reallocated. Those who believed SROs still fulfilled a necessary role within schools felt they should occupy less of a law enforcement role and more of a supportive, relationship building role.

#CopsOutCPS

The efforts to remove school resource officers are not one sided. While the #CopsOutCPS movement itself is not led by administrative efforts, CPS Chief of Safety and Security Jadine Chou pledged support for eventually eradicating the SRO position in its entirety, electing for more restorative justice alternatives. However, non-administrative CPS community members expressed the difficulties of working with an administration whose lack of urgency in removing police is apparent in the lack of guidance and resources it provides for schools looking to do so.

Idealized Admin Perspective

In her interview, Jadine Chou spoke optimistically about the safety plans her administrative team are putting in place. “We are on our way to eradicate the school to prison pipeline” in Chicago, she stated, referencing the efforts her team has made to change the narrative around school safety in CPS. Consistent with what Chicago Public School Behavior Data (Tables 2-7) shows, all levels of misconduct and disciplinary actions have decreased district wide, with school suspensions down over 87%, expulsions are down over 90% and arrests over 85%, according to Chou. Yet, in response to the question about the new SRO policy’s role in these decreases, she noted that the reductions reflected in the behavior data are a result of a combination of policies dating back to 2013 and that it would be hard to disentangle them to prove one policy as responsible. She also noticed a disproportionality trend within the CPS Behavior data that would require a different approach to resolve. Chou noted that Black male students still get the police called on them at rates over twice their representation, despite instances of misconduct requiring police involvement lessening overall (Table 2).

While the CPS safety administrative team remains optimistic about the decreases, Chou recognized the need for a shift in focus around school safety to resolve issues, such as the disproportionality trend. “The data is important” she says, “But what's really important is how do our children feel? And what are the relationships that they build with the adults in the school? Because that is what safety is about.” The motto of safety being about relationships instead of enforcement has been at the forefront of Chou's mind dating back to the beginning of her tenure. In 2011, her team began shifting the focus of the Student Code of Conduct and training from enforcement to being more about support. Efforts began by a change in policy that specified the reasons in which a school could involve police, limiting it to situations involving active shooters and imminent safety threats that cannot be handled otherwise. She said this policy change aimed

to mitigate the frequent use of law enforcement to address student misbehavior, but failed to make an impact due to the fact that what qualified as an “imminent safety threat” was up to a school’s discretion. Ultimately, the administration listened to demands of the community-based movement to remove police from schools and tackle the problem from the source: the school resource officers.

The #CopsOutCPS movement “Demands Police Free School NOW” (#CopsOutCPS), but, during her interview, Chou stated that she is taking a more conservative approach. She believed that “ultimately people will come to the understanding that they don’t need police in schools” but cautioned that it will take some people longer to understand that. This was what ultimately led to the policy that allows individual CPS schools, specifically their local school councils, to vote on whether to remove SROs. Throughout the interview, Chou frequently defended her decision against “pull[ing] the band-aid off” and removing school resource officers at once, despite verbalizing her commitment to police-free schools. Chou provided reasoning for her team’s cautious approach, the first being inadvertent consequences. The ultimate goal remains to remove SROs from Chicago Public Schools, but Chou warned that a blanket removal could backfire with one bad incident. She cited the problems other urban school districts nationwide faced by pulling police out of schools all at once..

In our conversation, Chou mentioned cities like Minneapolis, Oakland, and Denver that made public announcements that they were proudly going to “rip the band-aid off” and eliminate the SRO position. However, their ambitions were curtailed in wake of incidents deemed uncontrollable without police, and the districts quickly retreated to “replace them with these other things that look like police officers.” In the long term, Chou believes giving communities the choice will ultimately provide the least resistance towards eventually eliminating the SRO

position, which leads to her second reason for her reserved approach: democracy and community involvement.

The appeal of involving the CPS community in such an important decision is the shared responsibility LSC members have in the decision to keep or remove SROs. During her interview, Chou emphasized her hope that placing the decision in the hands of each individual school community will lead to greater investment in the election process. Additionally, she saw involving the CPS community as a better alternative to her making a blanket decision on the matter would ultimately upset one side of the SRO debate. This approach instead mitigates some of those worries by placing the power in the hands of the community and giving each school the space to consult their community before making an informed decision. Here, local school councils are empowered to vote on the future of safety protocols, a large responsibility that Chou hopes holds LSCs accountable to the wishes of their school. During her interview, Chou praised the democratic process created with this policy and further explains the importance of making a decision representative of the community:

“So we talked to a lot of students in some schools, the students were okay with it, actually, that makes them feel safer. But it was because they had a relationship with those officers in them. But then other schools, the officers did not have any interest in building that relationship. Yeah, so in that case, we're going to take you out, okay. And so over 50% of our schools have either reduced or eliminated police presence in their school at the direction of a committee that includes students and parents is very democratic.”

What became increasingly clear to Chou was that no interest group within the district was unanimously for or against the removal of police and the matter had to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. She emphasized the importance of a democratic process and how there were those who may actually feel safer with police presence, even if it is reduced. Typically schools have two SROs on staff and so decisions can be made to keep both, remove one, or remove both. The one stipulation, however, is that once an SRO is removed, the position cannot return:

“The only catch to this great process that was developed with community organizations, by the way, the only catch is to vote carefully, because you can't add them back. All right, yeah. So people are like why can't we add a bit? Because I can't deal with flip flopping. Okay. And CPD can't deal with flip flopping. Take a strategy on it...Build a culture, pick a culture, stick with it, make it work. And that's what we're doing.”

Abiding by this stipulation theoretically prevents Chicago Public School districts from copying other school districts that reintroduced law enforcement back into their school under a different guise. As Chou hoped to eventually eliminate the SRO position entirely, this condition also forces schools to work through the challenges of a new safety plan instead of making a panicked return to law enforcement. So far, Chou said that this method has successfully reduced police presence throughout the district, although she does not mention the racial disparities in which schools are removing SROs.

The goal now, according to Chou, is to support those who elect to remove SROs with alternatives that would prevent any desire to reinstate police while addressing lingering issues in schools where SROs remain. Starting in summer 2020, the district first gave schools the option to “trade in their [law enforcement] resources” for money to be allocated towards alternative, more restorative safety measures. Before this, schools would have received nothing in exchange, essentially penalizing them for removing SROs. For those keeping SROs, Chou mentioned collaborating with community based organizations, students and parents on how to reduce harm caused by officers. She believed schools must begin by training the Chicago Police Department to work within schools and acknowledging the historical weight the image of a police officer holds for many students:

“You have the gun, you have the handcuffs, you have the authority. And you could tell me you care about me all you want. But at the end of the day, that is a part of your identity. You know, because you can't change that you're a police officer, you're a cop. Yeah. But if you can help break down what being a cop means. A cop doesn't have to be a negative. It doesn't have to be, but right now it is”

During her interview, Chou provided an opinion that proves to be controversial when put in conversation with other interviewees, suggesting that schools who elect to keep SROs can separate the role of an SRO from the problematic history of police officers and temporarily turn it into a more positive and supportive role. Regardless of the positionality of each school, Chou and her team appeared adaptable to each situation and willing to provide assistance through the process to eventually render the SRO position obsolete.

Struggle Behind Removing Law Enforcement

Juxtaposing Chou's democratic approach to the SRO debate, some students and local school councils members expressed a greater sense of urgency for the removal of law enforcement from schools. These selected interviewees also disclosed the difficulties of working within the constraints of the administration, which complicates Jadine Chou's perspective of collaboration. A former CPS student at a southside high school and current southside Chicago student organizer explained her urgency behind immediate police removal, citing both the lack of improper allocations of CPS funds and police treatment of Black and brown communities. A student organizer since age 14, she was one the lead organizers for the #CopOutCPS movement, helping to develop its political services and strategy.

As a CPS student, the student organizer's education was severely impacted by lack of basic necessities and teacher shortages as well as their personal interaction with SROs. Firsthand experiences motivated her and other student organizers to develop a campaign around the CPS contract with Chicago Police Department. During the interview, she spoke directly to how she felt the impact of this misallocation of funds to be spent on law enforcement :

“I've always had an issue with police officers. So I was motivated off of not being compliant with the way they structured themselves when it comes to the black and brown community. And so that but then most importantly, I was a senior in 2020, where pandemic really f***ed us up. And my sister, I was a senior, my sister was a freshman.

And they prioritize me to have a laptop. So me and my sister were at the same school, but my sister was missing 24 hours of school, due to me only having a laptop. And so that was really what it was. Most importantly, CPS was taking from us \$33 million to give to CPD money”

The student organizer noted how the \$33 million contract, CPS money that could be spent alleviating shortages on teachers and other basic necessities, was being paid for oppressive law enforcement. Because of this contract, school resource officers were being paid throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including months in which students attended school virtually. As she describes, the misallocation of CPS funds, which was only exacerbated by the pandemic, revealed the lack of various accommodations and resources students needed to learn. In the midst of inadequate learning conditions, the organizer believes CPS was actively funding the criminalization of student behavior. The personal experience students had interacting with school resource officers inspired the mobilization of a student-led movement, long before any substantial administrative support:

“And being a black and brown woman, I've seen that the way they treat black and brown people, and it's not the same way that they treat white people... they were putting their knees on kids necks, to stop trying to restrain them, putting their knees on their chest to restrain them... And so we saw that, and we saw a pattern of this in our schools on the south side, and on the west side. And we decided to stop it... it really started as like six core young people. And I was one of the six..I really believe that that was the moment where the campaign took off.”

The organizer's account of the disproportionate treatment of Black and brown students by SROs aligned with the other literature's criticism of zero tolerance policy. She witnessed SROs physically restrain students and force them into compliance. The problematic enforcement of zero tolerance policy thus provided the impetus for a movement to begin. She spoke proudly of the movement's progress thus far; while they have not won the cancellation of the contract, their efforts led to the reduction of the contract from \$33 million to \$15.5 million, and then again to \$10.2 million.

Much of the resistance the student organizer and campaign team faced throughout this process came from adults throughout the CPS community. She spoke passionately about the trauma associated with the work, a side of the movement that was not mentioned from Jadine Chou's administrative perspective. In addition to the physical violence she faced from police officers, the organizer recounted the multiple occasions in which her credibility and motivation were questioned:

“ And to see people say I'm not credible and people saying that because you were in high school that you don't have no voice in this, you the person that we call the police on all the time. That was hurtful, that was traumatic work that made me almost want to quit my job.”

She faced individuals in person and through social media who discredited her work largely due to her behavior being the target of criminalization she was organizing against. Arguably the biggest source of resistance the movement faced and what upset her the most was the committee members and teachers, specifically Black teachers, who did not believe in the movement's mission. She mentioned those teachers who stood completely against the idea of SRO removal and pledged their allegiance to the specific officers who were staffed at their school. Her alma mater specifically employed teachers who told her “we're not getting rid of our beloved police officer. Why are y'all doing this to us? This is our police officer. We need him like he needs us” which was the exact opposite reaction she expected when asking for Black adult support. That response, specifically from adults of color, she believed stems from the uninformed mentality where adults fail to understand how such decisions as placing police in schools “were made against us, not for us.”

While not all teachers shared this mentality, apparent from support of select caucuses of the Chicago Teachers' Union (CopsOutCPS 2020), it became increasingly clear that the movement would require multigenerational support from other groups as well. While Chou and

members of CPS administration preach collaboration, working within administrative constraints was not without its difficulties. A few local school council members expressed how they felt administration was often unhelpful and sometimes a major obstacle in the SRO removal process. An LSC member of a downtown Chicago school stated their belief that when CPS first told LSCs that they could vote to remove their school resource officers, that it was primarily to take the pressure off the district from having to make that decision. Jadine Chou's idea of giving the LSCs the responsibility as part of a democratic process appeared to resonate less with these local school council members, partially because the district gave them no information or training on how to best carry out the process. One LSC member from a downtown high school emphasized the lack of guidance student representatives received in meetings and how it hindered their ability to give student perspective on an issue in which their interest group is most affected.

A LSC member representing a northside high school shared a story in which she felt showed how the district aims to prevent schools from removing their SROs. The day before her school's election, this LSC member received a phone call from a CPS district administrator asking her to share a year's worth of meeting minutes. While this is public information, she was certain the request for this information came "because what they were trying to do was disqualify people from voting in the LSC" vote on SROs. While the district ultimately was not able to affect the results of this particular vote, "they did manage to knock some people off" and prevent certain student and teacher representatives from voting. She also recounted the local police department reallocating their resources in response to election results:

"I have this experience with CPS central office, then we have the experience with our district 24 Police, which was up until that point, they always had a car parked in front of the school, at dismissal time, you know, there's some gang issues there stuff when kids walk out of the building and get into it into the street. That's happened. Their car disappeared. And I was in two meetings with the district commander. All of a sudden they didn't have the resources."

While some community members, such as this LSC member, were advocating for SRO removal, they still saw the merit in law enforcement presence outside of campus. She saw the department's removal of a patrol car at dismissal time as a tactic to dissuade schools from removing their officers.

Students and local council members exposed the amount of resistance the process of SRO removal has faced and will continue to be subjected to. Their stories not only highlighted a different, more complex version of working within and sometimes against the constraints of CPS administration than what Chou's interview provides, but also detailed that resistance comes from every level of interest group.

Discontent with SROs in their Present Capacity

While the interviewees communicated differing perspectives on the necessity of the SRO position, they all shared a similar vision of school safety. This version of school safety incorporates more than just a student's physical safety and assures "all your basic necessities are achieved." School safety necessitates a nurturing and protective environment in which students do not have "worry about anything apart from schooling," are comfortable to explore and experiment creatively and challenged to grow. This vision also requires a setting where positive connections to other students and adults are encouraged and fostered. Interviewees agreed that in order for this to happen, school safety should center on harm prevention, physically, emotionally and socially. While usually student-focused, one interviewee extended this vision to include other members of the Chicago Public School communities:

"School safety means that when students and their families and teachers and staff, but especially students come into the building, they know that they are respected, whatever background that they are from, that they will be in an environment when they can focus on learning, and not be fearful of things."

Where interviewees diverged in their visions for school safety is in how schools should address harm prevention and what role, if any, SROs should have in it. While no interviewees appeared content with the current role school resource officers play in their communities, some still expressed the need for law enforcement in their school safety vision.

Students

According to the two student interviews along with some anecdotes shared by other interviewees, student perspective leaned towards wanting school resource officers removed entirely or demanding that the district make drastic changes to the SRO position if it must remain. One local school council member recalled a student survey conducted at the school she represented around the time of the LSC vote, and “overwhelmingly that students wanted the SROs out,” about 80% of survey respondents. The two student interviewees shared similar opinions. As mentioned above, the student organizer stands completely against the use of police in schools, citing their criminalization of student behavior and the disproportionate amount of CPS money allocated to the Chicago Police Department instead of the students themselves.

In explaining why she organized to get police removed from CPS, she explained a personal anecdote of how students are treated by law enforcement. SROs in her school and across the district were used as scare tactics to force students deemed as disruptive into complying with administrative rules:

“They would try to use the police as a scare tactic on me as like ‘you’ll go to jail for pissing off a teacher’ not knowing that that’s not something they could do. So they were making us sit in there for hours with them. And like you didn’t want to use your phone, you didn’t want to say anything to incriminate yourself, but it was a scary situation.”

As one of the students deemed disruptive, the student organizer was familiar with the ways in which student behavior was usually addressed with law enforcement. She remembered these high school experiences as extremely traumatic but also as the impetus for the student-led

movement to remove police officers from CPS. She credited the organizing work her team and others accomplished for “decreasing the criminalization of young people” in schools over the past three years since she was a CPS student. The movement, while ultimately aiming to remove law enforcement in its entirety, also held officers accountable to their code of conduct because of the heightened visibility that now surrounds the role.

In her interview, the organizer offered her perspective of why those against SRO removal, specifically the educators she had interacted with, were “set in their ways” and “dismissive to the things that we go through as young Black people.” She believed that people who are not low income and are not criminalized by police officers are more likely to stand against the movement and believe defunding the police cannot or should not happen. These individuals, she stated, fail to understand the harmful effects SROs have on their students of color and how they are not exempt from criminalization of law enforcement themselves.

The other student interviewee was primarily against the use of SROs, but understood why the position exists. Occasionally students who were against the presence of law enforcement sometimes compromised with administration and discussed how to change the SRO position and decrease the criminalization of student behavior if the position must remain. In his interview, this former student similarly shared his discomfort in the presence of police but also offered his ideas on how to alter the position.

School resource officers made him feel unsafe, primarily because he feels unsafe around firearms. The entire institution of policing is oppressive toward people of color, he said, and the decision to criminalize student behavior ultimately affects that student’s life trajectory afterwards. In an ideal situation, the SRO position would not exist. However, this student believed that, due to the external threats of violence all schools face, “some type of officer needs

to be in school as just a safety mechanism in case something does go wrong.” SRO received additional funding from the government in response to increased mass shootings, and he believed that this should be the reason CPD officers stayed employed at his southside high school.

This student did not stand as strongly against the use of SROs as the student organizer, but he acknowledged that his perspective may be slightly skewed due to the limited amount of interactions he had with SROs. Teacher and administration never deemed his behavior disruptive and he benefited from being an AP student who was rather involved in extracurricular activities. Noting that although he would avoid misbehaving, the interviewee strongly believes that he avoided suspensions and referrals to police due to his status as an involved AP student. Some of his friends, specifically non-AP students, tended to be criminalized for the same misbehavior. In explaining in how student behavior is handled based on a student’s academic standing, he shared,

“They wouldn't really try to engage with those types of students...Whereas me and another AP student, we got into a disagreement, a teacher will be less inclined to kick us out. And also security will be less inclined to pull us out of class. So it's just a really different dynamic in terms of who they decided to intervene in situations with.”

If a student was marked “unredeemable” by administration, they were more likely to involve law enforcement in their punishment. While he was not one of those students, he understood the necessity of making sure SROs were being used to protect from external threats and not for the criminalization of student behavior, which is what he witnessed during high school.

Therefore, this student called for the redefining of the SRO role. The interviewee first mentioned the disarmament of officers if they were to remain in schools. In his revisions, weapons would remain off a person only to be retrieved in case of a school shooting. Ideally, officers themselves would remain out of school hallways unless absolutely necessary, as their constant presence in school hallways felt criminalizing to him as a student. Redefining the role means having SROs act less like law enforcement and more like protection. He described the

damaging effect school resource officers have by entering the classroom to “get rid of all the non-desirable students.” Not only does this disrupts students’ ability to learn and leads students to be more disruptive later, but it also reinforces the stereotypes of students of color as criminals:

“We need to reimagine what SROs like roles in schools are instead of having them be just be used as a parole officer or like the officer in a courtroom and escort you out of the room like you're a criminal because it reaffirms [the stereotype] that especially in all black people that we're criminals, and that if you need to be escorted out of the room, sometimes even in handcuffs. It just reaffirms the belief that we're not human.”

Instead of criminalizing students and reaffirming the ideas that their disruptive behavior is a sign of being “unredeemable,” this student hoped that schools can handle student behavior by investing more resources into mental health initiatives and school counselors. Together with administration, he believed students can determine the appropriate role for an SRO, but that it should not focus on criminalization and law enforcement.

As the interest group most impacted by school resource officers, both student perspectives provide insight into how many students across the district envision school safety. Some see no purpose for SROs in their educational environment, especially when their existence comes at the expense of other resources crucial to learning. Others worry about the external threat of violence and believe SROs are necessary, even if not favorable, for those instances. Regardless of their position, both student interviewees shared the sentiment of many other students district-wide supporting the police-free school movement who believe SROs should not exist simply to address and criminalize student behavior.

Teachers

The interviews suggest that CPS teachers have a wider range of opinions than students regarding whether their schools should keep school resource officers. Shown by the pledged support of Chicago Teachers’ Union for police-free schools, many teachers acknowledge the

criminalization of student behavior mentioned by the student interviewees. One LSC member mentioned that at her school, most teachers are committed to restorative justice practices and would resort to them before ever involving law enforcement. In contrast, other interviewees mentioned teachers who relied on the school resource officers for student discipline because they were scared of the students they taught.

A teacher who is also an assistant principal of a west side CPS school shared a unique perspective situated within the polarized debate between teachers. He strongly favored having SROs in schools, but believed their role should focus more on relationship building and less on law enforcement. His perspective was largely informed by personal experience with law enforcement and his former job as an SRO. Born and raised on the south side of Chicago, he had many family members in prison and others who died due to gun violence. He recounted the numerous times police harassed his family, including times where he had a police officer hold a gun in his face. Instead of becoming anti-police, these experiences encouraged him to “be the best cop out there” He entered the profession to provide his community with a different perspective of a police officer. He hoped to use his life experience to relationship build with students coming from similar background, an ambition that ultimately led to him becoming an SRO:

“I’m going to relationship build. I was the cop who would get out in my beat car and get out and have kids come play on my squad car and I remember running errands and I would get out and play basketball with them. And all of a sudden my watch commander was like ‘hey, we need you. No one wants to go to high school’...I love kids, I love it, I gotta go do it. An eye opener man like I have probably had made, I was forced to make more arrests in a high school setting than I did as a beat cop”.

In the role of SRO, he would converse with and counsel the students he arrested, but grew frustrated trying to “relationship build” with students after being made to criminalize their

behavior. As a result, he switched career paths and eventually landed in his current role of teacher and assistant principal of a west side Chicago high school.

In his current hybrid position of teacher and administrator, this interviewee spoke about the importance of relationship building between students and all adults in the building. His school intentionally hires teachers and other staff who possess the ability to build relationships with students. They have hired SEL specialists and social workers who focus on providing that adult support to students. As an administrator, he has an open door policy that he hopes fosters his ability to build relationships with students. Naturally, his administrative team“ was specifically looking for SROs to build relationships” as part of its school safety plan.

While the west side high school recently had one SRO employed on campus, it had zero officers on staff at the time of this interview. Throughout the interview, the former SRO turned teacher remained adamantly pro-SRO and shared multiple reasons why. In addition to the external threats mentioned by other interviewees, he mentioned the necessity of SROs in handling violence between students and the importance of their response time:

“When we do need an SRO...I can list many examples of when a kid got a big butcher knife, and they're trying to stab another student..Because we had an SRO here, he was able to respond within minutes, man, seconds... I personally feel it's about the safety of our students. For example, we don't have an SRO right now, right, so we needed the police. And it took them a little longer to get here and people got hurt. You know, it was pretty bad man. I just feel like if we had at least one here, we could have prevented kids from getting hurt by this incident.”

To address student safety, he felt SROs must be part of every school safety plan to prevent serious injuries. He wholeheartedly believed that the instances of violence within the school may have resulted in greater injuries if it were not for the quick response time of a SRO.

However, he shared the popular opinion among interviewees that the SRO position must change. Leaning into his relationship building initiative, he said that SROs will be completely

ineffective if they continue to remain hidden in an office until called upon by teachers or administration. While this directly contrasts the desires of the student interviewees who wished SROs would minimize their presence as much as possible, he stated that this was the only way to relationship build. By connecting with students, being visible and joining in their after school activities (as he once did as an SRO), he thought SRO can be utilized effectively. In this way, he believed SROs can be seen as a supportive role instead of simply law enforcement, while also being capable of handling internal and external threats of violence.

Parents/Local School Council

Other interest groups such as parents and local school council representatives stand divided on the SRO debate. The two LSC member interviewees, who were both parents, provided the unique perspective of participating in their respective school's vote to remove SROs. Both expressed their own anti-SRO beliefs and also explained how polarized individuals throughout the CPS district were on this issue. As a parent at the downtown Chicago CPS school, the first LSC interviewee explained the divisive nature that existed with many other topics long before the SRO vote. Her inspiration in running for local school council came from being able to serve the interest of students, who expressed feeling ignored by school administration especially around topics involving racial injustice. Students expressed sentiments of anti-blackness, lack of support for LGBTQ+ and English language learner (ELL) students.

By the time CPS first empowered LSCs to vote on SRO removal, she witnessed the same disconnect between students and administrators. The divisiveness of the vote, despite the clear student push to remove law enforcement, led her to run during the next LSC election cycle:

“The LSC voted and it was pretty narrow. I think, basically, the vote to keep them up was like, two more people voted yes than no. So it was a pretty close vote. And so, you know, the same students who have been pouring their hearts out about all the other stuff

happening at the school, you know, had a separate petition...So that was on our platform, when we ran that we would support removing SROs”

The LSC member’s platform, while certainly based on personal beliefs against the use of SRO in school, once again heavily relied on what the students wanted. She detailed the resistance her platform faced as the following year’s SRO vote approached. As she prepared to vote on the 2021 whole school safety plan, she described anticipating pro-SRO opinions from some parents and administrators that could prevent the vote from going the students’ way. She specifically mentioned the pro-SRO assistant principal who advocated for keeping law enforcement on staff in case of incidents outside of the school. In response, the LSC member stated that “[the school budget] is not supposed to be paying for patrolling downtown, which is a pretty heavily patrolled area in Chicago anyway.” Her stance did not necessarily advocate against law enforcement citywide, but urged her school community to better allocate the budget towards what students needed and asked for.

The other LSC interviewee’s motivation to remove SROs stemmed both from her personal experience of witnessing law enforcement interact with students and her desire to represent the students’ desires in her community. As a parent, she expressed that having police in schools was a bad idea because of how law enforcement pepper sprayed her son at a protest while he was trying to help an injured teenager. She felt this experience proved police were unfit to be in schools and could not appropriately handle misbehavior among adolescents. As a former CPS teacher, she also experienced how complicated and detrimental involving law enforcement could be for students and their families. She taught many students coming from refugee or asylum seeking families and therefore tried handling student misbehavior without involving SROs. Undocumented students are welcome within Chicago Public Schools, as Chicago is a sanctuary city. CPS has agreed verbally to protect immigrant families, stating that it won't allow

federal immigration agents into school buildings without a criminal warrant. However, this does not eliminate the risk of deportation for students and their families (Cardona-Maguigad 2019). Therefore, she felt keeping SROs out of school also better protects undocumented families from unwanted interactions with the Chicago Police Department.

She brought these precautions around law enforcement into her role as a LSC representative, especially considering the large refugee population served by her school. Similar to the other LSC account, she recalled divisiveness around the vote despite a clear desire from students for removal:

“It was heart wrenching to me, when these kids talked about what it felt like for them to see a cop in the hallway. Either because of experiences they've had in their families or, you know, of course, I mean, we're talking teenagers, they are not unaware of what happens to young black men with cops.... So there was a lot of heart wrenching stuff. Then we had the election. I don't remember the number now. But the move was to remove the SROs. That was the decision. The principal who had been back and forth on the issue and had to have a lot of persuading, did vote, I will say the right way at the end.”

Student testimonies drove enough people to vote for SRO removal, but not everyone was convinced that it was a smart decision. Administrators advocated to keep law enforcement in case of violent instances that they deemed of needing armed intervention.

In rebuttal, this LSC member explained that the police were reactionary and not preventative. She recalled that the principal had once called upon the SROs to handle a reported sexual assault during dismissal time. During this time, a separate fight broke out and officers refused to get involved, leading teachers to have to intervene and get injured. In this instance, not only did the SROs not prevent the altercation, but they also refused to react. She cited this as one example of police presence being unhelpful and how the school could benefit by focusing its resources elsewhere. Similar to other interviewees, she mentioned the disproportionate amount of the budget spent on SROs:

“When the SROs were in the schools, their salaries, uniforms, health care, pension stuff, was paid by CPS. That's why the cops loved it, you know, but really, CPS has enough money to do that when schools will have kids working with broken pieces of crayon?”

A school community that serves many low income and immigrant families, she believed, should allocate less money toward law enforcement that endangers its students and instead focus the budget toward helping families and resourcing classrooms.

Despite their strong anti-SRO beliefs, both LSC interviewees acknowledged why some still rather have school resource officers as a part of their school safety plan. Possible explanations given for the difference in opinion were the location of schools and the neighborhoods they serve. According to one of the LSC representatives, similar to the first LSC vote in 2020 (Karp 2020), many of the schools that still chose to keep SROs were majority low income and majority Black compared to her predominantly white and wealthy CPS school. Although she felt police had no place in schools, she felt she had no standing to dispute parents who said “I fear for the physical safety of my child, I want a guy with a gun standing outside the door.” It must be noted that this perspective focuses on SROs or some equivalent personnel serving as protection and not as a means to address student behavior. The other LSC member explained how in one school where she worked prohibited high school students from going to the bathroom alone due to “conflicting gangs, and kids could get hurt in the bathroom.” While she does not believe a police officer would remedy this situation, she understood that there are some people who do.

Another parent interviewee offered a possible compromise between these two conflicting perspectives on the SRO debate. Similar to the LSC members, he believed that “there's no need for police officers in school,” but made a key distinction by seeing a “need for trained, resourced, and engaged safety and security personnel in schools.” In his school safety plan, these unarmed

personnel would be trained to work with young people that need to be sort of seen, understand the backgrounds and cultures of the students, and be engaged in the school community. Even though he personally liked his SRO and how engaged he is in the community, he said that police officers cannot fulfill this position because their presence dramatically changes the response to routine adolescent behavior. His perspective, along with the LSC members, echoed all other interviews above who all advocated for a change in school safety from the status quo. Unlike those who either want SROs fully removed or want SROs trained into a more supportive role, this parent suggested completely separate personnel devoid from the stigma police carry with them. His suggestion also addresses the concern that majority Black schools tend to be keeping their SROs, replicating the disproportionate impact police have on Black communities. Instead, using different personnel may remove this concern.

Role of Teachers in Surveillance/ Involving Law Enforcement

Despite the interviews centering school resource officers, interviewees importantly addressed the closely connected theme of teachers' role in surveillance and involving law enforcement. While many accounts were given of teachers who were committed to using restorative justice practices instead of police, interviewees focused more on teachers who did not. Oftentimes when there is an SRO on staff, teachers "are the only ones that are able to give the call to a cop to come get the student" and therefore help determine whether a student gets punished by law enforcement. The student interviewees, in particular, spoke out strongly against the teachers in their respective schools. As mentioned above, the student organizer dealt with teachers, specifically Black teachers, who discredit the Cops Out CPS movement and were unwilling to accept working at a police-free school. She had teachers cite what they deemed her disruptive behavior to once again explain why the movement would not receive their support:

“it's frustrating for me to be a black woman, a black and brown woman and telling you my experience, telling you my trauma and you're saying ‘you're not credible because I have to call the police on you’”

The criminalization of students and their behavior, before reaching school resource officers, often started with teachers. Teachers choose who to criminalize and for what reason, no matter how negligible. CPS Chief Safety and Security Officer Jadine Chou gave a few examples of these occurrences during her interview. She recalled one incident in which a teacher called the police on a student who did not give her his cell phone when demanded to. In another incident, where a student pushed a teacher out of the way, Chou discovered the teacher attempted to trap the student in the room. In many more situations, police would tell teachers that the behavior they were called in to address “is not an arrestable situation.”

Teachers have jurisdiction over which students they target and criminalize and for what behaviors. A couple teacher interviewees confirmed that they have worked with teachers who were scared of the students they taught. One teacher said she had colleagues who referred to certain students, usually non-AP students, as “gen pop” which is a term used to describe prisoners. One of the student interviewees confirmed this sentiment in his own experience, explaining the difference between how he and his non-AP friends were treated by teachers and, as a result, their school resource officers. He noted how a significant number of teachers and administrators could not relate to students due to not sharing similar racial or cultural backgrounds and therefore would assume that “bad behavior just stemmed from them not wanting to learn.” There was a conflict of interests between students and white teachers and administrators, and adults found themselves only being able to relate to certain students. This was clear in the actions of one the principal this student had:

“And I felt like it was easier, especially for like our previous white principal, it was much easier for him to connect with the AP students than the not even students because he

would never say it out loud. But he will make it seem like that not AP students weren't going to really do nothing in life. So he just kind of pushed those kids aside.”

The disregard for non-AP students and their academic capabilities was evident in the amount of opportunities AP students received in comparison to their non-AP counterparts. One's grades determined how they were treated as students but also as people. According to this interviewee, teachers were more inclined to remove his non-AP friends from the classroom and police were less reluctant to confront students that teachers had marked as troublesome. He benefited from having better grades, as most teachers would give him the benefit of the doubt instead of involving law enforcement. But this was a luxury he did not share with many and he saw it as an extremely unfair practice. For example, when lockers were searched, his locker remained untouched while others were destroyed.

This emerging theme of teachers playing a role in surveillance slightly shifted the trajectory of this study, as their role was not an original consideration in the criminalization of student behavior. Yet, as shown by the data, the actions of some teachers are inextricably linked to the involvement of SROs and therefore must be studied together.

Alternatives

All interviewees concluded either that SROs should be removed from schools or that their roles should be altered significantly. Naturally, they were asked about their alternative visions of school safety, especially in light of schools now being able to take money once allocated to SROs and use it elsewhere. As mentioned above, some interviewees felt there still needed to be personnel capable of intervening in case of internal or external threats of violence. While some believed police officers could fill this role, others thought this personnel should be a completely separate entity trained specifically to engage with youth, like a Youth Intervention Specialist (CPS 2023). It should be noted that those who suggested alternative personnel were

uncertain what this would look like in practice and how schools would assure they did not serve the same role as police.

Others have visions for alternatives for what they believe to be more urgent needs. They believed that the money should be used to address the shortage of teachers, nurses, counselors, social workers and other specialists that can better address the needs of students. One LSC member mentioned an initiative started at her school that she would like see elsewhere:

“They opened a free store...where people would donate stuff, mostly teachers. But you know, you got, especially these refugee kids coming in, you know, they need like, shampoo. And then I'm talking about winter coats, you know, stuff. Yeah. And again, as a teacher, I don't know how much I was out of pocket. But I was out of pocket a lot of times for, you know, pencils, I was out of pocket buying coats for kids. You know, so I would like to see, you know, that general social service category. And it's especially so hard in high school and kids are trying so important to kind of fit in, you know, and it's so hard, you know, when you got nothing?”

Like her, many other interviewees were of the mindset that money should be allocated to such resources and personnel that can focus on the root causes that may manifest themselves as student misbehavior. Responsibility is often placed on teachers and other adults of the school community to financially provide what the school budget does not cover. More important than spending money on security for this LSC member is to alleviate this issue.

Multiple interviewees also mentioned using a restorative approach and hiring a restorative justice coordinator for the safety and security team in place of school resource officers. The coordinator would ideally help the school resolve incidents without involving law enforcement, reducing suspensions and expulsions in the process. However, as a fairly new concept and without much institutional support district wide, interviewees had little insight into how this would look in practice.

Policy Recommendations

Results from the interviews suggest a significant portion of the Chicago Public School community desires a reimagining of school safety in some form. While there exists mixed opinions regarding whether the school resource officer position should remain in CPS schools, all interviewees believe law enforcement should not be used to address student behavior in the manners it currently does. Even those who were pro-SRO saw room for improvement in the position. Thus, the experiences, opinions and anecdotes of the interviewees inspired my following policy recommendations:

1. Uphold policy that allows local school councils to vote on SRO status

Since the SRO position remains a highly contested issue, CPS should continue to give individual schools the choice to vote on keeping the SRO position for their own community. This democratic process, as Jadine Chou and others described in their interviews, is imperfect but appears to be the best method to handle the SRO situation. This policy ultimately proves best in decreasing the presence of law enforcement in schools, and will prevent Chicago from replicating the unsuccessful attempts at police removal around the country. Given the choice, schools have already and arguably will continue to vote against keeping SROs, thus decreasing the amount of law enforcement present district-wide. Here, the district avoids making the uniform decision for each school, a policy that ultimately led to the full reinstatement of policing in other school districts nationwide. The current Chicago policy best addresses the issue of the excessive use of law enforcement mentioned by the interviewees. In upholding this policy, the district should also provide better guidance for those voting, as that was another issue mentioned by interviewed LSC members.

2. Allocate more district funds towards financing alternatives to policing

Efforts have been successful in decreasing the CPS contract with the Chicago Police Department, as more schools vote to remove their school resource officers. District funds that once went toward the contract should be reallocated to fund alternatives to policing. As schools reimagine their visions of school safety, funds can be reallocated to hire personnel such as restorative justice officers, therapists, counselors, unarmed security guards, youth intervention specialists and SEL specialists. Funding may also go towards any programs working towards community-based safety if a school decides to take on that initiative for their whole school safety plan. Having funds dedicated to alternatives may also better incentivize schools to use alternative forms of safety other than policing. It is also important that schools make their decision on alternatives with input from those who know the community best, the members of the school community themselves.

3. Elevate student voice in local school councils meetings and elections

While all students are given the opportunity to vote on their local school council representatives, the councils themselves only have a maximum of three student representatives (CPS 2023). It is pertinent that student voice, especially the voice of students of color, is elevated surrounding the SRO decision making process, as they have been the interest group most affected by the actions of law enforcement in their schools. Local school councils should dedicate greater time during meetings to hear the student perspective, and student opinions should have greater influence over the ultimate decision around SROs. The district must also avoid obstructing student representatives' ability to take part in the democratic election process, whether that means giving proper guidance or not trying to disqualify them from voting.

4. Provide resources that address root causes of student problems

Student behavior in which law enforcement intervention is deemed necessary stems from a multitude of problems. As described by the interviewees, the use of SROs is reactionary; schools should instead provide resources that address the root causes of these problems, in other words, be preventative. This may take the form of counselors, mental health or youth intervention specialists and nurses or providing students with financial help. Once again, funding for these resources can come from money previously allocated to the police contract.

5. Explore personnel that can help foster building relationships

Schools should attempt to improve teacher-student relationships and student-student relationships. Relationship building proves important to the interviewees, and one interviewee expressed the belief that it should be the role of SROs to build relationships within their school community. Since the goal is to not continually criminalize students, schools instead should explore other personnel that may be able to fulfill this role that are neither law enforcement nor armed guards. Improving relationships schoolwide, especially between students and teachers, may lead to less conflict and cause teachers to rely less on law enforcement for disciplining their students.

6. Revise individual school policies of surveillance and discipline that address how SROs can be used

The manner in which teachers utilized SROs to address student misbehavior appeared frequently throughout the interviews. Members of every interest group, but especially students, mentioned that teachers called upon SROs to discipline students for minor incidents. Especially in schools where SROs are voted to remain, school policies of surveillance and discipline that address how SROs are utilized should be revised in an effort to decrease SRO-student interaction.

Limitations/Future Research

This study was hindered by a few limitations. Formal research within Chicago Public Schools requires going through a lengthy approval process from both the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the CPS Research Review Board (RRB) that did not fit into the timetable of this study. Direct access to current students and teachers was therefore limited. This limited access also hindered this study's ability to make thorough comparisons between all schools who elected to keep school resource officers and those who chose to remove them. This study benefited from snowball sampling and therefore may not reflect all opinions that exist within the CPS district. While not central to this study's design, the CPS Behavior Data was certainly affected by the restricted research and data collected during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While this study begins the exploration into the conversation around SRO removal and criminalization of student behavior in relation to the recent policy, future research should aim to complete a thorough district-wide comparison of Chicago Public Schools who kept SROs and those who removed SROs, noting differences in opinions around SROs and safety based on school locations and demographics of the community members. While this was a qualitative study, additional quantitative research would be beneficial in making this comparison by comparing metrics such as suspensions, expulsion and attendance between schools with and without SROs. Studies should also consider analyzing how the presence or absence of school resource officers impacts the treatment of student misbehavior. Lastly, future research should explore the effectiveness of alternatives implemented into schools that elected to remove SROs and analyze restorative ways to address misbehavior.

Discussion/Conclusions

The daily presence of police officers in public schools creates an atypical environment that few other social contexts can replicate. In few other environments are individuals subjected to as much police supervision as students are in the environment in which they are supposed to learn. With the passing of a policy that lets schools vote on their SRO status, Chicago Public Schools and the Illinois Board of Education gave their response to the student, parents and teacher advocates for the #CopsOutCPS campaign. This study begins to explore how the CPS community views the effectiveness of this response as well as captures opinions on the future of safety in the district.

This study better understands the research question “How do people in schools understand what removing SROs will do to their school and their safety?”, unveiling the complexities about the ongoing debate around school safety. The interviews, providing a range of experience from across CPS district, reveal the overwhelming discontent with the use of SROs. Many interviewees express that school resource officers, specifically the ways in which they are mobilized by teachers and administrators to address student behavior, are responsible for the criminalization of students. Some speak from personal experience while others share stories regarding SRO use in their school community, these anecdotes providing their impetus to vote against keeping SROs. Even those who remain uncertain about the future of law enforcement in schools or are adamantly pro-SRO were unhappy with the position in its current iteration. Those interviewees specifically emphasized wanting SROs who occupy supportive roles within the community instead of simply being law enforcement. Instead of trying to alter police into a role in which they were never intended to occupy, CPS must look elsewhere.

From the data, I conclude the Chicago Public Schools should continue their gradual removal of school resource officers from the district, as specified in the policy recommendations, and seek alternatives for a school safety plan. While there exists no general consensus in the SRO debate, a significant part of the student perspective advocates for their removal, citing SROs as harmful and counterproductive to their learning environment. As the ones historically criminalized by school resource officers, students and their experiences must be prioritized in reimagining school safety. In the future, attention must also be paid to which schools choose to keep SROs. While a decrease in law enforcement district-wide is desirable, a policy giving schools choice will fall short in its goals if school resource officers are not being removed from majority Black schools as well. As mentioned before, Black students and other students of color are disproportionately criminalized in schools and the presence of SROs exacerbates this.

Although not unanimous, most interviewees could not separate the SRO position from its role as law enforcement nor from the problematic legacy of racist policing practices in the United States. Employing officers connected to such a legacy of criminalization while simultaneously taking away funds that could be used elsewhere to support student learning proves detrimental to students' feelings of safety. Alternatives to policing can better utilize CPS money by addressing students' needs, funding resources and personnel committed to supporting students. One interviewee expressed the desire for an SRO whose main focus was relationship building with students. If the goal is to not criminalize student behavior, schools must divorce themselves from the idea of turning law enforcement into relationship builders and consider what other staff could be hired to fulfill that role of relationship building and conflict resolution.

From these interviews, I also reached conclusions pertinent to the ongoing SRO debate throughout Chicago Public Schools and in districts nationwide. First, the roles in which SROs

occupy within one's school community influences an individual's position in the debate. As mentioned before, there exists a growing body of literature connecting the roles in which SROs occupy in school communities to the criminalization of student behavior and feelings of student safety. Since the role of an SROs is up to the interpretation of each school administration, the variation in their use is expected. Interviewees who shared stories where an individual SRO was more involved with students' daily life tended to look upon the position more favorably. Meanwhile, those personally criminalized by school resource officers or who recognized the systemic effects of policing often advocated to remove SROs entirely.

Second, school safety requires the implementation of preventative measures and a school resource officer can only serve as a reactionary one. Whether addressing external or internal threats of violence, interviewees mentioned how police only respond once violence has commenced, if they choose to intervene at all. When they do intervene, especially in internal situations, interviewees noted how simply their involvement can criminalize behavior regardless of the level of violence.

Third, reimagining school safety must avoid reinstating personnel that serve the same function as law enforcement. Some interviewees, regardless of SRO stance, vocalized a need for violence prevention and conflict resolution. In employing alternative personnel to school resource officers, Chicago Public Schools must avoid following other cities who reinstated law enforcement under a different name. School safety personnel should protect students and not be used against them; therefore, new personnel should approach conflict resolution and violence prevention in ways that do not criminalize students. Creating a new community-based safety plan should involve input from every interest group of the CPS community, especially students.

Students' voices must be elevated in order to assure their needs are met and that the safety plan actually makes students feel safer.

Fourth, teachers can play an important role in the surveillance and criminalization of their students. Inversely, teachers can also play a crucial role in preventing student behavior from being criminalized in the presence or absence of SROs. In order to assure school safety, schools should prioritize building teacher-student relationships as well as reevaluate policies and procedures regarding student misbehavior. Ideally, school safety plans should create an environment in which teachers collaborate with students in assuring a safer school and where no one feels that criminalizing student behavior is unnecessary.

Collaboration between interest groups will best assure the successful implementation of the reimagined school safety plans. While it must be acknowledged that student efforts motivated the move towards alternative safety and police-free schooling, support from parents, teachers, LSC members and especially CPS administration will be important. Interviewees shared anecdotes of some unsupportive teachers who valued their current safety plan and CPS administrators obstructing the voting process. Input and buy-in from all stakeholders will be crucial in making sure whatever alternative safety plan a school chooses is sustainable and accomplishes its goals in making everyone feel safe.

Within this democratic and collaborative process, it must also be acknowledged that the issue this SRO policy addresses, the criminalization of student behavior by law enforcement, does not affect all of those involved in the decision making process equally. Black and other non-white students face criminalization by SROs at disproportionate rates when compared to their white counterparts. Yet, schools serving the most affected populations are more likely to keep their law enforcement (Karp 2020). This calls into question how effective this policy can

be. Nationally, Black and other non-white neighborhoods are overpoliced and surveillance and its members are more likely to have excessive police force used against them in comparison to their white counterparts (Cherone 2022). Therefore, while democratic deliberation still appears to be the best option, it is important that those most historically criminalized by SROs have influence in this decision making process. Otherwise, this policy will simply continue to reproduce these disparities in policing seen outside schools, where law enforcement is concentrated in non-white environments.

However, if this decision making process is performed correctly, it may serve as an example to decrease law enforcement presence elsewhere. The Defund the Police movement focuses on decreasing the presence of law enforcement from all institutions. Schools are microcosms of the societies they serve (Kira 2019). If Chicago Public Schools's SRO policy and decision making process are utilized correctly, the district may hold solutions that could be replicated in school districts across the country. It could also serve as an example of how to approach decreasing police presence throughout society.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

FOR JADINE CHOU

- What has been the process of getting this policy approved? What was your role?
 - Why was there such a push to get SROs out of school
 - Who have been the main players in this movement?
- What does school safety mean to you?
- What are the alternatives to SROs? Ways to address student misbehavior?
- Current landscape of CPS safety? SROs...how many and where?
- How is it going in school that has gotten rid? What has the sentiment been around their absence?
 - What is the sentiment in schools where they've been kept?
- Any resources to push me in the direction of?
- How has policy affected arrests, suspensions, involvement of the juvenile system?
- Ask about decrease in misconduct and police referral starting in the 2019-2020 school year...what happened?
 - Decrease was sustained after COVID (in 2021-2022)
 - Decrease over the past decade too?
- How is money being reallocated from schools who get rid of SRO? How is money being redistributed district wide within reduction in contract from CPD?
- Is the policy working as intended?
- How can social workers/counselors be used more effectively?
- Someone I interviewed really analyzed the role SROs occupy in their school affects perception of them? Have you seen that in your experience?
 - Relationship building...is that what is missing from SRO? Should SROs be more involved
- policies/practices in place in SRO-less school for dangerous non student behavior related issues? Gun-related or other violence?

- Things being done district wide regardless of SRO status

ABOUT THE SCHOOL/ INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- What is your relationship to/ role in the school community?
- How long have you been part of the school community?
- How has your experience been as a part of the community?
 - Are there any anecdotes that you feel describe your experience?
- How are student relationships with teachers and administrators?
 - If teacher/ administrator...how have you worked to understand the opinions and needs of your students?
 - If a former student...do you believe the adults at your school understood and valued the opinions of you and your peers?

SAFETY AND SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

- What does school safety mean to you?
- What measures does your school have in place that makes you feel safe? Measures that make you feel unsafe? Anything that would make you feel safer?
 - If you feel unsafe, are there people you can go to?
- How is student misbehavior handled at your school?
 - What policies are in place around misbehavior and punishment?
- Does your school have school resource officers?
 - If yes, what has your personal experience been with SROs? How do others feel about their presence? Do you notice that their presence affects students in their learning environment?
 - What is their role in your school?
 - Interaction with SROs...positive or negative?
 - If not, when did your school get rid of them? What has the sentiment been around their absence? How has the school year gone without SROs?
 - If they were there before and after removal... What is the biggest difference in your school between the presence and absence of SROs?
 - Would you feel safer with SROs on campus?
- Do you think schools should continue to remove SROs from their campuses?
 - If not, why not?
 - If so, what measures should be used instead to ensure community safety?
- Do you think the role school resource officers take affects the community's perception of them? How so?

MOVEMENT TO REMOVE SROs

- What are your opinions around the continuing movement around removing policing from schools?
- Did you have any involvement in the movement to remove SROs from schools?

- What was your role?
- Successes/challenges of the movement?

QUESTIONS ABOUT ALTERNATIVES

- How has your school community responded to alternative to policing
 - What have they implemented?
- What is your ideal alternative?
- What would your ideal school environment look like?

Table 1: Codebook

Perspective of the community	References a certain community perspective in the conversation around SROs
● student	References student voice or student perspective in SRO debate, or their background
● administration	References administration positions in SRO debate, or their background
● admin safety	References what admin has done around safety in CPS, or their background
● Teacher	References teacher positions in SRO debate, or their background
● parent	References parent positions in SRO debate, or their background
● Local school council	References LSC member positions in SRO debate, or their background
● LSC meetings	References anything LSC meeting related
SRO	
● Cops Out CPS movement	References the work being done to get SROs out of Chicago Public Schools, including resistance face, timeline of events, etc
● Role of SRO	References the role SROs play in their school community or the role they think SROs should serve

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher involvement 	References teacher involvement in the surveillance of student behavior or teacher getting law enforcement involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep SRO 	References the choice of keeping or removing SROs, personal and school opinion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-SRO 	References the belief that SROs should stay and what, if any, should change about their role or that they have been voted to stay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-SRO 	References the belief that SRO should be removed or have been removed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story/Anecdote 	References any story that explain the presence SROs have in a school community, how they are used and interactions with students. Also could reference stories around the process of choosing to keep or remove SROs
Alternatives	References any proposed or desired alternatives to policing in schools or reallocation of police contract
Future Research	References to any future research that needs to be conducted around SRO policy

CPS Behavior Data

Table 2 (Misconducts)

	School Year	Time Period	# of Misconducts	# of Group 1-2 (minor) Misconducts	# of Group 3-4 (moderate) Misconducts	# of Group 5-6 (major) Misconducts
District Wide	2013-2014	S1	61661	31505	26153	4003
District Wide	2013-2014	EOY	120543	58906	53311	8326
District Wide	2014-2015	S1	60026	35577	20971	3478
District Wide	2014-2015	EOY	132529	74771	49841	7917
District Wide	2015-2016	S1	60093	34187	22244	3662
District Wide	2015-2016	EOY	122104	68376	46004	7724

District Wide	2016-2017	S1	51213	32793	15487	2933
District Wide	2016-2017	EOY	100489	62078	32379	6032
District Wide	2017-2018	S1	49583	32977	13683	2923
District Wide	2017-2018	EOY	97727	63453	28190	6084
District Wide	2018-2019	S1	39461	23460	12304	3697
District Wide	2018-2019	EOY	76916	42689	26403	7824
District Wide	2019-2020	S1	33002	18908	12165	1929
District Wide	2019-2020	EOY	48404	26568	18803	3033
District Wide	2020-2021	S1	1996	1173	737	86
District Wide	2020-2021	EOY	3922	2350	1406	166
District Wide	2021-2022	S1	28067	16214	9850	2003
District Wide	2021-2022	EOY	72348	43387	24085	4876

Table 3 (Expulsions)

	School Year	Time Period	All Expulsions		District School Expulsions	
			# of students expelled	Expulsions per 100 students	# of students expelled	Expulsions per 100 students
District Wide	2013-2014	S1	205	0.06	70	0.02
District Wide	2013-2014	EOY	495	0.17	184	0.06
District Wide	2014-2015	S1	138	0.04	20	0.01
District Wide	2014-2015	EOY	430	0.15	111	0.04
District Wide	2015-2016	S1	138	0.04	34	0.01
District Wide	2015-2016	EOY	358	0.13	75	0.03
District Wide	2016-2017	S1	117	0.03	46	0.01
District Wide	2016-2017	EOY	258	0.09	103	0.04
District Wide	2017-2018	S1	62	0.02	13	0
District Wide	2017-2018	EOY	198	0.08	52	0.02
District Wide	2018-2019	S1	65	0.02		
District Wide	2018-2019	EOY	171	0.07	27	0.01
District Wide	2019-2020	S1	34	0.01	2	0

District Wide	2019-2020	EOY	72	0.03	16	0.01
District Wide	2020-2021	S1	2	0		
District Wide	2020-2021	EOY	4	0		
District Wide	2021-2022	S1	33	0.01	11	0.01
District Wide	2021-2022	EOY	113	0.05	33	0.02

Tables 4-6 (Suspensions)

Suspension (includes In School & Out of School)				
	School Year	Time Period	# of Suspensions	% of Misconducts
District Wide	2013-2014	S1	45455	73.7
District Wide	2013-2014	EOY	87763	72.8
District Wide	2014-2015	S1	27601	46
District Wide	2014-2015	EOY	63031	47.6
District Wide	2015-2016	S1	26924	44.8
District Wide	2015-2016	EOY	57321	46.9
District Wide	2016-2017	S1	17384	33.9
District Wide	2016-2017	EOY	38199	38
District Wide	2017-2018	S1	15742	31.7
District Wide	2017-2018	EOY	34168	35
District Wide	2018-2019	S1	15280	38.7
District Wide	2018-2019	EOY	32726	42.5
District Wide	2019-2020	S1	9794	29.7
District Wide	2019-2020	EOY	15047	31.1
District Wide	2020-2021	S1	16	0.8
District Wide	2020-2021	EOY	44	1.1
District Wide	2021-2022	S1	5689	20.3
District Wide	2021-2022	EOY	16107	22.3

Out of School Suspensions (OSS)								
	School Year	Time Period	# of OSS	% of Misconducts Resulting In	OSS per 100	# of Unique	% of Unique Students Receiving OSS	Average Length of OSS
District Wide	2013-2014	S1	25229	40.9	7.96	16235	5.1	2.47
District Wide	2013-2014	EOY	49708	41.2	16.69	26436	8.9	2.46
District Wide	2014-2015	S1	9926	16.5	3.12	7019	2.2	2.41
District Wide	2014-2015	EOY	24363	18.4	8.21	14364	4.8	2.33
District Wide	2015-2016	S1	10177	16.9	3.18	7353	2.3	2.29
District Wide	2015-2016	EOY	23147	19	8.26	14059	5	2.26
District Wide	2016-2017	S1	7039	13.7	2.25	5318	1.7	2.06
District Wide	2016-2017	EOY	16625	16.5	6	10766	3.9	2.04
District Wide	2017-2018	S1	6272	12.6	2.1	4890	1.6	2.08
District Wide	2017-2018	EOY	13563	13.9	5.86	9239	4	2.06
District Wide	2018-2019	S1	5279	13.4	1.81	4145	1.4	1.89
District Wide	2018-2019	EOY	11585	15.1	5.17	8004	3.6	1.91
District Wide	2019-2020	S1	3626	11	1.37	2930	1.1	1.86
District Wide	2019-2020	EOY	6023	12.4	2.79	4573	2.1	1.92
District Wide	2020-2021	S1	15	0.8	0.01	15	0	1.67
District Wide	2020-2021	EOY	43	1.1	0.02	40	0	1.67

District Wide	2021-2022	S1	3693	13.2	1.72	2943	1.4	2.12
District Wide	2021-2022	EOY	9989	13.8	5.39	6753	3.6	2.15

In School Suspensions (ISS)								
	School Year	Time Period	# of ISS	% of Misconducts Resulting In	ISS per 100	# of Unique	% of Unique Students Receiving ISS	Average Length of ISS
District Wide	2013-2014	S1	20226	32.8	6.38	11263	3.6	1.24
District Wide	2013-2014	EOY	38055	31.6	12.77	17597	5.9	1.3
District Wide	2014-2015	S1	17675	29.4	5.55	9518	3	1.25
District Wide	2014-2015	EOY	38668	29.2	13.02	16608	5.6	1.25
District Wide	2015-2016	S1	16747	27.9	5.24	8630	2.7	1.21
District Wide	2015-2016	EOY	34174	28	12.19	15173	5.4	1.23
District Wide	2016-2017	S1	10345	20.2	3.3	6624	2.1	1.24
District Wide	2016-2017	EOY	21574	21.5	7.78	12227	4.4	1.26
District Wide	2017-2018	S1	9470	19.1	3.17	6359	2.1	1.28
District Wide	2017-2018	EOY	20605	21.1	8.9	11843	5.1	1.28
District Wide	2018-2019	S1	10001	25.3	3.42	6461	2.2	1.25
District Wide	2018-2019	EOY	21141	27.5	9.44	11432	5.1	1.25
District	2019-2020	S1	6168	18.7	2.33	4423	1.7	1.27

Wide								
District Wide	2019-2020	EOY	9024	18.6	4.18	6134	2.8	1.26
District Wide	2020-2021	S1	1	0.1	0	1	0	2
District Wide	2020-2021	EOY	1	0	0	1	0	2
District Wide	2021-2022	S1	1996	7.1	0.93	1662	0.8	1.31
District Wide	2021-2022	EOY	6118	8.5	3.3	4549	2.5	1.29

Table 7 (Police Notifications)

	School Year	Time Period	# of Police Notifications	% of Misconducts Resulting in Police	Police Notifications per 100	# of Unique Students Receiving	% of Unique Students Receiving Police
District Wide	2013-2014	S1	2143	3.5	0.68	1864	0.6
District Wide	2013-2014	EOY	4342	3.6	1.46	3543	1.2
District Wide	2014-2015	S1	1958	3.3	0.61	1671	0.5
District Wide	2014-2015	EOY	4210	3.2	1.42	3347	1.1
District Wide	2015-2016	S1	1549	2.6	0.48	1340	0.4
District Wide	2015-2016	EOY	3253	2.7	1.16	2637	0.9
District Wide	2016-2017	S1	1325	2.6	0.42	1171	0.4
District Wide	2016-2017	EOY	2681	2.7	0.97	2215	0.8
District Wide	2017-2018	S1	1158	2.3	0.39	1018	0.3

District Wide	2017-2018	EOY	2354	2.4	1.02	1995	0.9
District Wide	2018-2019	S1	1054	2.7	0.36	905	0.3
District Wide	2018-2019	EOY	1757	2.3	0.78	1486	0.7
District Wide	2019-2020	S1	1015	3.1	0.38	911	0.3
District Wide	2019-2020	EOY	1586	3.3	0.73	1393	0.6
District Wide	2020-2021	S1	17	0.9	0.01	17	0
District Wide	2020-2021	EOY	57	1.5	0.03	53	0
District Wide	2021-2022	S1	551	2	0.26	507	0.2
District Wide	2021-2022	EOY	1245	1.7	0.67	1131	0.6