
US Largest Public Schools Have More Police than Counselors

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School security officers outnumber counselors in four out of the 10 largest public school districts in the United States, according to a new report carried out by education website The 74.

The study collected data from the nation's 10 largest school districts in order to calculate the ratio of counselors to security personnel.

New York City, Chicago, Miami-Dade County, and Houston schools all employ more security officers than counselors, the report found.

Per 1,000 students, New York City has 5.28 security officers, but only 2.9 counselors. Chicago has 4.21 officers to 2.18 counselors. And Miami has 6.32 officers to 2.28 counselors.

However, opponents of punitive discipline methods say more armed guards do not necessarily guarantee safer learning environments.

"The best way of preventing violence ... is by creating an environment that is rich in supports for students," David Osher, a vice president of the American Institute of Research told the 74. "Counselors play a really important role in that."

Meanwhile, the study also revealed that schools with high proportions of students of color are significantly more likely to have security personnel.

Critics argue that attempts to crack down on school violence through punitive measures contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline and disproportionately targets minority students.

"I'm not surprised, but it still concerns me really deeply," Dennis Parker, director of the ACLU's racial justice

programs told The 74. "It reflects an approach to school discipline and school safety that is ultimately counterproductive."

The number of armed security officers on school grounds has increased drastically in the last 15 years.

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