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Statement: UYC Slams NYPD for Plan to Hire & Train 475 New School Safety Agents

Plan would add \$20 million to \$450 million SSA budget

New York — *In response to today's announcement that the New York Police Department is intending to hire 475 new School Safety Agents (SSAs) by June, adding \$20 million to the School Safety Division budget, students from the Urban Youth Collaborative released the following statement:*

“As youth fighting for justice in our schools, we are appalled and heartbroken to hear that the city is not only ignoring our calls for police-free schools, but also planning to hire an additional 475 school safety agents.

“The city is already spending over \$450 million funding cops to patrol our hallways, criminalizing and traumatizing us. Students have been shouting for years that police do not make us safe, and that this money should instead fund the guidance counselors, social workers, and restorative justice programming that we need.

“Earlier today, many of us testified against Intr. 2211, which would further entrench cops in schools and feed the school-to-prison pipeline for years to come. It was a slap in the face to learn that in addition to that horrendous bill, written without consulting youth, the NYPD is also planning to hire 475 agents at an additional 20 million dollars.

“This news makes it clear that too many of our leaders in city government refuse to put our well being first. We're thrilled to see allies like Councilmembers Rosenthal, Lander, Menchaca, Kallos, and Reynoso stand with us against policing in schools, and even more excited to see over 75 candidates for City Council sign on to our Vision for Police Free Schools.

“To put it into perspective: thousands of New York City students can't afford a laptop or wi-fi for remote learning, but our city is now considering spending another \$20 million for police to patrol empty school buildings. We, the youth of New York City, are calling their bluff. We need police free schools.”

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