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Tomorrow: Students, Elected Officials to Testify for Police-Free Schools at Education Budget Hearings

+75 City Council + three mayoral candidates have committed to removing police from schools

Visuals: zoom backgrounds with various slogans related to removing police from schools

NEW YORK — 7 members of the Urban Youth Collaborative, all of whom are current New York City public school students, will tomorrow testify at the Committee on Education Preliminary Budget Hearing in favor of the complete elimination of the \$450 million school policing budget and investment in restorative justice practices, school support staff, and a mental health continuum.

Additionally, dozens of students and their allies will virtually join the hearings in support of police-free schools, all displaying zoom backgrounds highlighting the criminalization of Black and Latinx students of school policing and the severe underfunding of other critical services and personnel at their schools.

When: 9:00 AM
March 23, 2021

Where: Remote hearing — [Virtual Room 2](#).

Who:

New York City students:

Jade Entien — Dreamyard Prep, Grade 11

Brielka Rodriguez — Curtis HS, Grade 9

Ayesha Ejaz — Brooklyn Lab School, Grade 11

Akeria Adams — Academy of Medical Technology, Grade 11

Osvaldo Velasquez — College of the Atlantic, sophomore

Marcos Romero — Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School, Grade 10

Matthew Melendez — James Kiernan Junior High School, Grade 7

In June of 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio refused to heed the call from students and activists to remove NYPD presence from schools and instead coalesced around [ineffective reform](#) to shift jurisdiction of school security to the Department of Education. In February, over 75 City Council candidates rejected this faux-reform and instead committed to the Urban Youth Collaborative's ["Young People's Vision for Police Free Schools,"](#) a roadmap outlining what divestment and

reinvestment will entail. Last week, mayoral candidates Shaun Donovan, Maya Wiley, and Dianne Morales also committed publicly to police free schools.

New York City's FY21 budget allocated \$451,566,931 to the SSD budget, including funding for School Safety Agents (i.e. school police), metal detectors, and fringe benefits. The proposed budget for FY22 [maintains similar funding levels](#), despite the city's enormous and ongoing budget deficit. Meanwhile, the budget includes cuts to School Allocation Memorandum which fund critical youth support programs.

About the Urban Youth Collaborative: UYC is a coalition of students from across New York City fighting for transformative education reform that puts students first, with a focus on replacing harmful policing in schools with restorative justice and trauma-informed care. The UYC coalition is made up of members from the [Future of Tomorrow](#) of Cypress Hills Local Development and Corporation, [Make the Road New York](#), and [Sistas and Brothas United of the Northwest Bronx](#).

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