



BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING - WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS – MAY 28, 2024

1. I am a parent of three young children in BSD. I am writing today to express my opposition to the inclusion of \$750,000 for Youth Services Officers (YSOs) in the school budget. I greatly wish those funds would be used for alternate services that would create a safer and more supportive learning environment for all kids.

My children are mixed race kids, and knowing how disproportionately Black and brown students (as well as LGBTQ+ and other marginalized students) are impacted by the presence of police in schools, it concerns me greatly. Historical evidence of the school to prison pipeline is vast and we know that police officers in schools often lead to the escalation of minor disciplinary issues into criminal matters. Our students do not deserve to have minor misbehavior criminalized, which will lead to long-term negative consequences for the child.

There is little evidence to support that having police in schools effectively prevents school shootings or other forms of serious violence. The district needs to be focusing on the root cause of behavioral issues and spending the \$750,000 on services that would address those needs, which would in turn decrease violence in our schools. Investments in mental health services, counseling, and restorative justice programs have been shown to be more effective in addressing the root causes of violence and improving overall school safety.

Please put these funds towards something that will actually benefit our students and our community, rather than something that will only cause more harm. Our budget should reflect our district's stated values, and if we spend \$750,000 on police, I believe our district values need to be changed.

2. As a BSD parent and staff member and a Beaverton community member, I ask you to put the stated values of the district front and center with this budget by divesting the \$750,000 slated for police in schools and instead investing that money in staffing and resources that center student, staff, and family wellness. There is abundant research that police in schools do not prevent violence but rather contribute to racist and ableist harm and discipline gaps for historically resilient communities. If we are going to truly be a district where every child Belongs, Believes, and Achieves, we need to double down on a budget is aligned with all of the research that shows that investing in restorative justice, social emotional learning, and Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports. In this current budget landscape, every dollar counts. As the Collaborative Alternative Solutions to Exclusion Coordinator, I know what we could do as a district if we put more money into systems of equity and care and how that would lead to better outcomes for ALL students. \$750,000 is no small thing, and we owe it to our community to be thoughtful with every single dollar we invest. We can and must do better for our students, families, and community.