



## Black Organizing Project

[www.blackorganizingproject.org](http://www.blackorganizingproject.org)

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Dear Fellow ,

The Black Organizing Project (BOP) is a grassroots, member-led organization who is working to: develop Black leaders through political education and community building, dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline and end the over criminalization of Black youth and families.

We are deeply appalled and saddened by the current federal administration's call to arm teachers and to add more police in schools and communities. We know that the militarization of our schools and communities is but a component of the deep seeded issue of anti-Black racism and white supremacy in this country. We are fighting with community to ensure that the schools are sanctuaries for ALL students. We know Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) considers itself a "sanctuary district"; So much so that one of the pillars OUSD stands on states, "all students have the right to attend school free of fear, bullying and discrimination,"— however, Black and Brown students are left out of that equation. In fact, the racial disparities within OUSD are getting worse for Black students.

### 2016-2017 Facts:

- There were 2,266 calls to the Oakland School Police Department
- Most of these calls were for disciplinary actions that Teachers/Administrators could have handled
- 3 out of 4 arrest are of Black students
- 2 out of 5 Black middle school students are sent to the office 1 or more times

Since the 2015-16 school year until now, staff has made over 6,000 calls to police on students. Studies show that arrests, suspensions, and referrals to law enforcement, double the likelihood of the student dropout rate and increase the possibility of disengagement in school. In California alone, 90% of Black males without a high school diploma go to prison by the age of 35.



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In the case of state violence, nationwide far too many Black youth have been murdered at the hands of law enforcement – from Tamir Rice to Michael Brown. We all have watched the videos of children as young as 5 being handcuffed or physically assaulted in class by those who are supposed to protect and support them. The Black community in Oakland has faced a fifty year assault by the city and school system since the rise of Black Power and Black Panther resistance. Sanctuary schools and cities rings hollow throughout our communities with the triple violence of unemployment, displacement and mass incarceration. Our schools are disinvested in, our students are criminalized and left with little support, and teachers and administration are overworked and underpaid. Despite this, we believe that we all have a role to play as a part of the solution. It will take all of us but can start with just one. Calling any law enforcement agency on any child is unacceptable. School should be a sanctuary that is free from racism, free from implicit bias, free from fear and free from physical danger.

As an educator, I pledge to fight to make sure Oakland Unified School District is a sanctuary for all students. I pledge to not contribute to the criminalization of Black students by participating in the following:

**I \_\_\_\_\_ Pledge**

- To stand as an advocate and witness for students and parents threatened by any law enforcement agency
- Not to call Police on children
  - For school disciplinary issues which include school fights
  - I will seek out restorative justice practices or alternative measures
  - I will not take statements or interviews from students about alleged misconducts without their parent's/advocates' presence
- Not To Call ICE On Children
- Not To Call Homeland Security on Children
- Not To Call The Police on Children with Disabilities



- I wish to remain anonymous  \_\_\_\_\_
- I wish to subscribe to our enewsletter  \_\_\_\_\_
- I wish to spread the word, volunteer, and/or contribute to BOP's cause.  \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(What school site are you affiliated with?)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Mailing address)

X \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)