Fighting for #CounselorsNotCops in Schools

## Action Toolkit and Education Resources

Goals and Purpose of this Toolkit

The audience for this toolkit are organizers who want to share background with members and educators working with students to understand the issues and support the fight for Dignity in Schools!

The goals for this toolkit are to provide educational, informational and actionable resources to help realize the ongoing struggle to remove police from public schools, curb spending on technology that criminalizes young people, allocate more funding to Restorative Justice, and break the school-to-prison pipeline.

The toolkit is organized in separate modules that can be used as stand-alone activities and as a series of cumulative activities focused on Dignity in Schools campaign organizing goals.

For more information and additional resources, please check: http://dignityinschools.org
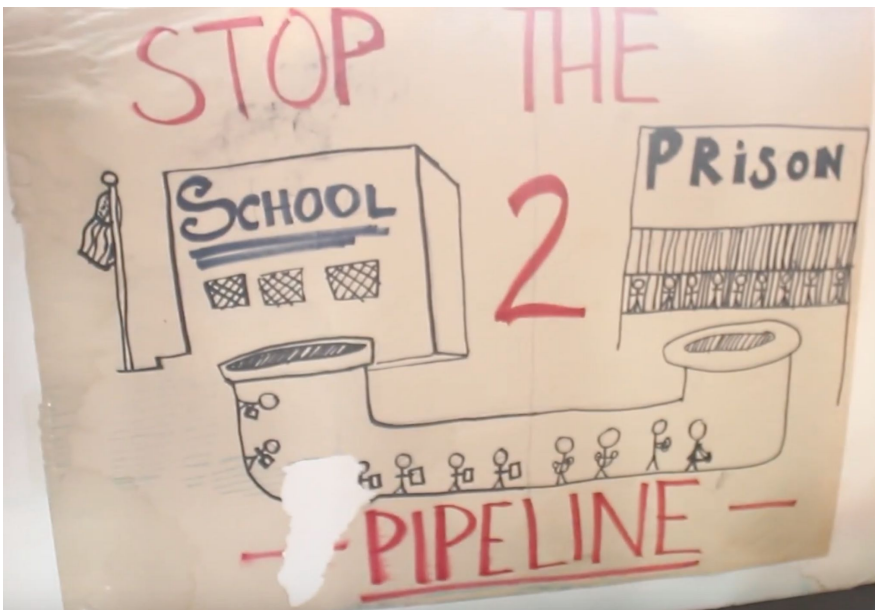
Activity 1: Envisioning Safety in Our Schools

Goal: Imagine what safety in schools looks like using creative drawings

Facilitator: When we think about safety what comes to mind?

Don't tell! Show, by **Drawing It!**

Use a blank sheet of paper, to draw a place, a person, an activity, or something that makes you feel safe, at peace, even brave.

Do this **visually without writing** out an explanation.

Any questions? OK, Let's Draw!

Facilitator(s) also draw their depiction of a safe and supportive community

After all are finished, Facilitator, asks people to share and describe their drawings

Materials:

- **Blank letter-size paper**
- **Butcher paper**
- **Tape**
- **Pens**
- **Markers.**

Running Time: 20-30 minutes, depending on group size and how much discussion is generated.

Activity 1: Envisioning Safety in Our Schools

Facilitator: *takes notes on butcher paper*

Any initial thoughts about this exercise? How did it feel drawing a picture of safety in your school?

What are the different ways we've envisioned safety in our schools? Any similarities or patterns?

Did anyone notice pictures with a lot of police, surveillance cameras, metal detectors or razor wire? If these images are in our drawings, why do they make us feel safe? Who is being watched, and why? What is being protected, and kept safe? How is this being done? And who is unprotected and vulnerable in this situation?

How is safety often depicted in movies or TV shows that feature cops and young people in schools, in their neighborhoods, their communities?

Does anyone have any examples?

Activity 1: Envisioning Safety in Our Schools

**Facilitator**: *takes notes on butcher paper*

How can we expand the narrative of school safety beyond:

- Putting more cops in schools
- Installing more metal detectors and surveillance technologies?

How can we **reframe** safety and **shift** it from a more capitalist (protect property, use consumer solution like buying surveillance equipment) and muscular (forceful and punitive) understanding to a vision of liberation?

What are the stories we need to write, produce and distribute? Who are the heroes of this narrative?

Activity 1: Envisioning Safety in Our Schools
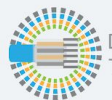
Activity 2: Screening & Discussion of #CounselorsNotCops

Facilitator: We're going to screen a short video, *Counselors, Not Cops: Creating Safe and Supportive Environments in America's Schools*, a youth-produced documentary showing educators, students and administrators organizing to create safe and supportive environments in schools with alternatives to punitive disciplinary practices.

Materials:

- **Youtube link**
- **Butcher paper**
- **Tape**
- **Pens**
- **Markers.**

Running Time: 20-30 minutes, depending on group size and how much discussion is generated.

Activity 2: Screening & Discussion of #CounselorsNotCops

Facilitator: *takes notes on butcher paper*

What were some of the organizations/coalitions mentioned in the video? What are their goals?

What were the young people in the film saying about metal detectors? Do you agree? Do metal detectors make you feel safe? Why or why not?

Have you ever witnessed or been a victim of harassment/arrest by police in your school? What happened?

Have you ever felt like you've been unfairly targeted by authorities in your school?

Have you ever had a helpful interaction with a school police officer?

Have you ever had the chance to speak with a counselor to resolve an issue? How is it different from your interaction with school police/security guards?

Activity 2: Screening & Discussion of #CounselorsNotCops

Facilitator:
Now that we've screened the video and shared our experiences with police in schools, can we summarize our reasons why we need counselors trained in restorative justice and not cops in schools? Let's put it in our own words: Why are we fighting for restorative justice? What's at stake?

Facilitator writes on butcher paper, summarizing and paraphrasing as best they can for clarity

Campaign Accomplishments & Campaign Goals

What have we done so far? Campaign Victories:

School to Prison pipeline - list accomplishments

Where are we now?

Where do we want to go?

Activity 3: A History of the Fight for Education Justice

Facilitator: We're going to look at a digital timeline of a history of the struggle for education justice in NYC.
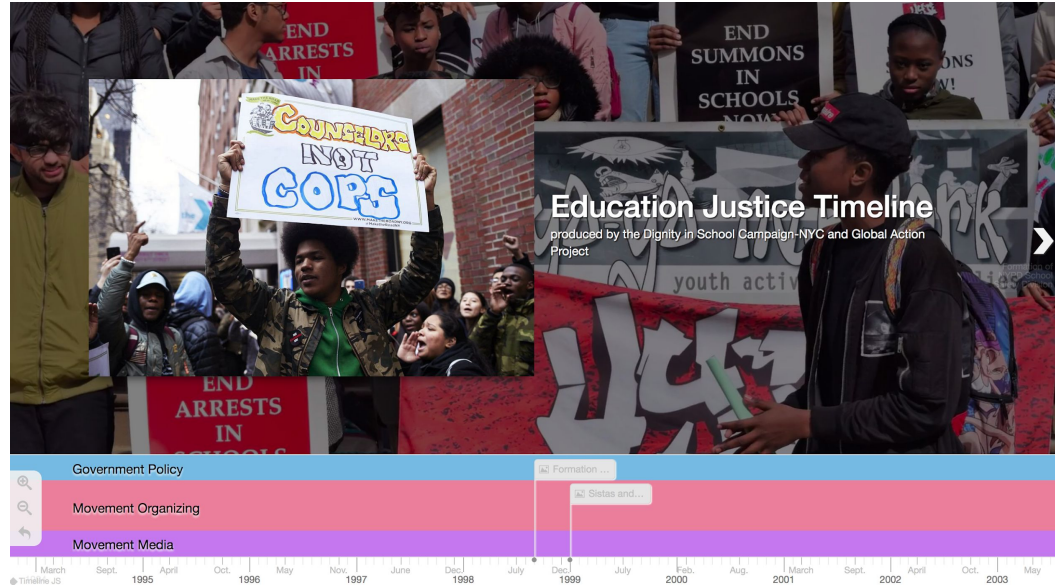
Facilitator(s) go to,
http://bit.ly/EdJusticeTimeline

This movement history timeline was created by GAP and DSC in 2017, with a web-based, timeline tool you can access here,
https://www.movementhistory.org/

And an online tutorial to build your own timelines,
http://bit.ly/MHTHowTo

Materials:
- **MHT link**
- **Butcher paper**
- **Tape**
- **Pens**
- **Markers.**

Running Time: 20-30 minutes, depending on group size and how much discussion generated.

Activity 3: A History of the Fight for Education Justice

Facilitator: This timeline currently consists of 3 tracks or themes:

- Government policy
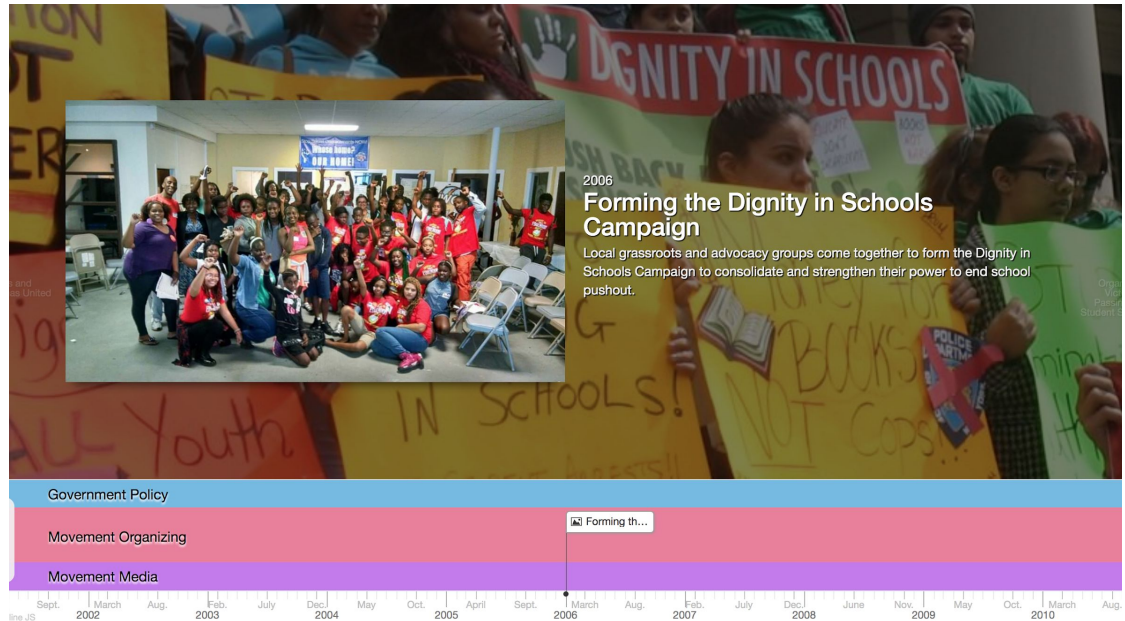- Movement Organizing
- Movement Media

Within these tracks there are:

2 Gov't policy stories

6 Movement organizing stories:

1 Movement media story

Facilitator walks participants through digital timeline stories

# Activity 3: A History of the Fight for Education Justice

Facilitator *takes notes on butcher paper*

What does a history like this tell us? What stories are lifted up?

How might a history with this perspective help shift the narrative around school safety?

What stories are missing?

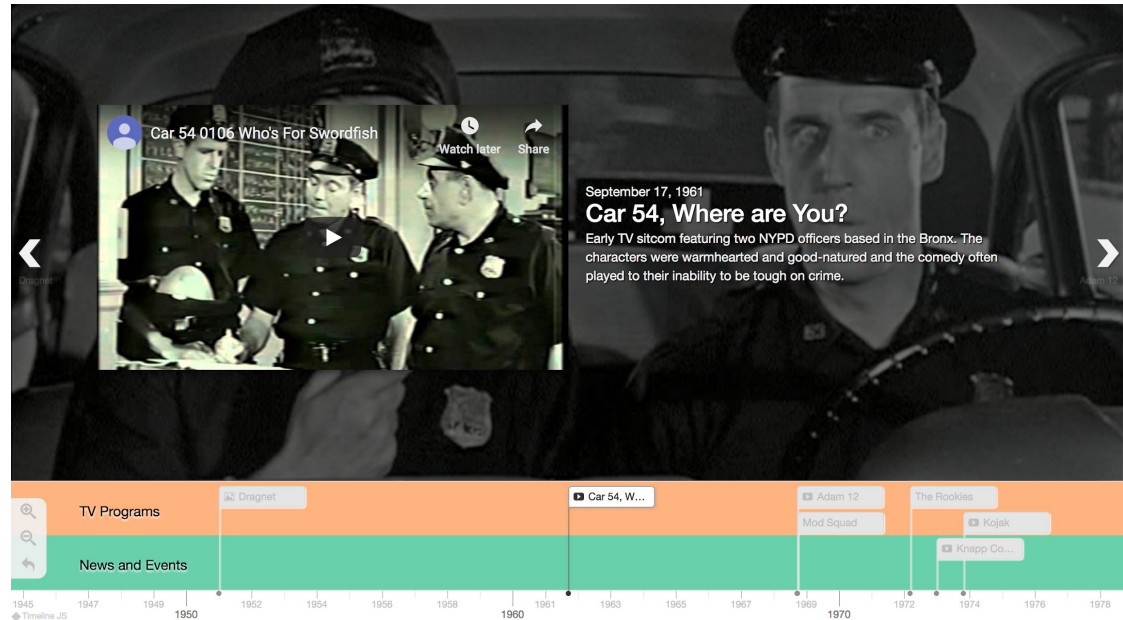What stories, from our possible future, can we add to this timeline to realize our campaign goals?
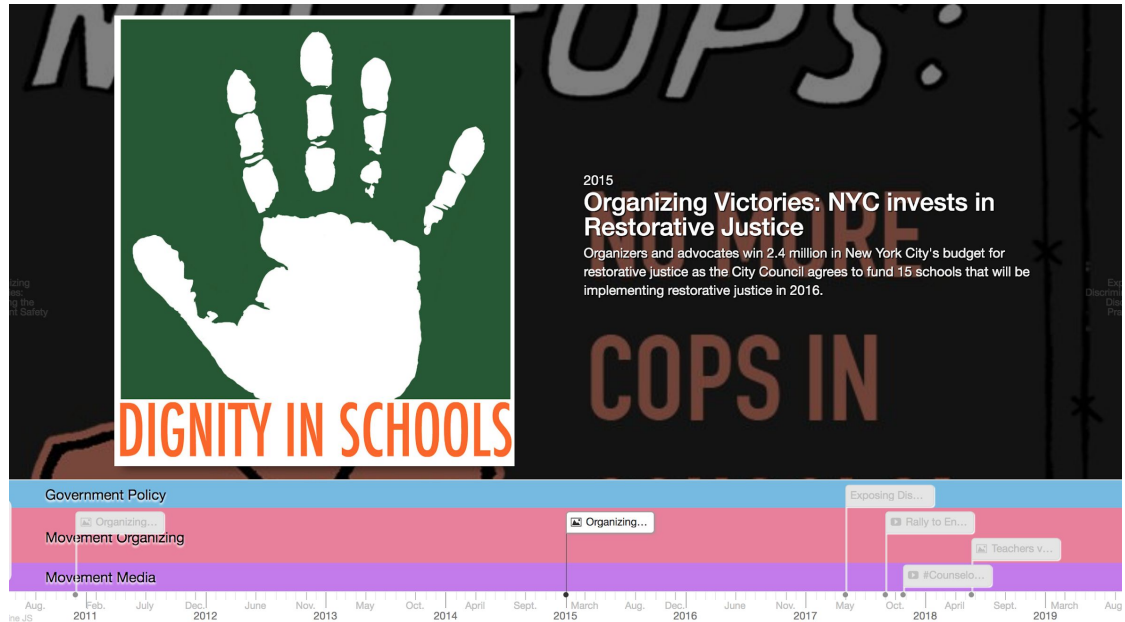
Activity 4: Good Cops & Super Predators, a TV History

Facilitator: Those who may not have everyday interactions with police learn about police, law enforcement and the criminal justice system through media.

This timeline explores a history of TV shows where the police, criminals and victims are cast members and the program's theme is justice? Or maybe something else?

Let's take a look at this media narrative

Facilitator(s) go to,
http://bit.ly/GoodCopMHT

September 17, 1961
Car 54, Where are You?
Early TV sitcom featuring two NYPD officers based in the Bronx. The characters were warmhearted and good-natured and the comedy often played to their inability to be tough on crime.

Activity 4: Good Cops & Super Predators, a TV History

Facilitator: This timeline consists of 2 tracks:

- TV Programs
- News & Events

These tracks are made up of:

- 24 different stories
- 19 stories in the TV programs tracks
- 5 stories in the News & Events tracks

Let's take a look at this history.

Facilitator clicks through stories

Activity 4: Good Cops & Super Predators, a TV History

Facilitator: *takes notes on butcher paper*

What initial thoughts do people have about these TV programs? Any patterns or similarities? Did any show seem different?

What about the news and events? Anything stand out? If you were too young to remember them happening, how did you learn about them?

There are plenty of stories and news missing from this historical narrative. Which TV programs and news events would you add?

Activity 5: Shifting Culture from Zero Tolerance to Liberated Schools

Facilitator: *This exercise builds from the previous activity's digital timeline:* http://bit.ly/GoodCopMHT

We are going to begin to dismantle the narrative of good cop and bad criminal.

After looking at the recent digital timeline who can share how this narrative was created?

Facilitator should bring the social climate of the time (Reaganomics, crack epidemic, AIDS pandemic, Central Park 5, etc) into the discussion.

"This is a SCHOOL, NOT a JAIL"

Materials:
- MHT link
- Butcher paper
- Post-its
- Tape
- Pens
- Markers.

Running Time: 20-30 minutes, depending on group size and how much discussion generated.

Activity 5: Shifting Culture from Zero Tolerance to Liberated Schools

Facilitator: *takes notes on butcher paper*

How was this policy of moving school safety from the DOE to the NYPD presented to the public?

As a temporary solution

How can we include abuse by NYPD as part of the narrative?

How can we include our stories in the narrative, and stories of proactive, less punitive solutions to school conflict?

Activity 5: Shifting Culture from Zero Tolerance to Liberated Schools

Facilitator: *draws basic tree from roots to trunk to branches on butcher paper and hands out colored post-its (or if possible different colored paper cut into leaf shapes)*

This activity is an adaption of one used in numerous trainings called the Tree of Liberation.

It's often paired with the Tree of Oppression exercise, however the Tree of Liberation provides a way to look beyond the injustice and suffering we're fighting to see the world we want to see.

For this activity, think of the leaves as examples of what we want to see in our schools. If our schools are liberated from oppressive forces that criminalize us, what does our school look like? What do we see? Everyday? In the hallways, classrooms, lunchrooms and schoolyards?
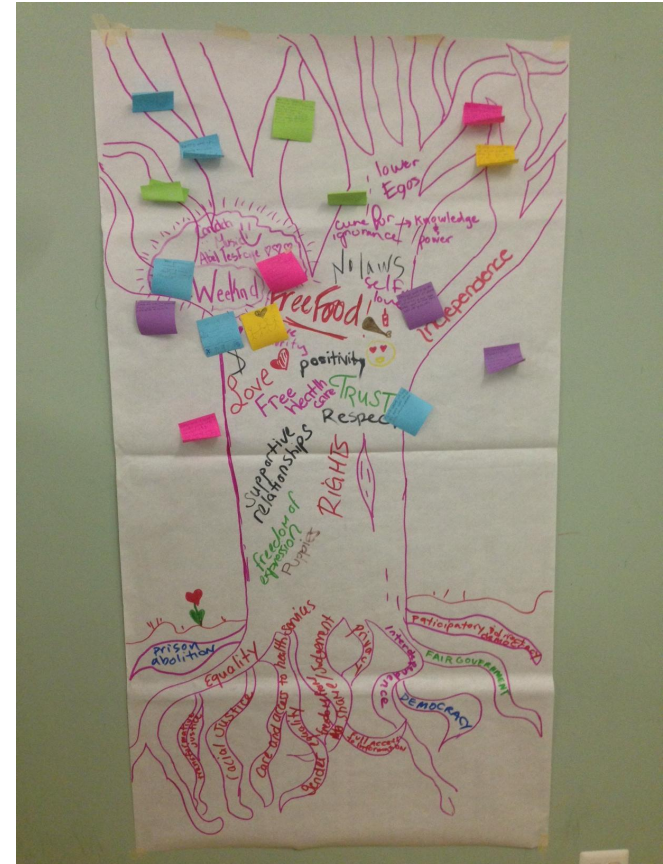
Activity 5: Shifting Culture from Zero Tolerance to Liberated Schools

Facilitator: *Allow time for participants to vision their stories, write them, and stick them to the tree. Then either Facilitator reads stories or students read them in turn.*

How did you feel doing this activity?

Was it difficult thinking of the world we want to see? Was it easy? Why?

Now that we've shared some of our stories on post-its, what are ways we can tell our stories of liberated schools beyond this butcher paper? How can we present them in ways that impacts policy?

some ideas Facilitator may introduce: digital timelines, graphics, social media posts, data visualizations, web video, audio interviews, others?
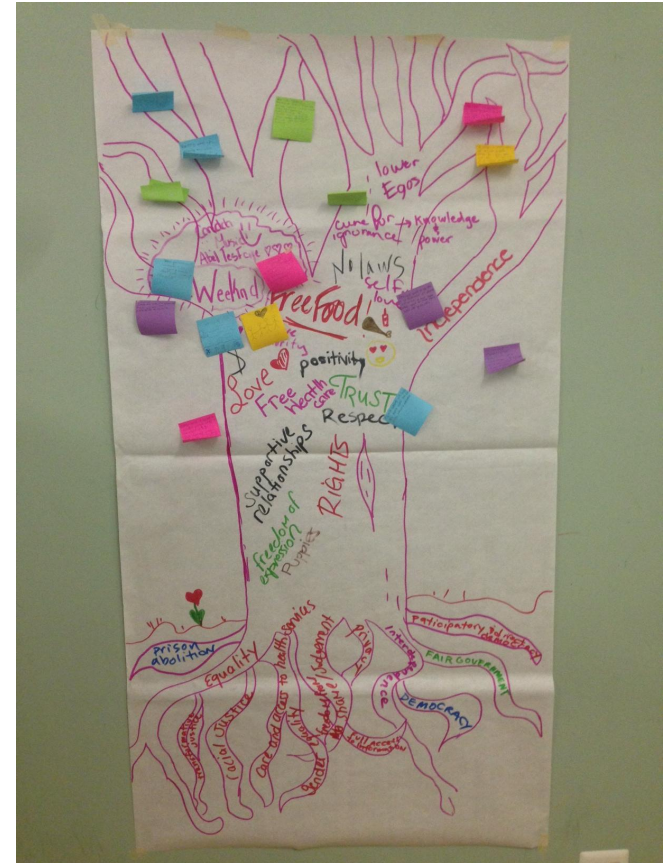
Activity 6: Oral History Project, School Safety Before NYPD and Now

Facilitator: *This multi-session project can be demanding and depending on skill level, equipment access, and other factors, a challenging assignment. That being said, oral histories are powerful stories and can be transformative for all, from producer to interview subject to audience.*

Audio Station: 录音站：记录你的故事

Talk about your your life, work your community,

谈谈你的社区，你的生活，你的工作和你的关心。

Facilitator: *For the purposes of this toolkit, we list resources for the basic elements of interviewing, production and editing. Youth-produced work is also noted to inspire more oral history projects!*

Activity 6: Oral History Project, School Safety Before NYPD and Now

Facilitator: *For this project, an initial challenge will be finding and confirming interviewees that can speak with experience about the subject. They will need to be senior educators and school administrators who worked with the Department of Education prior to 1998 when the NYPD took over school safety and continued working for sometime afterwards.*

A great place to start is your local school. In addition, organizations serving youth may provide leads to finding teachers.

In addition, teacher groups like NYCoRE (New York Collective of Radical Educators) and Black Lives Matter in Schools network may be good places to reach out to.

Activity 6: Oral History Project, School Safety Before NYPD and Now

Facilitator: *below are links to online tutorials*

Interviewing & Basic Audio Production

- **Kids' Guide to Recording Stories**- basic and user friendly tutorial
- **DIY Toolkit** by Radio Rookies
- **The Basics** of Radio Production
- **Before the First Question**- audio production tips
- **How Sound**- podcast on radio storytelling

Audio Equipment
- **Podcasting Basics, pt 1**- focused on voice recording gear

Activity 6: Oral History Project, School Safety Before NYPD and Now

Facilitator: *below are links to online tutorials and examples of youth audio content*

Editing

- **Podcasting Basics, pt. 2**- focused on audio editing software

Youth-produced work
- **Generation Justice**- a youth media justice program based in Albuquerque, New Mexico
- **Radio Rookies**, long running public radio show produced out of WNYC
- **YR Media** (formerly Youth Radio), national network of young journalists and artists

Activity 7: Mapping #AssaultAt...for NYC Schools

Building on the *We Came to Learn* action kit's #AssaultAt workshop, a more New York focused workshop could be developed looking at violent assaults by NYPD in NYC schools

Need to find this information. ACLU may be a source? see, NY Daily News article

Violent Assaults Perpetrated by School Police
November 2010 - March 2018
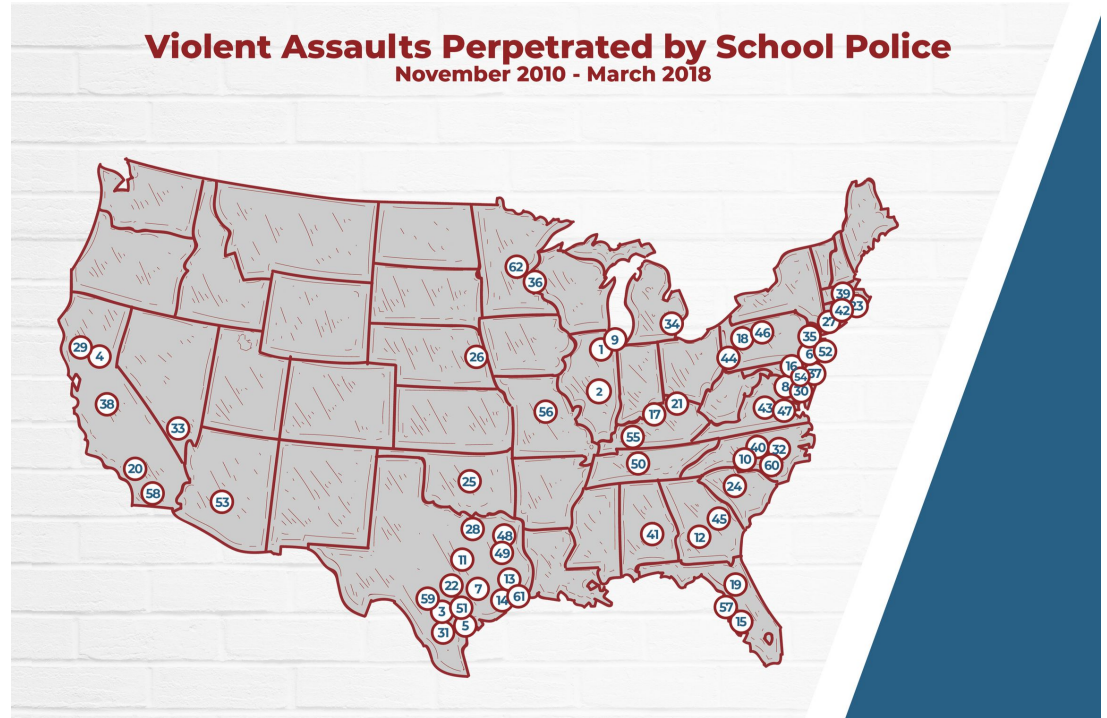
Resources

Education Justice Timeline

"We Came to Learn: A Call to Action for Police-Free Schools" Report and Action Kit

Budget comparisons

DSC-NY calls on the city to invest in guidance counselors, social workers and restorative justice.

Landscape of Guidance Counselors & Social Workers in NYC Schools

Running from COPS: Podcast investigating COPS, the longest running "reality show" on TV, and its cultural impact on policing

SOCIAL WORKERS & SUSPENSION RATES

ACROSS 913 SCHOOL SITES GRADES 6 - 12, WITH A TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF 575,989 STUDENTS, THERE WERE 2,120 FULL-TIME GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND 734 FULL-TIME SOCIAL WORKERS:

449 — SCHOOLS WITHOUT A SINGLE SOCIAL WORKER.

854 — SCHOOLS WORKING ABOVE THE 1:150 SOCIAL WORKER TO STUDENT RATIO

60% — SCHOOLS WITH SUSPENSION RATES HIGHER THAN 3.2 TO 100.