

Demand Letter

Attention: Board of Trustees

November __, 2020

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees,

This letter was written by the AFT Immigrant Student Support Committee and is a result of ongoing dialogue on defunding the San Diego Community College District Police Units and in support of equity, social and racial justice and human dignity for Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ and Students of Color.

By adopting the demands outlined in this letter, the Board of Trustees would be acting in accordance to the resolution it adopted on June 11, 2020, which states:

“The Board of Trustees of the San Diego Community College District denounces systemic racism in all its forms and affirms the District’s commitment to Black students and all students of color who have been subject to both overt and passive forms of racism.”

The Resolution goes further in saying that “the devaluing of Black lives is manifested not just through acts of police violence, but through the systemic violence of oppression and poverty.”

These are some of the ways in which our current SDCCD police force does not align with the ideas set forth in the above resolution. Some issues are: a lack of transparency and accurate collection of data detailing police activity; the use of guns, tasers and other weapons which increase tension and trauma; racial profiling by police and the criminalization of activities such as skate boarding; harassment of the local unsheltered population, including SDCCD-enrolled students. The involvement of SDCCD police in oppressive countywide policing activities, including an incident at a racial justice protest where a San Diego City College student was shot in the eye and blinded by a police-fired projectile.

We, as representatives of the SDCCD community, acknowledge that the oppression of our Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and Students of Color is rooted in the chronic threat of police violence and its relationship to white supremacy. In defunding SDCCD Police units, the Board will eliminate this systemic injustice and it will truly reflect its support for students and our commitment to their safety and well-being. In order to accomplish this goal, we are proposing the following changes:

We DEMAND a permanent freeze on the hiring of future SDCCD police officers. Furthermore, there should be an end to our reliance on SDPD and Sheriff’s Department

for school safety. Funds should not be allocated from the SDCCD budget to these entities.

We DEMAND a stop to recruitment by police forces including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on our campuses.

We NEED the SDCCD policing funds redirected to the hiring of social workers, mental health counselors, nurses, EMTs, and restorative justice coaches.

We also NEED to redirect funds to support our Chicana/o and Black Studies departments, the establishment of LGBTQ Centers, and our Dreamer Centers. Increasing these programs will improve cultural competency and foster the trust of our BIPOC students. It will help us better address their needs and aspirations.

We NEED a new model of students, staff and faculty trained as a diverse group of peace officers involved with the school community with a focus on nonviolent resolution of conflicts and de-escalation. This will replace the military style police force that has contributed historically to the criminalization and intimidation of Black and Brown students.

We NEED equity initiatives that strive to provide resources to address the trauma of students who have experienced discrimination by police, imprisonment and other oppressive social structures. Supporting programming for formerly incarcerated students would be also essential.

This is our opportunity to take the initiative and act in support of Black lives and the safety of all students of color. We want to imagine a future that is free of policing and in support of true equity and liberation for BIPOC students. We want to imagine a future where students form and lead their own safety teams and take care of each other. We want to imagine a future where BIPOC faculty can be supported in their roles as mentors and agents of change. We want to imagine a future where our students are empowered to create and innovate systems that uplift, and not undermine, Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ, and People of Color.

We look forward to your response and to beginning the process of undoing systemic and institutional racism within SDCCD.

Signed,