



Press Release

From State Representative and Chicago Mayoral Candidate La Shawn K. Ford

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State Representative and Mayoral Candidate La Shawn K. Ford Calls for the Immediate Removal of Chicago Police from CPS Schools

In response to the ongoing and most recent incidents in which Chicago police officers have been accused of using excessive force to subdue students following a disturbance at schools, State Rep. and Mayoral Candidate La Shawn K. Ford is calling for the immediate removal of all Chicago police officers from the Chicago Public Schools and that restorative justice experts be brought into schools as soon as possible to replace the police.

“Schools should hire personnel trained to recognize the needs of at-risk students,” says State Rep. and Mayoral Candidate La Shawn K. Ford. “Handling students with emotional distress and behavioral health problems is not the job for the police.”

The City of Chicago charges CPS \$30 million a year for the CPD to be in schools. That pays for approximately 200 officers. “Chicago Public Schools plays a major role in eroding the trust between communities and police in Chicago,” Ford says. “In the United States, the school-to-prison pipeline is the disproportionate tendency of minors and young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds to become incarcerated, because of increasingly harsh school and municipal policies,” Ford points out.

Felony charges were dropped last Wednesday against Dnigma Howard, the 16-year-old Marshall High School student who was tased by Chicago police officers during an incident at the school last month. The incident, which was captured on video by another

student at the school, renewed a debate about the role of police officers in Chicago Public Schools.

“This is just one of many situations in which a student whose behavior indicated emotional distress was criminalized rather than counseled,” Ford said. “Chicago police officers are not trained to respond to a child in distress; they are trained to subdue individuals who pose a threat to public safety. Their aggression often exacerbates a situation that could be handled differently.”

According to a report from the Civil Rights Data Collection, which contains detailed information for the 2015-2016 school year on more than 96,000 public schools, certain young people - including black, Hispanic male and American Indian students - face harsher discipline than their white counterparts.

About 291,000 referrals to law enforcement authorities and arrests on school grounds occurred in the 2015-2016 school year.

Calling for the removal of CPD from CPS is another example of Ford’s track record of standing for what’s right and aligns with his platform for mayor. He continues to fight for the rights of everyday people over the status quo of politics, often going directly against political machines. “We need an experienced, honest mayor who will lead this city in the right direction. We need a mayor who understands that Chicago is corrupt and is willing to face this obstacle head on, going up against the ‘machine-type’ politics that have permeated our city for far too long.”

“Throughout my 12 years as a state representative, I’ve been on the front lines not only fighting for equity, inclusivity, safer communities, healthier and better quality of life, as well as transparency, equity and accountability for all; but garnering a strong, proven track record of legislation that I spearheaded and was passed that is improving the lives of Chicago residents. My campaign is an extension of the work I’ve been doing for the past 12 years,” says Ford. Specifically, here’s Ford’s campaign platform:

EQUITY IN EDUCATION

- Recruit, support, and retain high-quality, culturally competent teachers
- Invest in Chicago educators through tuition reimbursement programs, on-going professional development, and home-buying incentives
- Expand CPS wrap-around services for students and families, including counseling, school-based health, arts, sports, and other enrichment activities
- Convert closed Chicago Public Schools into community centers
- Expand adult education opportunities through technical and trade schools
- Invest in early childhood education and community-based preschools
- Provide students with exposure to diverse career opportunities and workforce development programs

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

- Create a connected workforce by developing the technical skills of Chicago residents
- Establish a social investment fund to promote community entrepreneurship
- Revitalize vacant and abandoned properties to develop affordable housing
- Create paths towards homeownership through innovative financing options for Chicago residents
- Expand adult education opportunities through technical and trade schools
- Eliminate current fee structures that financially burden city residents (e.g. red light cameras, boots, and high/disproportionate property taxes)
- Establish Chicago as an advanced manufacturing hub and leader in green technology
- Develop a comprehensive quality of life plan for ex-offenders to reduce recidivism and promote full economic and social integration
- Collaborate with state and federal government to increase the amount of returning federal dollars, growing the city's revenue base without increasing taxes

SAFER COMMUNITIES

- Establish an Office of Violence Prevention to reduce systemic inequities, measure impact, and coordinate community efforts
- Expand mental health services and fund holistic health programs
- Increase investment in Chicago Park Districts, community centers, youth employment and entrepreneurship programs
- Explore alternative models for community safety and expand restorative justice initiatives
- Enhance police training protocols and renegotiate commitments between community members and police to restore healthy, respectful relationships

HEALTH & QUALITY OF LIFE

- Promote universal health care – make Chicago the most insured city in the nation
- Become “The City that Moves” by funding active lifestyle programs and expanding outdoor recreation across communities
- Create a comprehensive community recycling programs
- Invest in public transportation infrastructure to reduce commute times
- Address the heroin/opioid addiction crisis

TRANSPARENCY, EQUITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Establish an elected representative school board
- Support the creation of a Civilian Police Accountability Council
- Immediate moratorium on new TIFs – improve TIF laws to ensure equity
- Invest in public transportation infrastructure to reduce commute times
- Implement fair contracting process

More information can be found at www.fordforchicago.com.

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