

## Positive Images

200 Montgomery Drive, Suite C  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
(707) 568 - 5830  
[www.posimages.org](http://www.posimages.org)

February 9th, 2024

**Re:** Positive Images stands in solidarity with NAACP on Police Free Schools

---

Dear Santa Rosa City Schools Board of Trustees,

Positive Images stands in solidarity with the NAACP - Santa Rosa Branch in their call for Police Free Schools. Positive Images serves the LGBTQIA+ community of the North Bay, including Santa Rosa and, as an organization founded on the belief that all people deserve access to safety, mental health care, and understanding, we know that adequate support can transform the lives of young people.

Positive Images supports LGBTQIA+ students at our community center, in our mental health programs, and through our education services in Santa Rosa City Schools. Because LGBTQIA+ students are already often experiencing interrelated and compounding negative factors like stigma, harassment, discrimination, and rejection, we aim to help schools create safe, affirming, and equitable campus environments where LGBTQIA+ students are protected and able to thrive. Increasing security and police presence on campuses turns schools into a place where LGBTQIA+ students may feel more unsafe and on edge. Relying on tools rooted in punitive discipline and oppression pushes LGBTQIA+ students, especially LGBTQIA+ students of color, further into harm's way. We strongly urge the SRCS Board to prioritize investment in approaches that promote student success and safety without relying on increased policing of all students.

As we know:

- LGBTQIA+ youth experiencing harassment and discrimination at school are at higher risk for depression and anxiety, have lower GPAs, are more likely to be disciplined at school, and are nearly twice as likely to report no plans to pursue a college education (1)
- 81.8% of LGBTQIA+ students in GLSEN's 2021 National School Climate Report survey reported feeling unsafe in school because of at least one of their actual or perceived personal characteristics (2)
- More than two-thirds of LGBTQIA+ youth ages 18 to 24 reported having school security or police at their middle or high schools and stated that this made them feel untrustworthy and that any misstep would be treated as a crime (3)(4)
- LGBTQIA+ youth, especially LGBTQIA+ youth of color, are disproportionately entering the school-to-prison pipeline (5)(6)
- LGBTQIA+ youth are already over-represented in juvenile justice facilities; In surveys of juvenile detention centers and correction facilities across the United States, 20% of all incarcerated youth identified as LGBTQIA+ or gender non-conforming and of girls nearly 40% identify as LGBTQIA+ (7)(8)

## Positive Images

200 Montgomery Drive, Suite C  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
(707) 568 - 5830  
[www.posimages.org](http://www.posimages.org)

February 9th, 2024

**Re:** Positive Images stands in solidarity with NAACP on Police Free Schools

We wholeheartedly support the NAACP - Santa Rosa Branch calling for the SRCS Board to invest in "comprehensive community-based safety initiative that includes both the implementation of programs around - as well as training for students, parents and school staff on - safe passages, peace-building, violence intervention and de-escalation, conflict resolution, restorative and transformative justice, and youth development programs" as stated in their Statement on School Safety on December 13, 2023.

Thank you for your work to protect all students. We hope you take this information under consideration while building the future of safe schools.

In solidarity,



**Kimi Barbosa**  
Executive Director  
[kimi@posimages.org](mailto:kimi@posimages.org)



**Jess Carroll**  
Director of Programs  
[jess@posimages.org](mailto:jess@posimages.org)



**Chase Overholt**  
Director of Development  
[chase@posimages.org](mailto:chase@posimages.org)

## References:

- (1) GLSEN School Climate Survey, 2021 <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/NSCS-2021-Full-Report.pdf>
- (2) GLSEN School Climate Survey, 2021 <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/NSCS-2021-Full-Report.pdf>
- (3) #Out4MentalHealth LGBTQ Youth & School-to-Prison Pipeline <https://bhds.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb711/files/o4mh-schooltoprisonpipeline-factsheet-00-00-00.pdf>
- (4) Center for American Progress, Movement Advancement Project (2016) Unjust. How the Broken Criminal Justice System Fails LGBT People of Color. <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/lgbt-criminal-justice-poc.pdf>
- (5) #Out4MentalHealth LGBTQ Youth & School-to-Prison Pipeline <https://bhds.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb711/files/o4mh-schooltoprisonpipeline-factsheet-00-00-00.pdf>
- (6) GLSEN Educational Exclusion: Drop Out, and the School-to-Prison Pipeline among LGBTQ Youth (2016) [https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Educational%20Exclusion\\_Report\\_6-28-16\\_v4\\_WEB\\_READY\\_PDF.pdf](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Educational%20Exclusion_Report_6-28-16_v4_WEB_READY_PDF.pdf)
- (7) #Out4MentalHealth LGBTQ Youth & School-to-Prison Pipeline <https://bhds.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb711/files/o4mh-schooltoprisonpipeline-factsheet-00-00-00.pdf>
- (8) Center for American Progress, Movement Advancement Project, Youth First. Unjust: LGBTQ Youth incarcerated in the juvenile justice system (2017) <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/lgbtq-incarcerated-youth.pdf>