**School-to-Prison Pipeline - Introduction**

*From the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) website, www.aclu.org*

**Definition**

The ACLU is committed to challenging the “school-to-prison pipeline,” a disturbing national trend wherein children are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these children have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished, and pushed out.

“Zero-tolerance” policies criminalize minor infractions of school rules, while cops in schools lead to students being criminalized for behavior that should be handled inside the school. Students of color are especially vulnerable to push-out trends and the discriminatory application of discipline.

(Accessed 27 Oct 2016 at https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline)

**Police Presence in the Schools**

Many under-resourced schools relyon police rather than teachers and administrators to maintain discipline. Growing numbers of districts employ school resource officers to patrol school hallways, often with little or no training in working with youth. As a result, children are far more likely to be subject to school-based arrests—the majority of which are for nonviolent offenses, such as disruptive behavior—than they were a generation ago. These arrests for minor infractions disproportionately target students of color and students with disabilities.

The ACLU is working to end overly aggressive school policing and unnecessary school arrests in several communities by promoting agreements (often referred to as Memorandums of Understanding or MOUs) between school districts, police departments, and other justice agencies. We are also challenging harmful school policing practices and policies through litigation and legislative reforms.

(Accessed 27 Oct 2016 at https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline/police-presence-schools)

**Search and Seizure in Public Schools**

Today, concern about drugs and violence sometimes trumps privacy rights. For example, federal courts have found that students’ Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable searches and seizures do no always apply in a public school setting. The ACLU believes that schools are not constitutional dead zones and continues to fight for students’ privacy rights, challenging unreasonable strip-searches and seizures of property such as cell phones.

(Accessed 27 Oct 2016 at https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline/search-and-seizure-public-schools)

**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION:**

What is the relationship between the School-to-Prison Pipeline and the two specific dynamics described here (police presence in schools and search and seizure in schools)? Are these a cause of the StP? A result? A symptom? What's the best process for answering this question?