

## DISORDERLY STUDENT CROWDS AT AIKEN HIGH SCHOOL -YOUTH SERVICES UNIT-

### The Team:

Youth Services Section SRO's, including Aiken H.S. SRO  
Cincinnati Recreation Commission  
Sorta/Metro  
Cincinnati Public Schools  
Hamilton County Juvenile Court & Probation

### Scan:

With the start of school in 2024, youth-involved disorder and crime skyrocketed in the City of Cincinnati. Youth were perpetrating crime and being victimized in record numbers. Massive crowds of students were forming upon school dismissal and at major transit hubs. The city saw multiple instances of small verbal disputes turning into large "brawls" with injuries and arrests within minutes. District Three, particularly Aiken High School, College Hill Recreation Center, and College Hill Plaza had become "hot spot" locations for incidents of crime and disorder, threatening the safety and security of students, residents, and surrounding businesses.

### Analysis:

Issues related to youth disorder were happening in several areas of the City. The Police Department's Crime Analysis and Problem Solving (CAPS) team began systematic analysis of youth involved crime and disorder. Their analysis supported the observations of school resource officers regarding "hot spots" and crime and disorder increases.

### Response:

Having identified that crime and disorder had been perpetuated by Aiken students, the School Resource Officer (SRO) came up with the Aiken Initiative to Reduce Disorder, modeled from the city's CIRV initiative. The initiative's main goal is to calm the disorder, and create an environment

where everyone feels comfortable, safe, and supported. As part of this initiative, community stakeholders were invited to the table to discuss concerns and strategies to curb violence. The Cincinnati Recreation Commission participated in a meeting regarding Aiken students/parents fighting, and safety concerns. The main takeaway from the meeting was that we must work together to create a safer environment for our students, staff, and neighbors, and our firm stance regarding fights and threats. Under no circumstances will the SRO or Aiken New Tech administration tolerate any violence in any form. Crime and disorder off campus/after school hours will be thoroughly investigated by CPD and the proper criminal charges will be filed, if necessary. And all student participants will receive school consequences.

Another thing reviewed was students' attendance records. Often the kids that cause the most havoc in the community during school hours were students who were removed from school (suspended or truant). **Truancy is often associated with negative outcomes such as dropping out of school, delinquency, and criminal behavior.** School administrators, counselors, and teachers met to identify the delinquent students and discuss ways to mitigate absenteeism. Their goal is to establish a system that involves early intervention, social services, strong community partnerships, and create a supportive ecosystem.

The Youth Services Section met with Metro management to discuss the disorder involving students at bus stops. One main problem is that Metro no longer offers direct bus routes designated solely for student transportation. In the past, buses were lined up outside the schools at dismissal providing direct transportation to various neighborhoods. Now the kids must rely on normal bus routes, allowing more idle time for them to hang out for extended periods of time. The

longer that the kids have to wait for a bus, the more likely they are to get into trouble. Metro agreed to have one of their supervisors at each high school at dismissal to monitor the student crowds. They also increased the frequency of routes they send to the various schools during those dismissal hours. To curb the crowds at the various transit centers, they cut off the student bus cards at a certain hour so that kids aren't lingering throughout the evening hours.

YSS also met with representatives from Juvenile Court to address crime and disorder involving youth and to better understand our respective agency roles. Management from Probation, the Assessment Center, a Magistrate, and a Judge were in attendance. Some of the topics that were discussed were recidivism, lenient consequences, truancy, and programs/services vs incarceration. We agreed to establish an open line of communication between SRO's, probation officers, and counselors to support academic success. Probation agreed to make the SRO their first line of communication when visiting a probationer at a school. Juvenile court implemented a parenting mentoring group for struggling parents for guidance with difficult kids. The court is also developing the Parent Project which aims at pulling the kids closer in and providing services and programs vs pushing them away by sending them to jail. Probation has a docket inside Aiken where the team addresses truancy, disorderly conduct, incorrigible, and runaway.

**Assessment:**

Ongoing.