



Blame gun violence in Chicago on gangs, not police officers

BY MICHAEL F. MCCARTHY — 09/12/16 05:37 PM EDT

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As of this writing, 3,033 people have been shot in Chicago this year, yet less than half of 1 percent of those incidents involved the police, accounting for five people killed and 14 wounded. And, last year, there were 2,988 shootings with 25 involving police; this is less than 1 percent. The people in the neighborhoods do not give information nor support police investigations, so the police just stay out, and these shootings go unsolved. Blaming the cops, in effect, has given gangs control of our cities. Black and Hispanic gangs are contending for control of the drug trade. Drugs and guns are being shipped across the Mexican border by Hispanic cartels and are distributed by black street gangs. So, why blame the police?

Eight years ago the New Black Panther Party intimidated voters. This year they will intimidate the police as well as voters.

From Michael F. McCarthy, Hayward, Calif.

Providing arts-rich educations for all students should be priority

As students begin their school years and we approach the fall in our community, it is important for us to remember the impact of education in our homes, schools and communities. For decades, research has shown that when students participate in the arts as a part of their education, they go on succeed in school, work and life.

Designated by Congress in 2010, the week beginning with the second Sunday in September is National Arts in Education Week, a national celebration of the transformative power of the arts in education. We are celebrating here in Washington, and would encourage all supporters of arts, culture and education to join with us, as well as Mayor Muriel Bowser and District of Columbia Public Schools.

Recently, the new Every Student Succeeds Act was signed into law, replacing no Child Left Behind. This new bill fully supports the arts as part of every students' "well-rounded" education. It provides the flexibility for students to learn creatively and for local districts and states to create schools that embrace the arts. What we know is simple: Students attend school more often when they have access to the arts; parents and families engage with the schools when schools embrace the arts; dropout rates

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decrease, grades increase, and the halls are filled with artwork, songs, drama and dancing.

And I'm not alone in this belief. According to a public opinion poll released in March 9 out of 10 Americans believe that the arts are essential to a student's well rounded education.

However, so often we see that access is not there in communities across our state and the country. In that same public opinion poll, 67 percent of Americans said there was not sufficient access to the arts for their students to reap the benefits. Additionally, study after study indicates an opportunity gap in arts education, specifically along racial and socio-economic lines. We must stand together to fight for equity in access and delivery of arts education to the young people in our community our state, and the nation.

As we celebrate National Arts in Education Week, we should take pause to cheer for our accomplishments, but we should also remember the work we have to do. How can our district help provide equitable opportunities for all of our young people? How can we use the new law to create arts-rich schools? How can we support parents, families and the community in provide more opportunities for engagement? It's up to us, the arts education community, to take a stand and lead.

From Jeff M. Poulin, Washington, D.C.

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