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Union Laments Lack of Action Since Death NYPD: 35% More Weapons Seized In City Schools Than During 2016

By CRYSTALLEWIS Nov 27, 2017 Updated 15 hrs ago



BRIAN CONROY:
 Tough to pinpoint reason for rise.

At a City Council hearing Nov. 21 on weapons in city schools held in response to the September stabbing death of a student, the Police Department revealed a 35-percent increase in the number of weapons found between July and November compared to the same period last year.

The increase came as no surprise to the president of the union representing School Safety Agents.

From July 1 to Nov. 12, School Safety Agents found 746 weapons, compared with 552 for that same timeframe last year.



GREG FLOYD:
 'Taking several steps backwards.'

NYPD Chief Brian Conroy, Commanding Officer of the School Safety Division, said that the department "acknowledged" the increase in seizures.

'Take It Seriously'

"We obviously take the recovery of weapons seriously," he said.

At an October press conference, NYPD officials said that it was difficult to determine if the increase in weapons is because School Safety has improved its weapons-detection techniques or because students were bringing more in.

The Council held the hearing to discuss efforts to increase safety in city schools, an issue that was highlighted when Abel Cedeno, 18, allegedly stabbed Matthew McCree, 15, and Ariane Laboy, 16, in the chest with a three-inch switchblade at Urban Assembly School for Wildlife Conservation Sept. 27. Mr. McCree died from

his injuries.

Gregory Floyd, president of Teamsters Local 237, which represents School Safety Agents, said in a phone interview that he wasn't surprised by the increase in the number of weapons seized. He said he believed the number would continue to rise because students continue to bring in weapons to protect themselves.

At the hearing, Mr. Conroy explained that if a student was found with a weapon, that didn't produce an automatic arrest. For example, a student carrying a box-cutter would not be arrested, while some knives would warrant custody.

'Depends on Knife'

"It would depend on the type of knife," he said.

Mr. Floyd noted that former Mayor Rudy Giuliani made it illegal for students to carry box-cutters and for merchants to sell them to anyone under 18.

"We are taking several steps backwards," he said. "But nobody remembers these things, and nobody cares. Law is a three-letter word in New York City schools. I'm tired of being the only one talking about this."

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Mr. Floyd has advocated for metal detectors in every city high school.

He also asked why parent and Teacher advocacy groups haven't fought to increase the use of metal detectors in schools.

Since the death of Mr. McCree, three metal detectors have been added to city

schools, bringing the total to 91.

Eased Up on Discipline

The de Blasio administration has reduced the use of punitive discipline measures such as suspensions in favor of restorative-justice practices, and has placed metal detectors in schools on a case-by-case basis.

“Had Local 237 not spoken out, there’d be no metal detectors in schools,” Mr. Floyd said.

He contended that no policy changes that would discourage students from bringing in weapons were put in place after Mr. McCree’s death.

“What are we all waiting for? The worst has already happened,” he said.

