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Georgia 6-Yr.-Old Arrested

Handcuff case renews school policing debate

By Jeri Clausing
The Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A New Mexico teacher asked a 13-year-old girl to stop talking with her friend and move to another seat. The girl refused. The teacher called the police.

The case is among thousands across the country fueling a long-simmering debate over when educators should bring in the police to deal with disruptive students. A 6-year-old Georgia kindergartner became the latest test case last week when she was hauled off in steel handcuffs after throwing books and toys in a school tantrum.

(See The Skanner News' series 'The School to Prison Pipeline,' <http://www.theskanner.com/article/Suspensions-and-Expulsions-of-Black-Students-The-School-to-Prison-Pipeline-2012-03-06>)

"Kids are being arrested for being kids," said Shannon Kennedy, a civil rights attorney who has filed a class-action lawsuit against Albuquerque's public school district and its police department on behalf of hundreds of kids arrested for minor offenses over the past few years, including having cellphones in class, destroying a history book and inflating a condom.

Police were put in many schools across the country in the 1990s in response to zero tolerance policies and tragedies like the Columbine High massacre. But many overwhelmed teachers and principals began turning to those officers to handle disciplinary issues that in years past would have landed students in detention.

Frustrated teachers aren't getting enough support from above to deal with increasingly extreme student behavior, from sexual harassment in elementary school to children throwing furniture, said Ellen Bernstein, president of the Albuquerque teachers' union.

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FOR SCHOOLS



PHOTO BY LISA LOVING

Students at the Harriet Tubman Young Women's Leadership Academy attended the City of Portland Equity Department reception for newly-hired civil rights official Dante James. The girls asked local VIPs to help them save their school, which has a math, science and engineering focus.

Would You Please Save Our School?

Tubman, Humboldt families fighting to keep the doors open

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Monday night's Portland Public Schools Board "study session" is shaping up to be the Waterloo of the Harriet Tubman Young Women's Leadership Academy.

Back on the chopping block after many years of barely escaping the budget axe, Tubman, the city's only public all-girls school, is once again fighting for its life, as is Humboldt, which is scheduled to be

absorbed by Boise Eliot.

After this week's "study session" on the school, Portland Public Schools spokesman Matt Shelby confirmed Tuesday that the district has moved to "draft the formal resolutions" to close the Harriet Tubman Young Women's Leadership Academy despite impassioned pleas from the school's community and local elected leaders.

The district moved to fast-track the closure, separating Tubman from the rest of the district budget, which is decid-

ed in May – the Tubman vote is next Monday, April 23. The district will also be voting in May on whether to close down Another North Portland school, Humboldt, and merge its students with Boise-Eliot because neither school has enough students, district officials say.

At a "study session" held last night – the last opportunity for public input before the closure decision – State Sen. Chip Shields apologized to the Portland Public Schools Board for "the hand you were given" by

the legislature earlier this year, which has resulted in a \$27.5 million cut to PPS's budget; last year PPS faced \$20 million in cuts.

Shields was joined by State Rep. Lew Frederick and Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz in pleading with the district to reconsider, even pledging help in fundraising, public relations and marketing to help the school attract more students.

All three cited the impact of

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Jailin Gage: Scholar, Athlete, Teenager

How one freshman at Jefferson High School puts it all together

By Bruce Poinsette
Special To The Skanner News

The first thing that stands out about Jefferson High School guard Jailin Gage is his humility.

"I don't want to put everything on me," he says, with his father Johnnie and brother Johnnie Jr. at his side.

Gage, who is also an honor roll student,

led the school's freshman basketball team to an undefeated season and averaged 24 points a game. He goes to great lengths to praise his coach, teammates and family influences for his success, both on the court and in the classroom.

"It would've been rough without my teammates," says Gage. "They really helped back me up."

The Jefferson freshman team's success

has fans excited for the Jefferson Class of 2015.

It has also helped Gage attract attention from one of the top basketball schools in the nation, Oak Hill Academy. Current National Basketball Association (NBA) players who have played at Oak Hill, which is a fixture in national high school rankings,

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