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TOP STORY

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Omaha Public Schools board, community express outrage over electric gloves

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Aug 18, 2026

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Members of the community and Omaha Public Schools board members expressed outrage Monday that school resource officers have been issued the same shock-glove devices ICE plans to purchase.

Conversation around the device known as a G.L.O.V.E. — "Generated Low Output Voltage Emitter" — surfaced this month when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced it plans to spend up to \$20 million in 2027 to buy thousands of the gloves for its officers and agents.



The Omaha Public Schools board meets on Aug. 17. More than 20 members of the public spoke about the Omaha Police Department's use of the Compliant Technologies G.L.O.V.E. device in schools.

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The Omaha City Council **approved the purchase** of 40 of the devices for approximately \$66,000 in June 2025.

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The only Omaha police officers currently issued the gloves are school resource officers. The devices were first put into service during the 2025-26 school year, according to a joint statement issued by Mayor John Ewing and Police Chief Todd Schmaderer on Monday.

The Police Department has 34 school resource officers across the Omaha, Elkhorn, Millard and Westside school districts, and 29 are trained to use the gloves, the statement said.

OPS board members said they were not informed that the devices had been issued to school resource officers. Superintendent Matt Ray said he was also unaware.



Jane Erdenberger, Omaha Public Schools board president, speaks during a meeting Monday. Board members said they were unaware that electric glove devices were being used by school resource officers in OPS schools.

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Board member Gini Magnuson was among several board members who said they would like to examine the district's school resource officer agreements and its use of force against students.

"I would like to know how we got to the point that we believe pain compliance is an appropriate manner of responding to students," Magnuson said.

The gloves deliver an electric shock only when activated and when the palm is in direct contact with bare skin.

The device is less powerful than a Taser but still delivers an electric jolt of up to 380 volts. By comparison, the maximum output of a Taser X26 is about 1,200 volts, though output can vary by model, according to the National Library of Medicine.

More than 20 people shared concerns about the gloves during the public comment period Monday. Several speakers questioned whether the community was adequately informed before the devices were issued to school officers.

Several speakers also noted that the gloves' user manual states that the devices should not be used on vulnerable populations, including children.

Spike Eickholt spoke on behalf of ACLU of Nebraska, the Education Rights Counsel and Voices for Children, saying all three organizations oppose the use of the gloves on children. Eickholt said it was particularly concerning that OPD is only issuing the gloves to officers in schools.

"Children should not be subjected to electronic shock as a behavior appeal, as a form of discipline or as a form of punishment," he said. "They certainly should not be subjected to that type of treatment in the schools by school resource officers."



Nick Koehler speaks during an Omaha Public Schools board meeting. Koehler spoke in opposition to the use of electric glove devices by police officers working in OPS schools.

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Nick Koehler with Nebraska Young Democrats said, while students need to be held accountable when they hurt or threaten others, a device that cannot be tolerated for more than a few seconds by an adult should never be used on children.

"We need to stop treating children like criminals and confusing punishment, which is about inflicting pain, with discipline, which is about teaching a better way forward," he said.

Kathy Poehling, president of the Omaha Education Association, said responses to students in crisis need to focus more on prevention instead of investing in another tool to respond with force.

"We recognize that SROs can face challenging and unpredictable situations, and they need appropriate resources to keep school communities safe," she said. "However, a physical use of force tool is inherently reactive. It addresses a crisis only after a situation has already escalated."

The gloves were used twice during the 2025-26 school year, according to the city's statement.

The first case involved a student from another high school who was trespassing at South High and attempted to flee after a fight with a security guard. The glove device was used on the student's wrist for approximately two seconds, according to the statement.

The second case was when a student in OPS' Integrated Learning Program made verbal threats and threw a chair at a school security guard, striking the guard in the head. The student also punched the guard in the head. The glove device was used twice on the student, first for one second, then a second time for 2-3 seconds, according to the statement.

In both cases, the students were offered medical support but declined.

The Westside district sent a statement to parents Monday emphasizing that school resource officers are employees of OPD and that the police department was responsible for the purchase of the gloves and the training and policies around them.

The gloves had not been used in a Westside school, the statement said.

"Westside Community Schools will continue to monitor this issue and further work with our SROs and district safety and security personnel to prioritize student well-being," Superintendent Mike Lucas said in the statement.

OPD's protocol for using the glove device includes verbal commands and a warning.

The department considers any use of the device a use-of-force incident, which requires the officer to document the circumstances of the use. The incident is then subject to review under OPD's use-of-force review process, according to the statement from Schmaderer and Ewing.

"We know use of force in a school environment is serious," the statement said. "That is why officers are trained in the school environment and instructed to use force sparingly."

Our top Omaha staff photos & videos of August 2026



Red Bull acrobatic pilot Kevin Coleman performs during the Defenders of Freedom Air and Space Show at Offutt Air Force Base on Saturday, Aug. 8, 2026.

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during the Juneteenth parade in Omaha on Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026.

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Brett Lindstrom, non-partisan candidate for Nebraska governor, carries boxes of signatures for his nonpartisan governor bid into the Marriott Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln on Monday, Aug. 3, 2026.

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Jeremiah Morris, 13, goes up for a shot against Omaha Police Capt. Paul Hanson during a National Night Out event at the Christie Heights Community Center in Omaha on Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2026.

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Conor Oberst of Bright Eye performs during Maha Festival at Heartland of America Park Omaha on Saturday, Aug. 8, 2026.

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Frankie Harris celebrates with his caddie, Tyler Lipscomb, after defeating Alistair Docherty in a playoff to win the Pinnacle Bank Championship at Indian Creek Golf Club in Omaha on Sunday, Aug. 9, 2026.

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Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, Creighton University President, center right, celebrates during a ribbon cutting ceremony for Creighton University's Magis Hall in Omaha on Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2026. Magis Hall is Creighton University's newest residence hall that will house 409 sophomore students.

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Nebraska's Andi Jackson and Harper Murray speak with reporters during a press conference at the Hawks Championship Center in Lincoln on Thursday, Aug. 13, 2026.

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N-yajah Jackson, 13, and the Royal House of Diamond dancers perform during the Juneteenth parade in Omaha on Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026.

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Shelley Larsen, Assistant Managing Editor, is announced as the 2025 Dorr Award winner at the OWH Newsroom in Omaha on Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026.

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By Luna Stephens

Education Reporter
