



Vancouver School Board

School Liaison Officer: Student and Stakeholder
Engagement Program

March 2021

Table of Contents

Executive summary.....	3
Background.....	5
Engagement approach.....	6
Overview, goals, and objectives.....	6
A flexible, adaptable, and sensitive approach to engagement.....	8
Engagement methods.....	10
Engagement considerations.....	11
Who we heard from.....	12
What we heard.....	15
Discussion groups.....	15
Interviews.....	17
Survey.....	21
Who we heard from.....	21
Detailed overview of survey responses.....	23
What we heard: Suggestions for the future of the SLO program.....	42
Conclusion.....	43
Next steps.....	43
Appendices.....	45
Appendix A: Detailed engagement methods	
Appendix B: List of stakeholders contacted	
Appendix C: VSB/VPD School Liaison Program Review (January 2021)	
Appendix D: Written submissions – verbatim	
Appendix E: Written submissions – template letter and signatories	

Executive summary

The School Liaison Officer (SLO) program has operated in Vancouver School Board (VSB) schools since 1972. Currently, School Liaison Officers (SLOs) are stationed in all 17 of the district's secondary schools, with 15 VPD police constables and two designated sergeants across the city of Vancouver, and RCMP officers serving the one secondary and two elementary schools on the University Endowment Lands.

In 2020, acts of racism and discrimination involving police in North America elevated our collective consciousness and concern, while also raising questions from the community about police presence in schools. The VSB responded to calls from community by requesting that a review of the SLO program be completed to inform the Board in making decisions as to the future of the program in Vancouver schools.

After issuing a competitive bidding Request for Proposals process, VSB contracted Argyle Communications Inc. as a neutral, third-party organization to conduct this engagement, with direction to collect input from students and stakeholders. Engagement included interviews, discussion groups, surveys and a written submission process.

Under the Board's direction, the engagement program centered the voices of students who self-identified as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) and/or with direct experience with the SLO program itself. Through engagement several high-level themes emerged:

- **Overall, students shared a range of experiences with the program**, with positive, neutral/indifferent, and negative responses. Positive responses tended to mention supportive, trusting relationships with SLOs, whereas negative responses spoke to SLOs as intimidating and unwelcoming. **The theme of safety emerged across responses**, with positive responses seeing SLOs as contributing to safety, security, and support and negative responses connecting SLOs to feelings of fear, anxiety, and discomfort.
- Students who self-identified as Black and Indigenous were more likely to mention **police as symbols of larger societal concerns**, including systemic racism, oppression, and abuses of power. These comments often reflected **personal, lived experience with SLOs and policing in their communities**.
- Students who self-identified as BIPOC often expressed a **personal connection with SLOs** and appreciated a trusted figure to go to for guidance and conversation. Of these students, there was a mix of personal and secondhand experience (perception), with personal experience tending to be associated with positive feelings and perception often tied to sentiments of neutrality or indifference.

- Ideas about changes to the program ranged from “keep it as is,” to “end it.” For those who want the program to **continue with some changes made**, suggestions included officers not in uniform, not carrying arms, and undergoing more training, particularly related to cultural sensitivity and mental health, and having more accountability in place.
- For those who want the program to **continue with a lot of changes made**, suggestions included moving towards an approach that addresses the power dynamic of having officers in schools and implementing training/selection processes that prioritize having SLOs that are representative of Vancouver demographics.
- Respondents who wanted to see the program ended or radically reformed referred to **broader concerns about police in schools and connections to systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression**. Many expressed a desire to explore alternatives, including removing ties to the VPD and implementing a restorative or transformative justice approach grounded in community care and support for all students.

This report will be presented to School Trustees at their March 3 Policy and Governance Committee meeting. Trustees will consider learnings from this review and input from stakeholders and broader community members in making recommendations about the future of the SLO program.

Background

About the SLO program

In April of 1972, the Vancouver Police Department's (VPD)'s School Liaison Unit was established, with service beginning at Killarney Secondary School. According to VPD, the SLO program aims to combine education, investigation, law enforcement, counseling, crime prevention, and community relations to meet the diverse needs of residents in the school community. Drawing from VPD's definition, SLO's aim to enhance the safety and security of schools by delivering safety and crime prevention lessons to students, staff and parents; act as a legal resource; speak to students informally; investigate criminal offences related to the school and its population; and act as a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system.

In addition to the SLO program, VPD also operates the School Safety Patrol which teaches elementary school children about safety issues. The School Safety Patrol also oversees school crossing guards and parent parking. The SLO program serves about one-quarter of the 50,000 students enrolled across the district.

About the engagement program

Argyle was contracted in mid-December 2020 with a mandate to deliver a robust student and stakeholder engagement program that reported back to Trustees by early March 2021. Given the short timeframe, we drew on existing connections with community leaders and liaisons to reach VSB students. Our engagement approach was grounded in care and cultural sensitivity. We strove to make sure engagement was accessible and inclusive, and that all participants in the review process had a safe setting in which to share their experiences and opinions.

It is important to note that Argyle was not asked to independently make recommendations on the future of the SLO program. Rather we were asked to structure and facilitate a safe, open, and transparent process to gather input and feedback. This report includes a summary of all responses and input that we received, including understandings of the SLO program, experiences with the SLO program, and suggestions for the SLO program's future.

Engagement approach

Overview, goals, and objectives

Working with Trustees, we established an **engagement program goal** to:

- Conduct an accessible and inclusive engagement program that centres the voices of students who have direct experience with the SLO program, as well as those who identify as being part of BIPOC communities.

In support of this goal, several **program objectives** were also established:

- Build a shared understanding of the SLO program with engagement participants.
- Gather feedback on the experiences and impacts of the SLO program on students.
- Ensure students and stakeholders understand how their feedback contributed to a *What We Heard* Report that highlights the varied experiences of communities.

To achieve the goal and objectives three key considerations emerged that further informed our methodology:

1. **Co-develop a student engagement approach with Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC).** To ensure student voices were centered in the engagement program, Trustees asked us to work with VDSC to establish an approach and tactics that reflected students' needs in a virtual environment.
2. **Meaningful engagement is grounded in trusting relationships.** We drew from an extensive list of stakeholder and community groups to support outreach, recognizing that established community connections would be essential to the engagement program's success in such a short period. Recognizing the sensitive nature of the conversations, it would be critical for stakeholders to feel a genuine invitation to participate and that individuals felt supported throughout.
3. **Take an adaptive approach to make space for many voices.** We adapted our engagement approach to encourage broad participation while responding to students' and stakeholders' needs and interests. This adaptive approach included engagement format, structure, timing, and interactivity level, and was applied to both students and stakeholders to provide as inclusive and accessible means of participating as possible within the constraints of the program.

Given the purpose and scope of the engagement program as well as considerations described above, we developed a methodology consisting of three phases: **pre-engagement, engagement, and analysis and reporting**. Each phase was supported by ongoing research and participant communication to inform adjustments or adaptations throughout.

Figure 1: Engagement program phases



Engagement methods

To ensure the engagement program was accessible we developed four streams to invite and collect input:

Figure 2: Engagement tactics



Interviews: Tailored 1:1 or small group conversations with student groups, parent groups, VSB employee groups, urban Indigenous groups, and community groups.



Discussion groups: Virtual small group sessions with secondary students to foster conversation in a safe and welcoming space (developed in consultation with the Vancouver District Student Council).



Online survey: Tailored to secondary students and available to parents, VSB employees, and broader community members; distributed through secondary school leads, school counselors, community liaisons, and stakeholder representatives.



Written submissions: Additional outlet for any individual or group who wished to provide input, with the option for writers to be anonymous.

The four streams are described in detail in Appendix A. A full list of the stakeholders to whom we invited into the engagement program can be found in Appendix B.

A flexible, adaptable, and sensitive approach to engagement

Our team developed a flexible, adaptable, and sensitive approach in response to a range of engagement planning considerations, including contentious public discourse, a virtual engagement environment, diversity of perspectives, condensed timeline, and diversity of audiences.

The flexible process offered a range of options to engage and encouraged participants to provide feedback in the way they felt most comfortable with. To support the implementation of this approach we provided ongoing communication with community leaders and liaisons to understand how best to engage with participants in their respective communities. This allowed Argyle to respond to community needs, such as having a multicultural liaison worker (MLW) at student discussion groups, collaborating with an urban Indigenous community organization to meet with Indigenous students, and working with school counselors to ensure mental health supports were available to students participating in discussion groups.

To help reduce online engagement barriers, we connected with participants over the phone and a range of online meeting platforms, including Microsoft Teams, Webex and Zoom depending on participants' preferences. Supplementary tools like Google Jamboards made sessions interactive and engaged people in a variety of ways. Discussion sessions were scheduled to allow participants to take breaks and engage both actively and passively, given the challenge of screen fatigue.

Throughout the three phases of engagement, we made space for diverse voices, communication preferences, and experiences with the SLO program. We recognized that this engagement must be designed and carried out in a way that centers voices who have been more highly impacted by the program, while also making space for a diversity of perspectives, including positive, negative, and neutral sentiments. Our approach drew from the following principles:

A diverse facilitation team and culturally relevant approaches to engagement

Our facilitation team reflected Vancouver's diverse communities and included staff members who identify as Black, Indigenous, South Asian, and East Asian, as well as those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. We recognize how important it is for those stewarding engagement to reflect the communities to whom they are speaking. In organizing the student discussion groups we further worked with community liaisons to set up safe and welcoming virtual environments for students from

diverse backgrounds. For example, we had MLW present to translate and support students and to share information through trusted community members.

Data collection and analysis grounded in community understanding

As engagement professionals, we follow best practices that ensure attribution of themes and quotes is not biased. This included having the feedback analysis conducted by members of our own team who identify as members of equity-seeking communities, as well as segmenting data across self-identification markers to ensure the voices of more highly-impacted communities were centered and uplifted. We took notes at a thematic level for all phone and virtual conversations.

Through the written submission process we confirmed with writers their consent and options to have their submission included anonymously. To ensure that Trustees heard directly from individuals and groups seeking to share their feedback in a written record, no interpretation of that input was provided and it is included verbatim in Appendix D*.

**Participants could opt to remain anonymous. In these cases, Argyle removed participants' names, affiliations, and any other identifiers from written submissions. All VSB student submissions were anonymous to protect their confidentiality.*

Establishing 'brave space' for participants

We recognized that, in many cases, speaking about the SLO program is highly sensitive, and that by asking participants to share their experiences, we may have put them at risk of experiencing re-traumatization. With this in mind, we sought to prioritize 'brave space'* for all participants.

We made every effort to ensure that participants felt supported, knew that they could participate to the extent to which they were comfortable, and had the power to come into and out of conversations with dignity. All discussions were based on active listening, cultural humility, and respect. We also limited the participation of outside authority figures — except for VSB chaperone protocol for student discussions — to create a welcoming environment without the influence of individuals associated with the SLO program.

**This term is generally used in academic and social justice work to refer to creating spaces where everyone is empowered and support to participate actively in discussions. This concept developed from a recognition that, historically, spaces have been set up to empower certain voices, leaving little room for others to contribute, leading to biased outcomes based on dominant voices.*

Offering supports to student participants

To support students taking part in online discussion groups, we invited school counselors to be available by phone and Microsoft Teams. We worked with school leads, counselors, community affinity groups, District Parent Advisory Committee, and VSB's Diversity Committee to ensure all student outreach was paired with community support based on trusted relationships. We also worked

with individuals and groups to determine culturally relevant supports and approaches to discussion sessions for students who self-identify as being part of BIPOC communities.

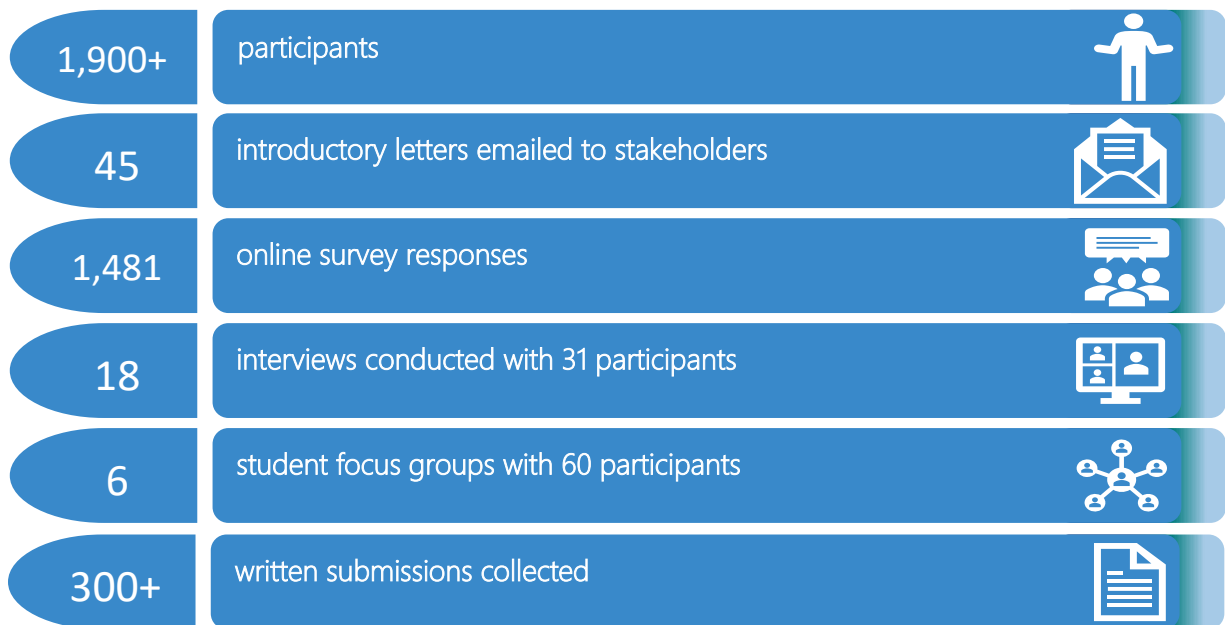
Sharing back to participants

We recognize the time and effort involved in participating in engagement. Given the short timelines, we did not include a stakeholder review process in the writing of this report. However, all stakeholders will be invited to review the report and will have the opportunity to share their feedback with Trustees during the April 7, 2021 Policy & Governance Committee meeting. The Board will also hold a special meeting on March 8, 2021 to hear delegations from community members. Trustees will consider the feedback presented in this report as well as stakeholder and community feedback to determine the next steps for the SLO program.

Engagement methods

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Argyle delivered the engagement process entirely by phone and through online meeting platforms. An online survey was also made available from January 27 to February 15, 2021. The survey was shared directly with participants through key contact, including stakeholders, VDSC, DPAC, secondary school leads, and school counselors, with a focus on distributing the survey to secondary students. We also collected written submissions via a project-specific email throughout the engagement process.

Figure 3: Engagement: By the numbers



Engagement considerations

Given the sensitive nature of the SLO program and public discourse on the subject, several key considerations were reflected through engagement planning. Our team took great care to ensure that all participants were treated with respect. We also sought to make space for all voices to be heard, understanding that some individuals and organizations may prefer not to take part in the engagement.

Table 1: Engagement challenges and mitigation strategies

Challenge	Description	Mitigation strategy
Condensed timeline	The engagement process needed to be developed and implemented within a few weeks, making it challenging to build relationships with stakeholders – particularly those who have had negative experiences with the SLO program.	Argyle drew from a media scan and existing community connections to reach out to key stakeholders early in the process. We built a list of additional contacts from stakeholder interviews. Throughout, we approached stakeholders with respect and humility and acknowledged their time and energy.
Different levels of understanding	Participants had different understandings of the SLO program. Some stated discomfort with taking part in engagement without enough knowledge, while others perceived the engagement process to be driven by the VSB and/or VPD, leading to possible discomfort and distrust.	Argyle prepared a summary of background information on the program so that all stakeholders came into engagement on a level playing field. We clearly communicated our role as a neutral, third-party organization with no affiliation to the VSB or VPD to address concerns about who was leading engagement.
Reaching participants	Without existing relationships in place, it was difficult to reach students who identify as BIPOC and/or have direct experience with the SLO program. It was also challenging to build rapport with students given that all engagement was done online, limiting our ability to connect with students.	Argyle took time in the pre-engagement phase to research and understand stakeholder dynamics. We met early and often with VDSC and other VSB groups to understand how best to communicate and engage with students. We connected with secondary school leads, school counselors, and community leaders to distribute the survey and discussion group invitations to students.
Broad student feedback	Given that communication and outreach happened virtually, it was challenging to reach a broad student population, meaning that responses reflect only those	Argyle strove to communicate through existing channels to reach VSB students, particularly those more highly impacted by the SLO program. We ensured that data



	who opted to engage and that some voices may have been missed.	analysis accurately reflected participants' self-identification to centre the voices of participants most impacted by the program.
Capacity and resourcing	A student-centered approach to engagement requires pre-existing relationships with the student community. Initial meetings with VDSC were formative to the discussion group process, but overall, students felt they did not have enough capacity or resources for a co-created approach. It was challenging to reach students in schools across the district with limited time to co-develop engagement with students.	Argyle met with VDSC and a sub-delegation of secondary students to identify a suitable approach to student engagement. Students' feedback directly informed the timing and format of discussion groups and survey distribution. We also drew from stakeholder interviews to identify community contacts to convene additional student discussion groups, including groups with students in English Language Learners (ELL) programs and with Indigenous students in alternative programs.
COVID-19 and online engagement	An online engagement program brought challenges related to adapting to technologies, screen fatigue, and competing responsibilities at home.	Argyle designed online discussion groups to be engaging and to allow for both verbal and written feedback, which included Google Jamboards to foster discussion. We also worked with community leaders, such as MLWs, to provide simultaneous translation and other relevant supports to students.
Other outreach challenges	Reaching key stakeholders was challenging due to time constraints, engagement fatigue, and language barriers. We understood that sometimes those with the most direct personal experience may not wish to share, especially if there is a risk of being re-traumatized.	Whenever possible, Argyle offered many ways for participants to engage and ensured supports were in place to create a safe and welcoming environment. One example of this was having a school counselor available during discussion groups if students needed support. Some stakeholders declined to engage after an initial introduction, which we respected.

Who we heard from

Throughout this process, we heard diverse voices from many different groups, with priority given to a list of stakeholders and community groups based on the Board Motion passed by VSB on October 26, 2020, prefacing this engagement (this Motion is described in the VSB/VPD School Liaison Program Review attached in Appendix C). A full list of all the individuals and groups we invited to participate in the engagement program can be found in Appendix B.

In October 2020, the Vancouver Board of Education amended a previously approved motion (from June 22, 2020). The revised motion directed the review process to seek input from VSB stakeholders, local First Nations and community members/groups, including but not limited to:

- Students/Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)
- Parents/Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)
- VSB Employee groups
- VSB Diversity Committee
- Black community groups such as but not limited to Black Lives Matter Vancouver and BC Community Alliance
- Urban Indigenous groups
- Vancouver Police Department (VPD)/Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

The motion also indicated that students/VDSC were to be included in developing the plan to seek input from students. Given this direction from the Board, we sought to focus on reaching four main groups, described below.

1. Current VSB secondary students:

- Secondary students who identify as being part of BIPOC communities
- Secondary students with direct SLO Program experience
- Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)
- Students at large

2. Parents/guardians:

- Parents/guardians of secondary students who identify as BIPOC and/or have direct SLO Program experience
- Parents/guardians of elementary students who identify as BIPOC and/or have direct SLO Program experience
- District Parent Advisory Committee (DPAC)

3. VSB's internal employee groups:

- Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals Association (VEPVPA)
- Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA)
- Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA)
- Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA)
- Professional and Administrative Staff Association (PASA)
- Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 15

4. Representatives of community groups, including:

- VSB Diversity Committee (includes VSB employees and community group representatives)
- Black Lives Matter Vancouver (BLM Vancouver)
- BC Community Alliance (BCCA)
- Urban Indigenous groups
- Other individuals and organizations who gave delegations to the Policy and Governance Committee

On behalf of the engagement program, our team also undertook outreach to Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations to invite conversation on the SLO program. It is important to note that government-to-government engagement was not the focus of this work: rather, we invited dialogue with Nation representatives along with offering the engagement methods described above.

What we heard

This section provides a snapshot of overall themes from all participants through discussion groups, interviews, and online surveys.

A note about participation:

The findings and emerging themes are reflective of those who elected to participate in the engagement process and do not represent the VSB study body at large.

Discussion groups

We organized and facilitated six virtual discussion groups with VSB students across the district. A total of 60 students participated in discussion groups, with most students enrolled in a secondary school and a few students in grade seven.

Across all groups, the primary theme was a lack of understanding of what the SLO program is, and how it serves the broader student population. While overall impressions trended toward neutral feelings about the program because of this lack of understanding, several participants spoke either strongly in favour or strongly against having a police officer in schools.

Notably, students who identified as being BIPOC expressed negative feelings and experiences with the program, pointing to negative personal experiences and broader concerns about the program's ties to policing in society. A few students mentioned experiencing or witnessing acts of racism or discrimination at the hands of SLOs, which was tied to a desire to change the program and/or remove officers from schools. A few students expressed strong discomfort with having police in schools at all, with some mentioning negative associations with the police related to factors such as race, gender identity, sexuality, immigration status, and geographic area.

It is important to note that students with negative experiences with the SLO program faced barriers to sharing about their experiences – including a higher risk of re-traumatization due to the nature of discussion topics:

"I would also like to point out that many students with negative experiences with the SLO don't speak up, whereas positive experiences with the SLO are more likely to be shared and celebrated. Whereas bad experiences are swept under the rug" (VSB student)

The following chart provides a summary of emerging themes and key quotes concerning the questions Argyle asked during the student discussion groups. All quotes are from current VSB students.

Table 2: Summary of emerging themes and key quotes from discussion groups

Question	Top themes	Key quotes
Q1. How do you feel coming into this discussion?	Excited to share and learn more	<i>"Hoping to have my questions answered; excited to hear the perspectives of others"</i>
Q2. What is one thing you'd like to get out of this discussion today?	Desire to hear from others and share ideas	<i>"I would like to learn more about the specifics of the SLO program outside of my perspective."</i>
Q3. What has your experience with the SLO program been like?	Positive experience with the SLO program	<i>"The SLO program changed my high school life forever and I'll never forget that. If there's a kid like me in grade 8 who doesn't know what to do who can't talk to an SLO because the program was dismantled, that kid would be lost. That would've been me, if not for the SLO program."</i>
	Negative experience with the SLO	<i>"I thought the main reason for the SLO program was to make students feel safe (and to help with any legal matters at the school of course) but so many of my peers and myself don't feel safe when the SLO is around"</i>
Q4. Your ideas for the SLO program	Keep the program with small changes	<i>"I think if possible a hybrid between both the SLOs as well as the counseling professionals within schools can be incorporated to give students a wider range of options to receive assistance from"</i>
	Remove or make large changes to the program	<i>"[...] police create a hostile and uncomfortable experience at school for BIPOC students. and my personal suggestion is to get rid of them and use that funding for other youth engagement programs and mental health and substance abuse assistance programs. this is a better option than spending more excessive time to better the SLO program"</i>
Q5. Any other thoughts	Valuing safety and security provided by SLOs	<i>"We need to have them. It's a safety issue if there was no protection. Student safety is key. We don't need incidents like ones that have happened in eastern canada or the US"</i>

Interviews

Overall, we conducted 18 interviews with 31 participants. Of these interviews, we spoke to:

- Representatives from VSB affiliated groups
- Representatives from community groups
- Representatives with the VPD

Overall, responses ranged from strong support of the program continuing as is or with small changes, to exploring larger changes for program operations, and cancelling the program altogether. Many respondents spoke to the importance of Trustees listening to BIPOC communities when it comes to deciding the future of the SLO program, recognizing that its impacts are felt differently by communities for whom policing may represent negative symbols, systems, and experiences.

Themes emerging out of the interview with VPD trended towards positive perceptions and experiences relating to the SLO program, with the desire to improve community relationships and no desire to remove the SLO program. VPD representatives' responses focussed on the relationship-building aspect of the program and creating safe and secure school environments. These respondents also spoke to the selection, training, and personalities of SLOs to ensure that they are well-suited and equipped to support students of all backgrounds. Their suggestions to improve the program included changing protocols for proactive incident responses, better communications, more scenario planning, and ongoing training, such as unconscious bias training and more cultural [sensitivity] training.

When we spoke to VSB affiliated groups, we heard mainly positive perceptions and experiences relating to the SLO program and the desire to build more relationships with students and community groups. Despite the largely positive perception, there were notable concerns over officers contributing to feelings of fear and discomfort for students, particularly for equity-seeking students. Representatives from VSB affiliated groups primarily expressed a desire to keep SLOs in schools and make additional changes to the program. A few representatives called for the SLO program to be removed or replaced with an alternative program.

The main themes from interviews with community groups were negative perceptions and experiences with the SLO program. In particular, there were concerns about reinforcing systems of oppression through police in schools and the risk of re-traumatizing BIPOC students who have previously experienced or witnessed policing in their communities. Representatives from community groups also called for more engagement with Black and Indigenous students and families. Most representatives called for the SLO program to be removed or replaced, while some representatives called for the program to change.

The following chart provides a summary of emerging themes and key quotes from the interviews. Quotes are attributed to the category of group or organization to which the participant belonged, in order to demonstrate how comments were associated with participants' positionalities.

Table 3: Summary of emerging themes and key quotes from interviews

Question	Top themes	Key quotes
Q1: Understanding	Perception of what SLOs are supposed to do: relationship building and responding to safety needs	<i>"Some kids had to be removed from school – issues with violence – [SLOs are] instrumental in creating safe environment"</i> (VSB Affiliated Group)
	Perception of what SLOs are not supposed to do: contribute to feelings of discomfort and re-enforce oppressive systems	<i>"[The SLO program] is not a response that was asked for by community in our jurisdiction. It's been around for decades, was started by a cop, was never about responding to parents coming forward asking for [support] in identifying issues to be addressed in schools."</i> (Community group)
Q2: Experience	Positive sentiment towards supports that the SLO program offers to VSB students, parents, and staff.	<i>"Even students brought forward to SLO because of their negative actions (actions that put people at risk), even those interactions always come to a positive resolution."</i> (VPD)
	Negative sentiment toward the historical and contemporary context behind policing at large.	<i>"RCMP were used in the past to enforce residential schools; this is a longstanding history that has led to distrust and fear "</i> (Community group representative)
Q3: Impacts	Positive impacts: responsiveness to safety needs	<i>"[for a high-risk situation] I would reach out to our SLO...she would connect with the VPD and send somebody to student's house, understanding that student's situation. "</i> (VSB affiliated representative)
	Negative impacts: contributing to feelings of discomfort and signaling oppressive systems	<i>"It's a compromise for us as educators, we haven't been assured that our students are safe – creates vulnerability and sense of fear in some of our students"</i> (VSB affiliated representative)

Q4: Safety and positive sense of community	Yes – responsiveness to student needs and fostering positive community relationships	"We feel it's imperative to keep the program for the safety and well-being of staff, students, and parents." (VSB affiliated representative)
	No – contributing to feelings of fear and re-traumatization	" Any intersection of marginalization will increase likelihood of trauma with cops in schools" (Community group representative)
Q5: Changes	Continue the program but with more work to build community relationships	"Maybe an Indigenous Lead could be facilitating discussions in schools [about the SLO program]. " (VSB affiliated representative); "I'd like to see more collaborative conversations between admin staff and SLOs – organically and authentically, not tokenistic." (VSB affiliated representative)
	Listen to students and BIPOC Voices	"VSB needs to listen to students. Even if a small percentage of students want it removed, need to listen to them." (Community group)
Q. 6&7 Identity	Self-reported identity as it informs understanding of and experiences with the SLO program	Indigenous: 2 Black, African, Caribbean, or Afro-Caribbean: 2 East Asian: 2 South Asian: 1 White: 6 Woman: 4 Man: 3 Gender non-binary/gender diverse: 1
Q8: Other	Concerns around the perception of broader systemic issues at the VSB	"[The SLO program is] becoming a proxy issue for related concerns that have been bubbling." (VSB affiliated representative)
	Comments on review/engagement process	"We're disappointed to hear that the program isn't under review and alternatives aren't being considered." (VSB affiliated representative)
	Desire to explore larger issues related to reconciliation	"Need to look at these bigger issues: abilities to practice one's culture, structural violence against Indigenous women, UNDRIP, recommendations" (community group representative)

Survey

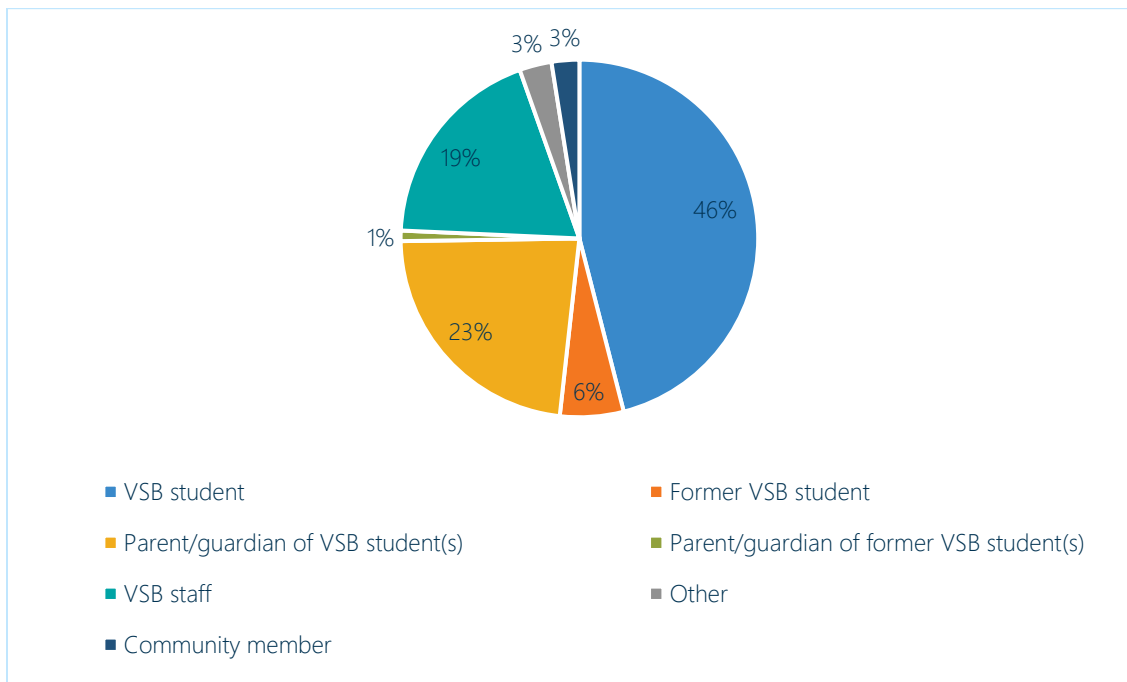
Who we heard from

To ensure feedback reflected the diversity of the district, our team regularly reviewed self-reported demographic responses to monitor and track community participation. We worked with secondary school leads, school counselors, and community liaisons to ensure the survey was distributed to under-represented student populations.

As Figure 4 shows, 52% of respondents were current or former VSB students. Of non-student respondents, 24% were parents/guardians, of current/former VSB students, 19% were VSB staff, and 5% identified as community members or 'other'.

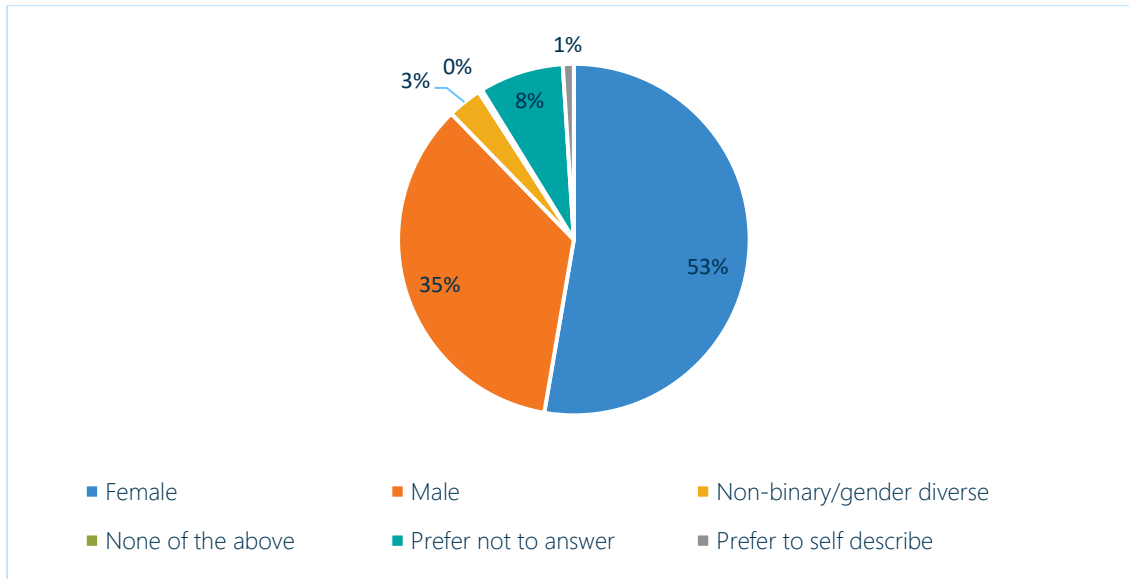
Of student respondents, 96% were secondary students, with 3% from alternative schools, and <1% from elementary schools.

Figure 4: Survey respondents



As displayed in Figure 5, we invited respondents to self-identify by gender identity. Of the 1,482 people who responded, 53% identified as female, 35% as male, 3% as non-binary/gender diverse, 8% said they preferred not to answer, and 1% said they prefer to self-describe their gender.

Figure 5: Gender identity (self-reported)

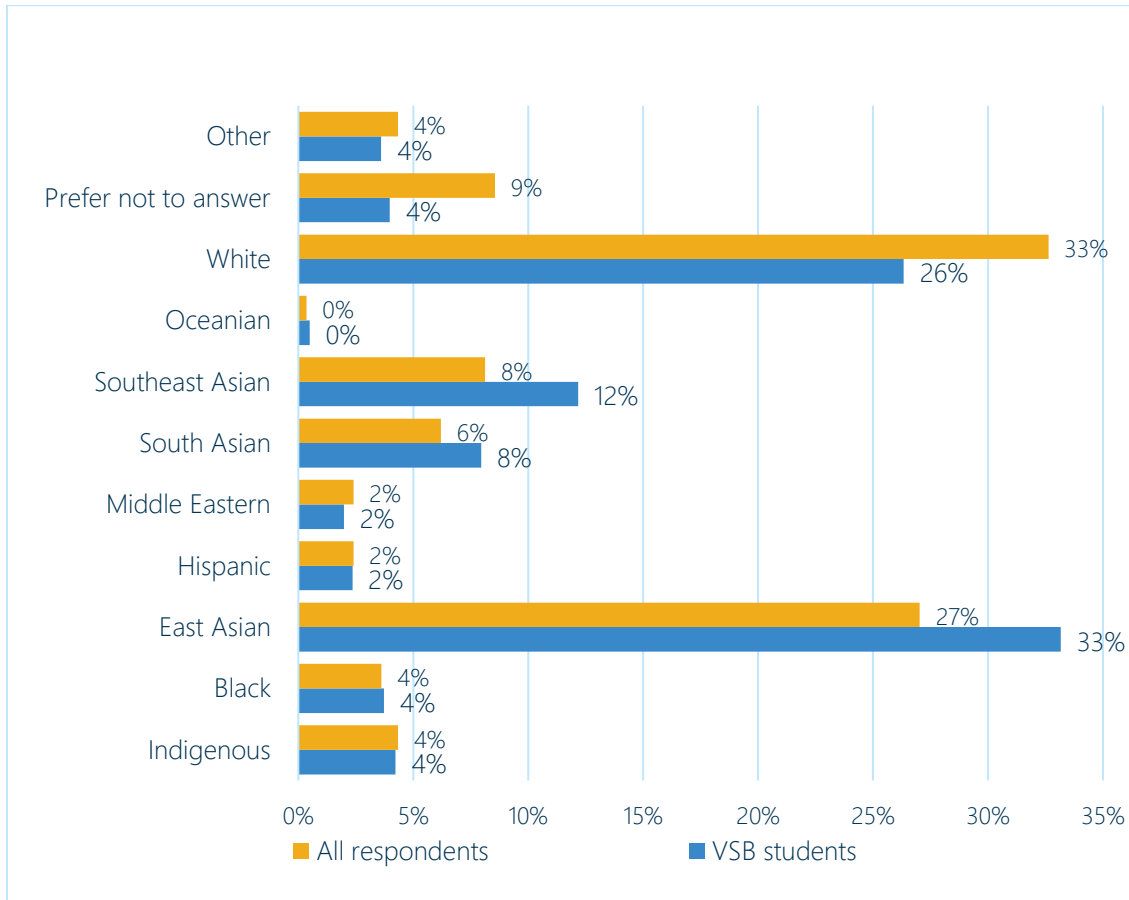


As shown in Figure 6, we also asked respondents to self-identify by ethnocultural background.

Overall, 4% of all respondents and 4% of student respondents identified as Black, 4% of all respondents and 4% of student respondents identified as Indigenous, and 47% of all respondents and 58% of student respondents identified as being a Person of Colour (POC); this includes those who responded: East Asian, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Oceanian.

33% of all respondents and 26% of student respondents identified as White; the remaining respondents chose 'Prefer not to answer' or 'Other'.

Figure 6: Ethnocultural identity (self-reported)



Detailed overview of survey responses

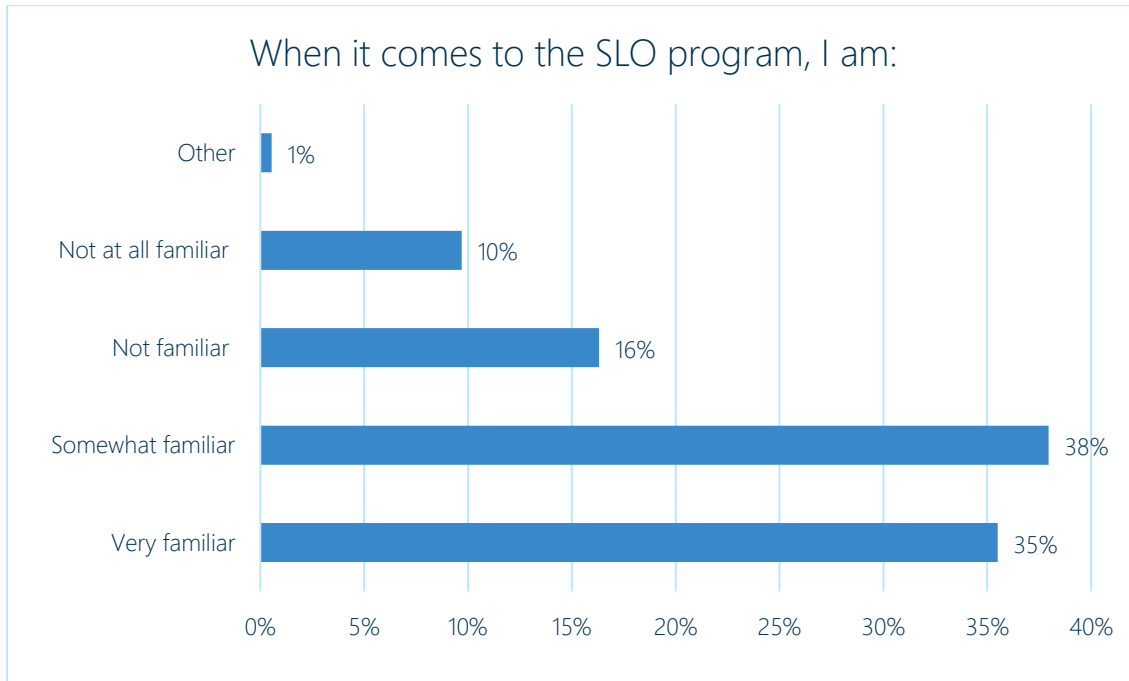
This section provides detailed summaries for each of the seven survey questions asked about the SLO program. It includes supporting quotes verbatim (i.e., no edits for grammar, spelling, or punctuation), with names, schools, and other identifiers removed to protect respondents' confidentiality.

Our analysis starts with an overview of the responses for each survey question before highlighting feedback from our focus communities. To center student voices we have cross-tabulated responses specifically for students who identified as being Black and Indigenous. This analysis supports the overarching engagement program goal to centre the voice of those who self-identify as members of BIPOC communities.

Q1: Familiarity with the SLO program

We asked the question: "We are interested in how familiar you are with the SLO program. Please complete this statement: When it comes to the SLO program, I am:"

Figure 7: Familiarity with the SLO program



There were 1,465 responses to this question. Overall, 73% of respondents reported being somewhat or very familiar with the program, with 26% reporting being not familiar or not at all familiar. A few respondents said they had never heard of the program, were not aware that it existed, or did not know what SLOs did.

Compared to all respondents, a higher percentage of students reported being less familiar with the program. When asked how familiar they were with the program, 58% of students said they were somewhat or very familiar with the program, with 41% reporting being not familiar or not at all familiar. This lower level of familiarity among student respondents was connected to more students having questions or expressing indifference in their responses, for example:

"Never heard of it until today."

"I was not aware that such a program existed at our school."

In questions 5 and 6 about the future of the program, many students indicated they felt they didn't have enough information to form an opinion.

Q2: Personal experience

We asked the question: "Please describe your own personal experience(s) with the School Liaison Officer (SLO) program. How does having an SLO in your school building make you feel? Why? Thinking about your experiences with the program overall, how would you characterize those experiences (e.g. positive, neutral, negative, unsure)?"

There were 1,250 comments total for this question. Our team analyzed responses into three main categories: **positive**, **negative**, and **neutral/indifferent** experiences with the SLO program. The themes below are listed in order of frequency of mentions, with the most mentioned category at the top.

Table 4: Summary of emerging themes and key quotes – personal experience with the SLO program

Sentiment	Theme and # comments	Key quotes
Positive	Safety (positive) – 307 comments	<i>"I personally feel more safe. I love knowing that there's a liaison officer that I can talk to and share anything. It was always a positive experience. I just felt more safe"</i>
	Community relationships – 219 comments	<i>"SLO's are vital to the building of trust and a positive relationship between communities and the police. SLOs have a positive impact and provide volunteer hours through coaching or various programs that have a great impact on schools"</i>
	Supports for students, parents, teachers, administrative staff – 208 comments	<i>"My daughter joined the VPD Cadets program. It has been by far the best experience of her high school years. It has motivated her to exert herself physically and socially in ways that nothing else has. If the VPD did not have a presence in Vancouver secondary schools, then she would not have known about the program that has been so uniquely beneficial to her. My daughter is mixed-race."</i>
	General positive perception – 207 comments	<i>"Positive - He's just a nice guy that hangs around the school and makes sure everyone's safe. He's not threatening nor intimidating at all. Friendly face you can chat with whenever."</i>
Negative	Safety (negative) – 197 comments	<i>"It makes me feel more scared than protected. It makes me feel like the school is saying the kids are dangerous, when I know they aren't. it feels like I am being criminalized for something I didn't do. I would say these experiences are negative."</i>
	General negative perception – 157 comments	<i>"I am uncomfortable with the presence of police officers in schools. I believe there is high risk of discrimination against Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, as well as those who are neurodivergent. Children should not be policed and at risk of being treated as criminals in a space that should be protective of them and work to find restorative justice and peaceful interventions."</i>
	Systemic/structural concerns – 93 comments	<i>"...When I see VPD in building or on grounds I am extremely uncomfortable. The VPD has a long history of systemic racism toward indigenous peoples and there is a large population of indigenous students' families at this school."</i>
	Negative symbols – 84 comments	<i>"As a black student, when the first thing I see when I walk into school in the morning is an armed police officer, it automatically gives me the message that "you aren't really welcome"</i>

		<i>here, and we're here to protect the white students from your disruptive behavior so they can continue to learn in a safe environment."</i>
Neutral/indifferent	Neutral/limited experience/desire to learn more – 167 comments	<i>"I feel fairly neutral. I don't pay much attention to the SLO program at my school, and I honestly don't see much of our SLO anyways. I sometimes forget that the SLO program is happening."</i>
	No experience/unaware of the program – 95 comments	<i>"I didn't know that an SLO was in my school building, I just knew that there was always a police officer around but no one informed me what they were here for."</i>

To understand variation in responses between the overall population and subpopulations of interest to Trustees, we surfaced the following themes based on self-reported demographic identities. Respondents who self-identified as being part of the following ethnocultural groups, and not as being Black or Indigenous (e.g. mixed race), are represented in this report as ‘person of colour’ (POC).

- East Asian, e.g. Chinese, Korean, Japanese, etc.
- Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin, e.g. Mexican, Haitian, Dominican, etc.
- Middle Eastern or North African, e.g. Iranian, Syrian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.
- South Asian, e.g. Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, etc.
- South East Asian, e.g. Filipino, Thai, Vietnamese, etc.
- Oceanian or Pacific Islander, e.g. Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, Fijian, etc.

Table 5: Summary of emerging themes from overall population and subpopulations – personal experience with the SLO program

Group	Themes	Sub-themes
All respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feelings of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has a positive impact • Positive community relationships
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral/indifferent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither positive nor negative • Lack of experience with the program
Student respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral or limited experience with SLO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feelings of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive community relationships: SLOs as a friendly, welcoming presence
Black student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative feelings of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling uneasy, uncomfortable, nervous, scared with SLOs in schools
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral/indifferent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral: experience with SLO is limited, unsure, never had an issue, feel indifferent
Indigenous student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative first and secondhand experiences with the SLO program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLOs are unnecessary • SLOs make schools feel unsafe, unwelcoming, like a prison
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feelings of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safer knowing SLOs are in schools
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral or limited experience with SLO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No interaction • Witnessed negative interactions
POC student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General positive feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive personal experience: feelings of safety, SLOs as supportive and friendly

		presences, positive impact on students and school environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No personal experience but positive perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that friends who are BIPOC have had positive experiences and felt supported by SLOs, generally happy having SLOs in schools
Community respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No personal experience but negative perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of students feeling uneasy, uncomfortable, nervous, scared, worried, intimidated
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systemic concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police as negative trigger for students, re-traumatizing students who have had negative interactions with the Police in their families or communities

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the interviews, discussion groups, and survey.*

In addition to the thematic summaries above, we noted feedback from parents of BIPOC students relating to their children’s experiences with the program. Some parents noted positive experiences with the program connected to their children feeling safer at school:

- “My experience is SLO programs is positive. My son mentioned that police officer Involved in educating students who took cantinas or drug at school. Also with SLO I felt relieved because there will be minimized school violence which sometimes is astonishing. There are drug dealer and drug addict living or wandering around the school. Needles and alcohol bottle could be found around the sports ground. Parents volunteered to clean the ground. If police is removed from school I could not imagine the risk to those helpless teenagers.”*

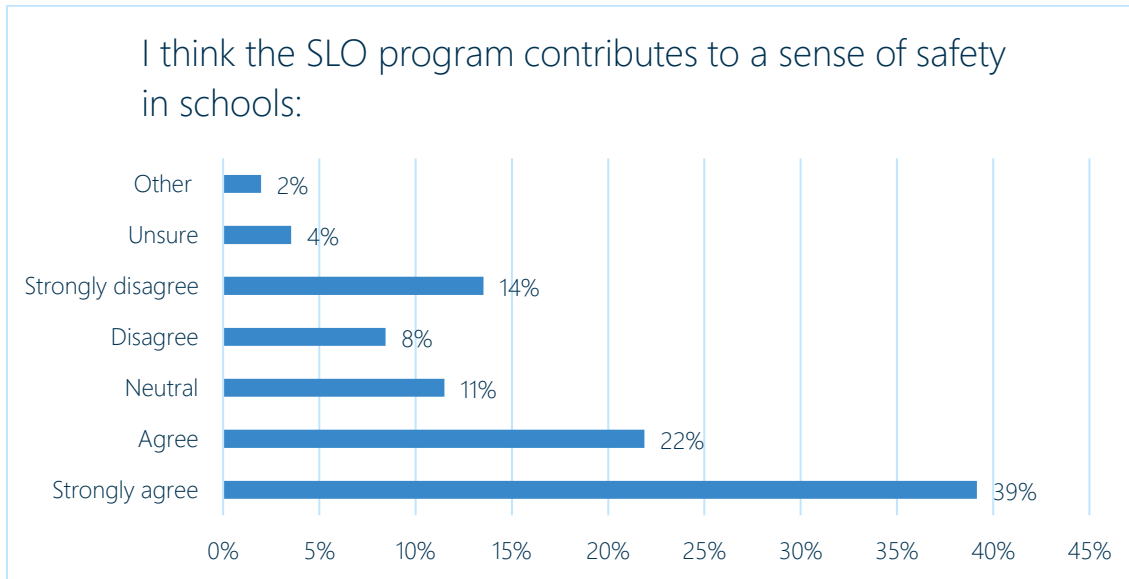
Other parents alluded to negative experiences relating to interactions with the SLO:

- Negative. “As a queer parent of a queer kid with a partner who is indigenous/latinx **it makes the school less safe for us and our child**”*
- “When a student I witnessed SLO harass and intimidate any student (including myself) they encountered: one and all were coerced into demonstrating “understanding” of the SLO views, although this involved slander and heresy. **As a parent now I similarly feel SLO presence projects officially sanctioned abuses of power** and its forced acceptance by each school community. I characterize my experiences then and now as negative.”*
- “I am uncomfortable with the presence of police officers in schools. **I believe there is high risk of discrimination against Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, as well as those who are neurodivergent.** Children should not be policed and at risk of being treated as criminals in a space that should be protective of them and work to find restorative justice and peaceful interventions.”*

Q3: Sense of safety

We asked: "Please indicate your agreement with this statement: I think the SLO program contributes to a sense of safety in schools:"

Figure 8: SLO program and sense of safety in schools



There were 1,483 total responses to this question with 1,415 respondents choosing to self-identify. A total of 657 VSB students answered. Of these students, 20 respondents self-identified as Black and 34 self-identified as Indigenous.

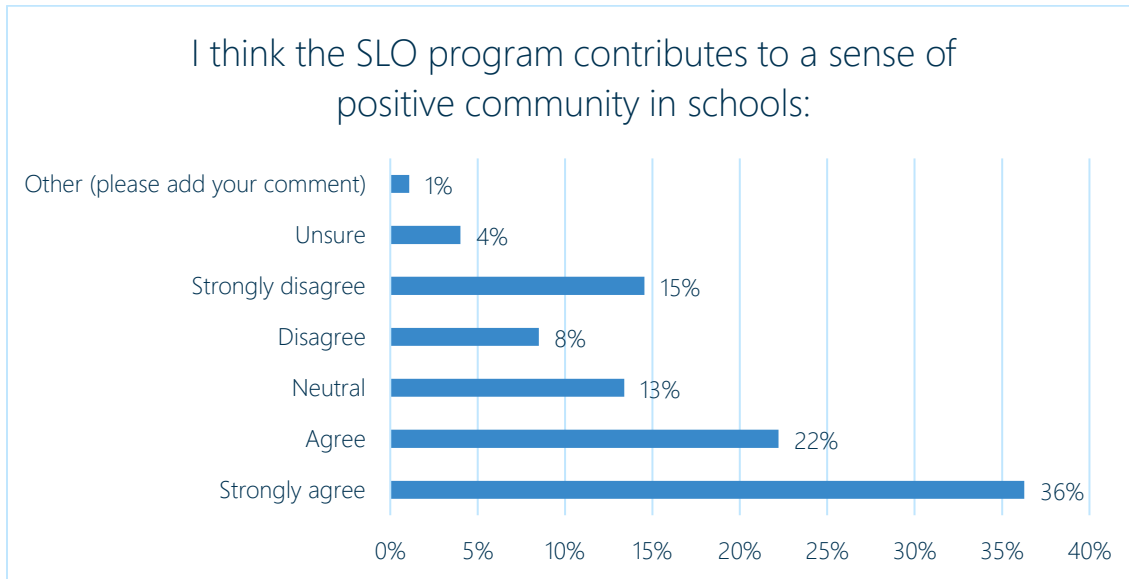
For this question, we ran cross-tabulations to surface any differences between the overall population, student population, and Black and Indigenous student populations.

- Overall, 61% of respondents reported they strongly agree or agree the SLO program contributes to a sense of safety in schools, with 22% reporting they disagree or strongly disagree.
- VSB students overall agree with this statement with 53% stating that they strongly agree or agree. Another 20% of respondents indicated that they either disagree or strongly disagree.
- Students who identified as Black responded differently, with only 15% stating that they strongly agree or agree. A combined total of 60% of Black VSB students indicated that they disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.
- Of students who identified as Indigenous, 47% reported that they strongly agree or agree, while 33% strongly disagree or disagree.

Q4: Sense of positive community

We asked: "Please indicate your agreement with this statement: I think the SLO program contributes to a sense of positive community in schools:"

Figure 9: SLO program and sense of positive community in schools



There were 1,472 total responses to this question with 1,416 respondents choosing to self-identify. A total of 658 VSB students answered. Of these students, 20 respondents self-identified as Black and 34 self-identified as Indigenous.

For this question, we ran cross-tabulations to surface any differences between the overall population, student population, and Black and Indigenous student populations.

- Overall, **58%** of respondents reported they strongly agree or agree with the sentiment, with 23% reporting they disagree or strongly disagree with this sentiment.
- Of VSB students, agreement was slightly lower. **50%** stated that they strongly agree or agree. Another 23% of respondents indicated that they either disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.
- Students who identified as Black responded differently with only 10% stating that they strongly agree or agree. **A combined total of 75% of Black students indicated that they disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.**
- 44% of Indigenous students reported that they strongly agree or agree. **A combined total of 33% of Indigenous students said they disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.**

Q5: Changes to the SLO program

We asked: "Drawing from your own personal experience(s), how do you think the SLO program could be changed or improved? This could include the presence of officers in schools, the programs, events,

and activities that SLOs run (e.g. sports programs, after-school programs, VPD Cadet Program), the ways that you get information about the program (e.g. announcements, assemblies, newsletters), and any other considerations related to the program.”

There were 1,135 comments total for this question. Argyle analyzed the responses in three main categories which were **keep the program**, **end the program**, and **neutral/indifferent**. These themes have further sub-themes which address any suggested changes or improvements to the SLO program. The themes below are listed in order of mentions, with the most mentioned category at the top.

Table 6: Summary of emerging themes - changes to the SLO program

Sentiment	Theme and # comments	Key quotes
Desire to keep SLO program	Keep but more awareness/engagement – 218 comments	<i>"I think that the program should have a dedicated place in [school name removed]'s newsletter. As I only heard about SLO today, I think it reflects largely on the awareness of the program within my school, and I think that it should be promoted more frequently."</i>
	Keep the program with small changes – 172 comments	<i>"If the program continues, I don't think SLOs should wear a traditional uniform or carry a gun while at the school. If they are there to build relationships and community, they should not dress like a typical police officer."</i>
	Keep the program as is (status quo) – 158 comments	<i>"I strongly wish for the SLO program to remain unchanged. Our school is a diverse community and helps build a sense of unity and community in the school. "</i>
	Keep, but more work to build relationships within school –146 comments	<i>"I understand that the presence of a police officer can be intimidating but in my personal experience once you talk to them and get to know them they are so kind... I think more purposeful interaction between SLO's and students would be great."</i>
	Keep the program with large changes – 69 comments	<i>"The VPD cadet program is a great program for those students who take part in it, but I find it unnecessary to have a police officer to hype up the program. There are other ways to promote the program, whether that be the principal or guidance councillors, but not only does having cops in the building create a sense of unease for black and indigenous students, but it creates division."</i>
Desire to end SLO program	Suspend or end SLO program/remove officers from schools (general) –146 comments	<i>"SLO officers should not be in schools. This is not necessary. I did not have an SLO in my school when I did any of my schooling. Too much intimidation, false illusion of power, and threat to people of colour. Both of my children are Indigenous, and I want minimal to no exposure to police. SLO officers are inflicted rather than necessary. I have police related trauma and as a parent I do not want to see them if I am at my children's school."</i>
	Mention of systemic/structural problems and need to listen to BIPOC communities –53 comments	<i>"The SLO program must be ended, based on feedback from students, parents and teachers of colour who continue to report significant harms causes by having police in schools. People of colour are routinely targeted and traumatized by police, and police</i>

		<i>presence undermines the safety and security of the most vulnerable people in Vancouver schools"</i>
Neutral/indifferent	No opinion/neutral/no personal experience – 168 comments	<i>"I don't have any personal experiences, so I don't know how it can be changed or improved."</i>

To understand variation in responses between the overall population and subpopulations of interest to Trustees, we surfaced the following themes based on self-reported demographic identities.

Table 7: Summary of emerging themes from overall population and subpopulations – changes to the SLO program

Group	Themes	Sub-themes
All respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater awareness and communication Removing negative symbols like uniforms and firearms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with no changes (status quo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with the program; contributes to safety and community Concern about removing the program
Student respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No opinion/neutral/no personal experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of familiarity with the program No personal experience Indifferent/neutral sentiment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More awareness, communication, engagement with students Mentions of not knowing the SLO and interest in personal interaction
Black student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspend or end the program (for student safety) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discomfort/fear/anxiety with SLOs Remove SLOs from schools and only call them in for emergencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with large changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More training/education for SLOs Relationship-building with students
Indigenous student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLOs should be more welcoming/reassuring/connected to students Remove uniforms/arms as they contribute to threatening presence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspend or end the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLOs are threatening, intimidating; culture of enforcement/punishment
POC student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No opinion/neutral/no personal experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't know about the program; no personal experience Program seems fine
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased sports programs, community involvement, and safety talks More awareness, communication, and visibility

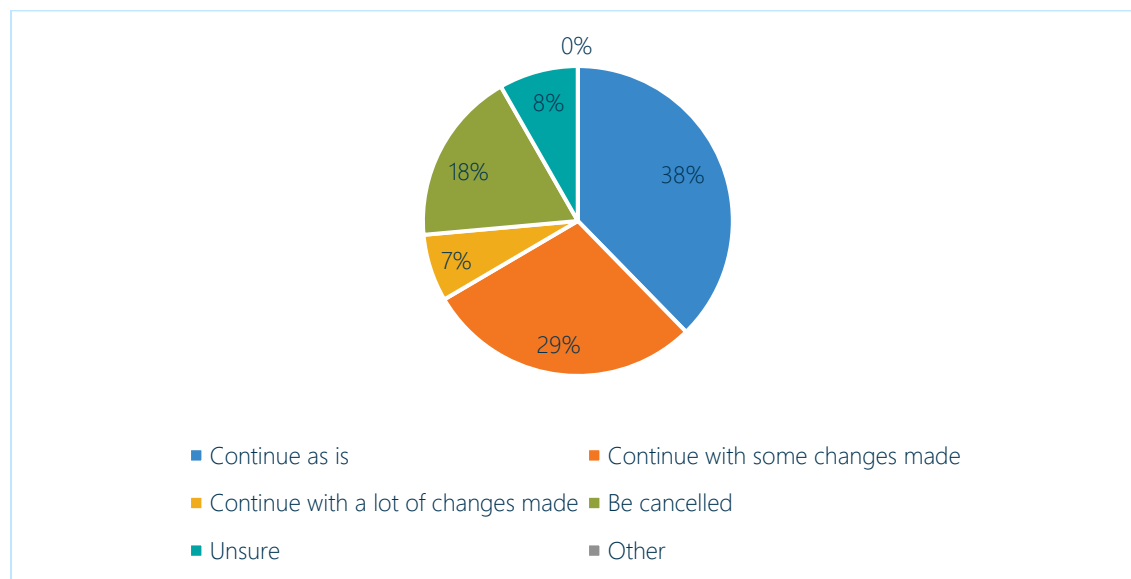
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive personal experience with SLO (bond, connection, mentorship)
Community respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspend or end the program (general) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to BIPOC communities as they are the most impacted Police presence undermines the safety and security of the most vulnerable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspend or end the program (systemic/structural concerns) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program reinforces state violence SLOs detract from a safe and supported learning environment SLOs are symbols of oppression

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the interviews, discussion groups, and survey.*

Q6: Suggestions for the future of the SLO program

We asked: “We are interested in hearing your thoughts on the future of the SLO program. Please indicate what you would like to see happen with the program by completing this statement: Based on my experience with the SLO program, I think the program should:”

Figure 10: Suggestions for the future of the SLO program



There were 1,438 total responses to this question with 1,407 respondents choosing to self-identify. A total of 653 VSB students answered. Of these students, 20 respondents self-identified as Black, 34 as Indigenous, and 434 as Person of Colour.

Table 8: Summary of emerging themes – future of the SLO program

Group	Themes	Sub-themes
All respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program as is (status quo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with the program General positive experience Indifferent/neutral/no personal experience
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No uniforms or arms More training and accountability
Student respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program as is (status quo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with the program General positive experience Strong positive experience (mention of SLO by name)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent SLO/more SLOs More proactive and focus on relationship-building
Black student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove police from schools entirely/only come in for special events Address discrimination/criminalization of BIPOC students' behaviour and division created by policing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with large changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the program to address intimidation/ power imbalance Processes to investigate incidents of racism/discrimination against BIPOC students
Indigenous student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program as is (status quo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indifferent/neutral/no personal experience Desire for SLOs' continued/more involvement in sports, events, activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of SLOs is needed for students to feel comfortable and safe Move towards alternative program, e.g. youth worker partnership
POC student respondents*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program as is (status quo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neutral; don't feel like I have enough experience to say General positive experience
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the program with small changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program works well but minor tweaks are needed

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training/selection process that prioritizes SLOs that are representative of Vancouver demographics (race and gender) • Acknowledgment that some may be uncomfortable with police presence
Community respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End or reform the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel, then reform the program to a restorative justice-centered approach • Cancel the program based on BIPOC communities' experiences and input
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the program as is (status quo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

**These demographic identities were self-reported by respondents in the interviews, discussion groups, and survey.*

Q7: Open space question

We asked: "Please share any other questions, comments, or ideas you have about the SLO program."

There were 559 comments total for this question. Themes are depicted by frequency in Figure 7, below, and listed in the following table by order of mentions, with the most mentioned category at the top.

Figure 11: Themes and # comments from open-ended questions

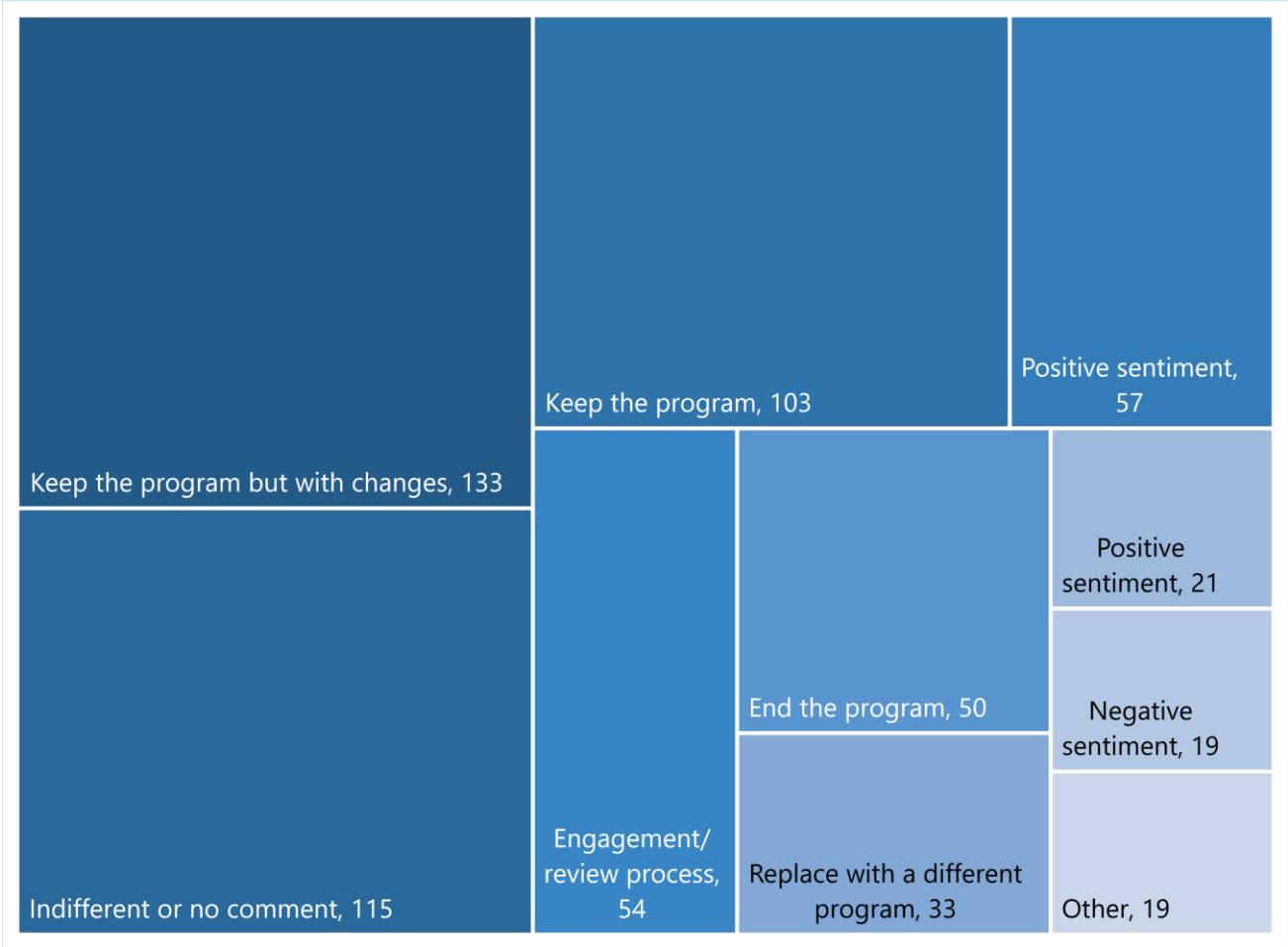


Table 9: Summary of emerging themes – open-ended question

Sentiment	Theme and # comments	Key quotes
Positive	Keep the program but with changes – 133	<i>" This whole approach needs to be rethought. Building trust with police begins in community with adults. When there is community trust then relationships with police improve. It shouldn't be a top down cops in schools forced relationship with youth. Step back and examine the data and research about what works. Don't keep doing the same thing expecting a different result - or wishing a program into success. It's a waste of time, energy, money, good will and at worst causes a lot of harm."</i>
	Keep the program as is – 103	<i>" Nothing should be changed, I can't stress enough how the SLO at my school and many other officers try and be very supportive and kind to everyone, regardless of who they are. I and many other people believe nothing should be changed at all about the SLO program."</i>
	General positive sentiment – 57	<i>"SLO provide an opportunity for a positive interaction with a peace officer. Their presence also provides a sense of protection and a role model of positive problem solving. Students at risk can observe and ask a peace officer about possible life changes to different possible careers in a non-threatening environment."</i>
Negative	End the program – 50	<i>"Police continue to be a damaging force for BIPOC in Canadian society. They do not belong in schools."</i>
	Replace with a different program – 33	<i>"Marginalized and racialized communities have spoken strongly to the unnecessary trauma brought to them by the presence of SLOs in school. Kids who have not had any interactions with police may find the SLO's presence neutral or comforting but the discomfort of vulnerable students should take priority. The day-to-day services performed by the SLO program can be replaced by other community supports, and that would teach students who to reach out for when they need support in their adult life. Many community issues can be resolved within the community without introducing police presence."</i>
Other	No other comments – 115	N/A
	Engagement/review process –54	<i>"The VSB should not be relying on public opinion to inform its choices regarding marginalized people. Listen to marginalized people first. It's that simple. If 9/10 students felt safe with police</i>

would you keep the program and ignore the thousands of students who don't? When those thousands are most likely marginalized youth?" ... "Program review is always helpful. It would be good if the job description was described to parents at the beginning of each year. I would appreciate no guns."

What we heard: Suggestions for the future of the SLO program

As part of the engagement process, participants were asked about their thoughts on the future of the SLO program. Questions on the topic were posed in interviews, discussion groups, and the survey. The question was posed slightly different depending on the engagement tactic used, for example over the phone versus on Google Jamboard, to encourage participants to share their thoughts.

Table 10: Summary of suggestions for the future of the SLO program by engagement tool

Tool	Question	Themes
Interviews	Are there changes you would make to the SLO program to better ensure students feel safe and a sense of belonging in schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep: consistency with SLOs so that they can build relationships with the school community • Change: no uniforms, change the length of term, focus on relationship-building, prevention/early intervention, selection and training process, ensure SLOs are demographically representative • Remove: discomfort with police in school, police presence undermines the safety and security of the most vulnerable, systemic concerns (e.g. perpetuates state violence), desire to listen to Black and Indigenous students and families
Discussion group	Your ideas for the SLO program: please place a comment using any sticky note colour, under the appropriate column: <i>What I would keep, What I would change, What I would get rid of</i> (using Google Jamboards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep: clubs, activities, programs, events, • Change: no uniforms, no arms, better communication, training - cultural values, assignment to schools, work with counselors • Remove: SLO program, no officers in schools
Survey	We are interested in hearing your thoughts on the future of the SLO program. Please indicate what you would like to see happen with the program by completing this statement: Based on my experience with the SLO program, I think the program should...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep: clubs, activities, events, programs • Change: better communication, SLO selection process, no uniforms, no arms, training - cultural values, assignment to schools, work with counselors • Remove: SLO program, no officers in schools

Conclusion

Overall, we heard a diversity of perspectives regarding understandings of, experiences with, and ideas for the future of the SLO program. Narrowing in on student perspectives, the dominant themes were:

- **Lack of familiarity with the SLO program** and a desire to understand why SLOs are in schools and their roles; this was often connected to students expressing neutrality, indifference, or uncertainty when asked about their suggestions for the program's future.
- **A spectrum of experiences with the program**, from positive to negative, with strong opinions on either side often informed by personal experience with the program or a particular officer.
- **Many perspectives on the future of the program**, with most students expressing support for the program to continue as is or with small changes; a smaller but important group of students expressed a desire for the program to be dramatically changed or removed.

With the Board's direction to centre voices of students who self-identified as BIPOC, we heard notable themes from these populations which should be brought to the forefront for Trustees' consideration:

- Students who identified as Black and Indigenous were more likely to express **both positive and negative feelings connected to safety in schools**, with comments reflecting their lived experience with SLOs and policing in their communities.
- Compared to the overall student population, students who identified as Black and Indigenous were **less likely to refer to positive relationships with SLOs** (e.g. mentorship, guidance, and support) and were more likely to reference negative feelings of fear, anxiety, and mistrust in the presence of officers.
- Similarly, those students were more likely to use words like **'uncomfortable, scared, anxious** and less likely to use words like **'safe, supported, caring'** than students at large.
- Students who identified as Black were more likely to mention **police as symbols of larger societal concerns**, including systemic racism, oppression, and abuses of power which affected their perceptions of the SLO program.
- For students who identified as Indigenous, **feelings of discomfort connected to being in a school environment where there were uniformed and armed officers** were more prominent than for the overall population.
- Students who identified as POC often expressed a **personal connection to SLOs with whom they related** (for example, being from the same ethnocultural background) and appreciated having a trusted figure to go to for guidance, support, and conversation.

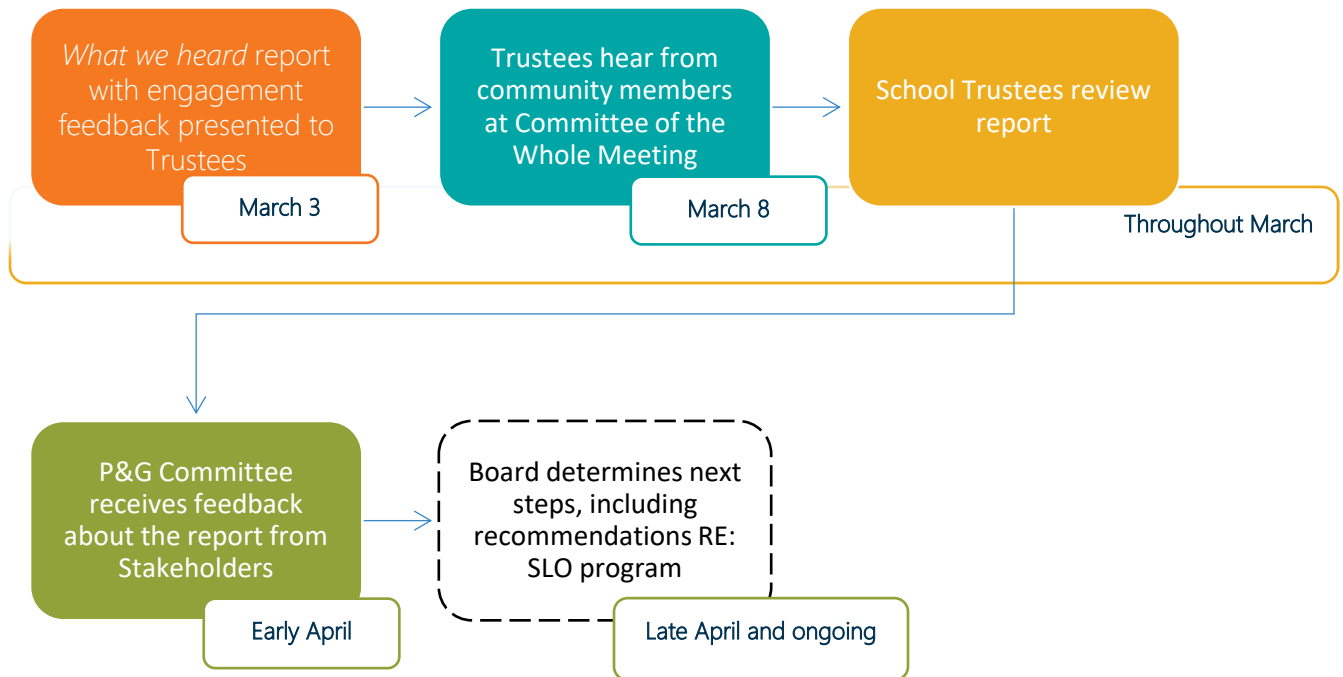
Next steps

This report will be presented to School Trustees at their March 3, 2021 Policy and Governance Committee meeting, where stakeholders involved in engagement will have the opportunity to present

delegations. After that meeting, Trustees will hear from broader community members; there will also be opportunities for stakeholders to review this report and provide feedback to the Board at the April 7, 2021 Policy and Governance Committee meeting. Recommendations regarding what Trustees have heard will be made by the Board at the April public Board meeting.

Recognizing the time and effort that participants gave to take part in this engagement, the report will be shared on the VSB's website and with each participant, to report back and maintain communications as part of this engagement process.

Figure 12: Next steps



Appendices

Appendix A: Detailed engagement methods

Appendix B: List of stakeholders contacted

Appendix C: VSB report and cover letter: Vancouver School Board/VPD School Liaison Program Review (January 2021)

Appendix D: Written submissions – verbatim

Appendix E: Written submissions – template letter and signatories

Appendix A: Detailed engagement methods

Dates	Tool	Purpose	Benefits	Audiences	#
Dec. 21- Jan. 29	Introduction letters	-Introduce Argyle and the engagement program -Offer different ways to engage, e.g. 1:1 interview, discussion group, survey, written submission	-Tailored letters to each stakeholder acknowledged their position, role, and interest in the engagement program	Student groups, parent groups, VSB employee groups, community groups, Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh Nations	45
Jan. 11 – Feb. 10	Stakeholder interviews	-Provide 1:1 or small group engagement with key stakeholders	-Opportunity to understand personal experiences in a 1:1 or small group setting -Collect information to inform student discussion group design and outreach	Student groups, parent groups, VSB employee groups, and community groups	31
Feb. 9 – Feb. 18	Student discussion groups	-Offer student-centred online group discussions with secondary students -Tailor discussions to student audiences	-Enable rich group discussion -Create space to listen and build on ideas -Offer accessibility and culturally relevant supports to students from community partners	Secondary students with direct experience with the SLO program and/or who identify as members of BIPOC communities	60
Jan. 27 – Feb. 15	Online survey	-Provide an online survey primarily for VSB students -Offer an engagement mechanism to parents, VSB employees, and broader community members	-Allow participants to share written feedback at their own pace -Collect demographic information (optional) for analysis and reporting	-VSB students, parents, and employees -Broader community members	1,481

Jan. 22 – Feb. 19	Written submissions	-Give an opportunity for stakeholders to share written feedback -Collect feedback outside of the survey window	-Provide an outlet for those who did not participate in the interviews or discussion groups	Any individual or organization who wished to give feedback	300+
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Appendix B: List of stakeholders contacted

Stakeholder Category	Group/Organization
Vancouver Police District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigative Support Services
VSB Affiliated Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 15 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 407 Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals Association (VEPVPA) VSB Bargaining Council of the VSB Construction & Maintenance Trade Unions Vancouver District Parents Advisory Council (VDPAC) Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA) Professional and Administrative Staff Association (PASA) Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC) Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA) Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA) VSB Alternative and Alternate Programs VSB Adult Education International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) VSB Indigenous Education City of Vancouver's Racial and Ethnocultural Committee VSB Newcomer Welcome Centre
Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VSB Diversity Committee (includes VSB employees and community group representatives) Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) Mosaic BC Out on Screen BC Community Alliance (BCCA) Black Lives Matter Vancouver Youth Speak Out Tierra Negra Arts University of British Columbia (UBC) Equity & Inclusion Office Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) Metis Nation of British Columbia Urban Indigenous Peoples Advisory Committee (UIPAC) Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre (VAFCS) First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) Pacific Region of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Musqueam Indian Band Squamish Nation Council Tsleil-Waututh Nation

Appendix C: VSB/VPD School Liaison Program Review (January 2021)



February 2021

Dear SLO Program Review Participant,

As you are aware the Vancouver School Board has requested that a review of the School Liaison Officer (SLO) program be completed to inform the Board in making decisions as to the future of this program in Vancouver schools. At the October 26 Board meeting, trustees revised a previous motion on the SLO program dividing the review into two distinct parts.

Part I: Background and Context Report

Retired Secretary Treasurer Joan Axford was engaged to compile a report for the Board outlining the history of the SLO program, scope of the program, an overview of school liaison programs in other jurisdictions, and information on restorative justice programming. This document will form part of the final report on the SLO program to be submitted to the Board and is attached for your information.

Part II: Stakeholder Engagement

The Board is most interested in receiving input from stakeholders on the SLO program as part of this review. Trustees are particularly interested in hearing from VSB students. The voices and perspectives of students with lived experience with the program and of students who identify as being part of the BIPOC community will be sought out as part of this engagement.

Argyle Communications has been contracted to conduct the stakeholder engagement. Input from stakeholders will be collected through a series of targeting strategies including focus groups, interviews and surveys. All input received will be shared with the Board for their review and consideration.

It is important to note that Argyle Communications has not been asked to make any recommendations as part of this engagement process. Rather they have been asked to structure and facilitate a safe, open and transparent process through which input and feedback is gathered. Their final report will include any recommendations heard from participants through the engagement process.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to share your thoughts and experiences with the SLO program with the Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Nelson', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

David Nelson
Deputy Superintendent

Attachment: Vancouver School Board/VPD School Liaison Program Review

Vancouver School Board/VPD School Liaison
Program Review

JANUARY 2021

JOAN AXFORD

Contents

- A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY3
- B. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT4
 - 1. Terms of Reference5
 - 2. Historical Background.....5
 - 3. Current Program in Vancouver Schools with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD).....7
 - 4. RCMP Program and Vancouver Schools.....9
 - 5. VPD Cadets Program9
 - 6. Vancouver Police Department - Description of the Programs.....9
- C. EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER PROGRAMS IN OTHER DISTRICTS IN BC AND CANADA14
 - 1. Provincial Information and Guidelines14
 - 2. BC School Districts.....15
 - 3. Comparison Chart – BC School Districts.....19
 - 4. Other Metropolitan School Districts Across Canada.....20
 - 5. Comparison Chart – School Districts in Other Provinces.....24
- D. INFORMATION ABOUT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS26
- E. APPENDIX28
 - 1. Appendix 1 – Memorandum of Understanding between the Vancouver School Board and Vancouver Police Department28
- F. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LINKS49

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was written at the request of the Board of Education and provides background of the current School Liaison Officers' program (SLO) and how it compares to other school districts in British Columbia and sample school jurisdictions across the country.

Information for this report was obtained from the following:

- Surveys from neighbouring and comparable school districts;
- Interviews with some of those same districts;
- A review of school district websites;
- A review of relevant provincial guidelines and other documents;
- A review of police websites and recent reports;
- Interviews with staff of the Vancouver Police Department;
- Research regarding restorative justice programs.

The intent of this report is to provide background and contextual information and serves as a companion document to the community engagement report (January – April 2021). The final report will be presented following consultation and discussion with students, parents, district employees, stakeholder groups, local Indigenous communities and other community organizations, and the Vancouver Police and RCMP.

The Ministry of Education states in their guide [Maintaining School Safety: A Guide for School and Police Personnel in B.C.](#) that school safety is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation, collaboration and communication. Partnerships between schools and police play a particularly important role when it comes to preventing and responding to serious incidents. The Ministry does not state that the program needs to involve police officers in the schools.

The Vancouver School Board and Vancouver Police Department (VPD) have an almost 50-year history of supporting school safety and programs for youth in the community. The programs are outlined in this report (Table on pages 17-20). Over time, the Vancouver Police Department has integrated their youth and community programs into the SLO program. The SLO program is fully funded by the VPD.

Across BC and the country, school districts and police departments are reviewing their programs. Some school districts have cancelled their in-school programs and are working on new frameworks to partner with their local police on school and student safety. Out of the 8 BC school districts surveyed, four districts indicated that their school liaison programs were being reviewed, most while the program was continuing to run in its existing format. All five of the school districts in other provinces across Canada that were analyzed for this report indicated that their programs have recently been, or are currently in the process of being reviewed, and three of those districts have cancelled their SLO program entirely. The report includes a table that compares the programs in those school districts on pages 19 and 24.

The programs in each jurisdiction differ but all have similar goals – student security and safety, support for schools and families and prevention of crime. Where they differ is in the amount of time officers spend in schools and the number of programs offered to support youth. The number of programs in Vancouver exceeds those offered in other jurisdictions.

[Nova Scotia](#), [Ontario](#), [Alberta](#) and [BC](#) provincial governments have published protocols for police presence in schools. The bibliography outlines the research reviewed.

The use of Restorative Practices varies across the districts reviewed. Many of the police departments use the practices. These practices range from School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) who have provided professional development to all staff and use the practices extensively to School District No. 36 (Surrey) where restorative practices are used primarily by the RCMP. Vancouver is currently reviewing its policies and procedures to incorporate restorative justice practices.

B. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

In October 2020, the Vancouver Board of Education amended a previously approved motion (June 22, 2020), that stated:

The Vancouver Board of Education resolves:

That as part of the Racism and Discrimination Strategic Plan the role of VPD/RCMP in schools, including School Liaison Officers (SLOs) and related activities and events, be reviewed, led by independent third-party experts.

1. *With respect to gathering input, those would be experts in communications and consultation and be informed that the review's primary focus is to seek input from VSB stakeholders, local First Nations and community members/groups, including but not limited to:*
 - *Students/Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)*
 - *Parents/Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)*
 - *Employee groups*
 - *VSB Diversity Committee*
 - *Black community groups such as but not limited to Black Lives Matter Vancouver and BC Community Alliance*
 - *Urban Indigenous groups*
 - *Vancouver Police Department (VPD)/Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)*

That students/VDSC are included in developing the plan to seek input from students.

That specific measures and procedures will be in place to ensure that all participants providing input have a safe setting in which to share their experiences and opinions.

2. *With respect to the following matters those would be experts in their fields:*

That the review includes investigating the creation and funding of a restorative justice model/process for acts of racism.

That the review makes recommendations on (1) the VPD/RCMP role, and (2) the continuation/alteration/elimination of the SLO positions, for the board to consider.

3. *And that there be a report back to the February 2021 Policy and Governance committee meeting.*

1. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for this first part of the Independent Review of the School Liaison Officers Program include the following:

- An Historical Background of the Program
- Current outline of the Program
- Information provided from the schools about the program
- Information provided by the Vancouver Police department about the Program
- Examples of other school district school liaison programs
- Information about Restorative Justice or similar programs in schools in BC
- Seek to provide answers to the following questions:
 - How does the school liaison program currently operate?
 - Does the program operate similar to other school district programs?
 - Name the schools where the program operates-does it look differently in elementary schools versus secondary schools?
 - What is the current cost of the school liaison program, either by direct payments or other resources provided by the Vancouver School Board?
 - How does a restorative justice or similar program operate and how it differs from the school liaison program?
 - What is the cost of restorative justice type programs in other school districts?

2. Historical Background

In 1972, the Vancouver Board of Education approved a pilot project at Killarney Secondary School and its family of elementary schools. Its stated aim was to improve relations between young people and the police.

From the minutes of Vancouver School Board Meeting April 17, 1972:

Education and Student Services Committee Meeting March 28, 1972:

7. b). Request from Vancouver City Police Department – Moved by Trustee Rowell, seconded by Trustee Mrs. New, that as an experiment for the remainder of the school term, the Board approve the Vancouver City Police Department’s proposal to achieve better communication between the school community and the Police Department.

A Trustee noted that there was some discussion at the Committee meeting that policemen should not be used as discipline consultants in the school, but this was not included in the report and it was suggested that the Police Department’s proposal should not be accepted in its entirety. The Chairman referred this matter to the Head of Education and the Trustee raising this item to discuss with the Chairman of the Committee.

Trustee Rowell amended the motion to read “that as an experiment for the remainder of the school term, the Board assist the Vancouver City Police Department in its attempt to achieve better communication between the school community and the Police Department.”

Comments were made on the Police Officer in the program not being required to wear his uniform on all occasions.

A vote was taken on the motion as amended and declared CARRIED.

As noted below, those involved at the time felt that the project was successful and in July of 1972, the Board approved the continuation and expansion of the program:

Education and Student Services Committee Meeting June 27, 1972:

- (iv). Communication Project, Police Department and Killarney School Community: Moved by Trustee Rowell, seconded by Trustee Bowers, that the Board approve the continued involvement of a Police Officer in the Killarney School district for the 1972-73 school year.

The committee Chairman spoke of the success of this project and indicated that this motion would approve the motion in principle with the hope that it could be expanded to other areas in the city.

A vote was taken on the motion and declared CARRIED.

Subsequently, police liaison officers were posted to John Oliver Secondary and Lord Byng Secondary in the spring of 1973.

Minutes from the Education and Student Services Committee, September 11, 1973:

- 6). Evaluation of Police Officer at Killarney Secondary
The Committee received a detailed report regarding the involvement of a police officer in the schools in the Killarney District. J.H. Wormsbecker commented that this has been a positive experience but that the maximum influence of the officer at the school will not be known for some years. The individual involved is an outstanding personality and relates well to the students and teachers. It was noted that the Vancouver Police Department has seconded another police officer to Lord Byng Secondary School and that another school has requested a policewoman. This request will be followed up and a report made to this committee.

In the minutes from the November 8, 1973 Board Meeting:

Committee IV Meeting:

- 6.) Extension of Killarney and Byng Community Police Projects: J. H. Wormsbecker said that this project has been so successful at the two communities of schools where it has been introduced that requests have been received for the assignment of police officers to other communities of schools. Officials would therefore like the authority to approach the Chief of Police requesting an additional two communities of schools be served by police officers.

A Committee Member asked what specific benefits had been received by the students from this experiment and was informed that while concrete results will not be evident for 5 or 6 years, there seems to be a more positive feeling in terms of the relationship between the police officers assigned to the Killarney and Byng communities, and the students in these areas. A

Trustee mentioned that the officers concerned form a valuable link between the elementary schools and their related secondary school.

The Board also asked the Police Department to assign three more officers in the 1973-1974 school year to Vancouver Technical, Thompson and Gladstone Secondary Schools with a fourth to be shared by King George and Kitsilano.

In the 1974-1975 school year, The School Liaison Officer Program was expanded to support half the secondary schools and their associated elementary schools in the Vancouver School District. At that time, the assignment included working alongside and in cooperation with counsellors, teachers, principals and parents to support individual students.

In February 2006, the Vancouver School Board approved the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Vancouver Police Department (MOU). This document intended to clarify the working relationship between the Vancouver Board of Education and the Vancouver Police Department and their staff in reference to the School Liaison Program. The MOU set out the goals, roles, policies and procedures related to the program.

According to the 2006 Memorandum of Agreement, the Goals of the School Liaison Officer Program are to:

- a. create a safe and positive school and adjacent community environment;
- b. provide students with experiences and meaningful relationships that will develop in them:
 - i. positive values,
 - ii. a strong sense of self,
 - iii. social competencies,
 - iv. a commitment to learning that will support and empower them to make positive choices; and
 - v. effective preparation for life's challenges; all of which are developmental assets and are conditions to building resiliency that students need in order to bounce back from risks, stress and trauma, and to experience life success;
- c. address criminal and anti-social behaviours;
- d. protect those at risk; and
- e. develop effective and timely communication links between the VSB schools and the VPD.

The full MOU is included in the Appendix 1.

3. Current Program in Vancouver Schools with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD)

In Vancouver, the Vancouver Police Department's School Liaison Unit (SLU) has maintained a partnership with the Vancouver School Board since 1972. School Liaison Officers (SLOs) are assigned to specific schools. At present, the VPD deploys 15 police constables and 2 designated sergeants across the city of Vancouver, with the exception of the University Endowment Lands around the University of British Columbia which is served by the RCMP. In addition to the public schools within the VSB, the SLU also serves the private educational institutions in the city.

In their description of the School Liaison Unit, the VPD states that:

“In support of targeted outreach and interventions for at-risk and/or vulnerable youth, SLOs are expected to connect with all individuals in the student body of their assigned schools in order to provide day-to-day support and participate in various school-based activities and events. A number of unique programs are offered to youth based on the identified needs of each particular population/community”.

In addition to the programs offered at Vancouver secondary schools (outlined in the chart below), SLOs perform a variety of functions as outlined on the VPD website.

School Liaison Officers engage in the following:

- *Deliver safety and crime prevention lessons to students, staff and parents;*
- *Act as a legal resource to students, administrators and staff;*
- *Counsel and talk informally with students;*
- *Work to enhance the safety and security of the school;*
- *Coach teams, join clubs and escort field trips;*
- *Investigate criminal offences relating to the school and its population;*
- *Serve as a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system.*

In addition to the School Liaison Program, the VPD operates the School Safety Patrol which teaches elementary school children about safety issues. The School Safety Patrol also oversees school crossing guards and parent parking.

Youth Outreach Presentations at the elementary school level are conducted by SLOs on a regular basis throughout the school year. In 2019, the SLU reports that 51 presentations were given by SLOs to over 1250 elementary school aged children on topics such as Halloween safety, strangers, internet safety and bullying.

According to the VSB/VPD MOU, the following topics are available for schools and their communities to access from School Liaison Officers:

Education for Elementary Students:

- Stranger danger
- Substance abuse prevention
- Halloween safety
- Introduction to 911 and policing
- Conflict resolution
- Introduction to the SLO
- Gang recruitment
- Internet safety
- Bullying
- Theft & Shoplifting
- Abuse Prevention

Education for Secondary Students:

- Substance abuse prevention
- Dating violence
- Conflict resolution
- Driver licensing
- Police department recruiting
- Drinking and driving
- Introduction to the SLO
- Gang recruitment
- Internet safety
- Bullying
- Street Racing
- Abuse Prevention
- Theft & Shoplifting

Education for Parents and the Community:

- Criminal Law Education for Parents and the Community
- Drugs
- Community safety
- Child abduction prevention
- Gangs
- Sexual exploitation of children and youth
- Crime prevention in the neighbourhood
- School safety
- Internet safety

Education for Staff:

- Current trends in youth crime
- Responding to intruders
- Response to critical incidents
- Drugs and weapons
- Threat assessment and responding to threats

Education for Administrators:

- Interviewing
- Case Law
- Drugs
- Weapons
- Restorative Justice
- Critical incidents

4. RCMP Program and Vancouver Schools

The three schools (University Hill Secondary, Norma Rose Point School and University Hill Elementary) on the University Endowment Lands are served by the RCMP. There is no established police liaison program in these schools and therefore officers are not in the schools on a regular basis but will respond to both emergent and non-emergent issues at the request of the school. The officers assigned to schools have training in working with youth but are not necessarily the officers who respond to the calls from the school.

5. VPD Cadets Program

Funded by the Vancouver Police Foundation (VPF), the Cadet Program is designed to instill leadership skills and good citizenry. Although this program could increase the pool of potential VPD recruits among inner-city youth, it is not the primary purpose of the program. The 28-week program is led by VPD police officers and includes educational workshops along with physical training, team building exercises, and life skills training such as public speaking and resume-building skills. Graduates of the program become mentors and peer-to-peer role models for subsequent cohorts. A total of 366 youth has participated in the program since its inception in 2014. Over 270 cadets have successfully graduated from the program, and in the present cohort, there are 85 cadet participants and 135 cadet volunteers who are graduates of the Cadet Program.

6. Vancouver Police Department - Description of the Programs

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) produced a [Community Matters Report in May 2020](#) that reported on the many programs provided by VPD including the programs associated with the work of the School Liaison Officers (SLO) in the schools. The VPD considers the School Liaison Program (SLO) to be an integral part of their community outreach programs. The report provided a comprehensive background on the programs in the schools and how they relate to their overall community outreach. The report contained the outcome of a 2019 survey of Vancouver residents. When asked how important various programs were, the response for SLO programs was 59 percent very important and 24 percent somewhat important.

The following table itemizes each program, its purpose, and who participates in the program. Most of these programs are funded by either the Vancouver Police Department or the Vancouver Police Foundation. If funding is not from either of these sources, it is indicated in the table.

Over time there has been an integration by the VPD of the SLO program and many youth and community programs. In discussion with the VPD, there are certain programs that operate in the schools primarily as the officers are already there such as Student Challenge, Get Real, Youth Connect, Windemere Running Club, Rise Basketball and Here 4 Peers. Other programs are able to more easily identify youth in need as the officers are in close touch with the schools such as New Kids Police Academy and the Cadet Program. As well, the VPD supports the crossing guard program at elementary schools through the SLOs assigned to the schools.

Program	Purpose/Support provided	Participation
New Kids Police Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive role modeling for those who have not had positive relationships with law enforcement in their home country • Mentorship and presentations by police members • 10-week program 	15 youth (aged 15 to 18) twice a year Since 2015, 150 youth have participated Student selection is done in consultation with school counsellors and teachers
Indigenous Cadet Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented in 2007 • Mentor and coach Indigenous youth aged 19 to 29 who desire to become police officers 	42 Indigenous youth have completed the program since 2007
Access Recreation and Culture Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage high risk indigenous youth • Cultural and recreational activities • Seminars with Elders • Independent review of program-well received and impactful for youth 	Indigenous youth aged 16 to 24 First cohort had 8 males and the second in April 2019 has two females and six males
Cadet Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instill leadership skills • Focuses on Inner city youth • 28-week program • Physical training, life skills, team building 	366 youth have participated since 2014 Present cohort has 85 participants and 135 cadet volunteers from previous programs
Student Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini Police Academy over spring break • Legal studies, human relations • Presentations from current police units such as VPD Canine 	48 students from Vancouver schools Since its inception 21 years ago, 1000 students have attended
Get Real	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth resiliency program • Supports crime prevention through engagement • Weekly workshops on issues such as mental health, substance abuse prevention, self-defense, employment readiness • Focuses on the Windemere community 	Current enrolment is 60 to 80 Youth
Police Athletic League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses athletic, recreational programs to foster positive rapport and mutual trust between police and youth 	In 2019, 24 lunch hour games were played, with over 3,000 youth playing or in attendance
Youth Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth facing potential risk from online behavior • Day long symposium 	Annually, 150 students, staff and counselors from Vancouver Schools

Program	Purpose/Support provided	Participation
Rise Basketball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After school program • Healthy relationship with police • Sir Charles Tupper and John Oliver Secondary • Funded by the B.C. Civil Forfeiture Office, ICBC, Hillcrest Community Centre 	In 2019, 36 youth attended the program Program takes place twice a month
Total Respect for Ourselves and Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Children of the Street Society • Addresses the issue of sexting among youth • Intensive workshops and preventative information sessions at schools 	In 2019, presentations were attended by over 950 youth and 125 professionals including VSB teachers, support staff and administrative staff
Here 4 Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership between VPD, VSB, Canadian Mental Health Association, Vancouver Coastal Health • 80-minute mental health workshop facilitated by grade 10-12 students and presented to grade 6-7 students 	Over 4,000 students in grades 6 and 7 have participated Over 150 workshops completed to date Schools participating are David Thompson, Vancouver Technical, John Oliver, Prince of Wales, Eric Hamber and King George Secondary
VPD Musqueam Basketball Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started in 2010 • Develop community relations between the Musqueam Reserve and the VPD 	The 2019 camp had 50 participants
Making Everyone Safe and Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Day event every June -Hosted by VPD police officers 	200 students took part in the event
Churchill Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After school Workout Club at Churchill Secondary • Encourage youth to make healthier choices • Build relationships with police 	50 students actively participate
Annual Soccer Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its 31st year this camp is supported by VPF, CIBC, Whitecaps • Free for at risk youth aged 6 to 17 • Games and drills to learn the game 	In 2019, 300 children participated

Program	Purpose/Support provided	Participation
Paul Sanghera Soccer Tournament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by the VPF and Masonic Lodges of the Lower Mainland • Hosts nine Vancouver secondary schools • Two-day tournament and top players are rewarded with scholarships for post-secondary education 	In its 37 th year
Free Boot Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soccer boots are provided to youth in need 	Supports initiatives and hosts celebration with families
End Gang Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations conducted by VPD's Gang Crime Unit Officers in partnership with school SLO • SLO provides support and follow up discussion with students following the presentation • Presentation focus is on gang deterrence 	Number of presentations and follow-up, varies year-to-year
Windemere Running Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive running club, promotes good physical health • Fosters sense of belonging and community and mentorship of youth involved 	4th year, over 150 youth have participated since its inception

C. EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER PROGRAMS IN OTHER DISTRICTS IN BC AND CANADA

1. Provincial Information and Guidelines

The relationship between school districts and their local police department and the role that police officers play in the school environment and community is one that is agreed upon and managed at the local level, often through a Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding (MOU) between the Board of Education and the Police Department. As is apparent in the descriptions outlined below, the role that police officers play in schools in the districts listed here varies from one to the next, given that the needs of each district not only vary greatly but also can change over time.

However, even though the decisions regarding if, how and when to use police officers in schools is in the domain of the local governing bodies, there are provincial guidelines. These guidelines provide information that is intended to help school districts and the local police build appropriate relationships and set expectations for their respective roles and responsibilities. In 2019, The BC Ministry of Education published, [*Maintaining School Safety: A Guide for School and Police Personnel in B.C.*](#)

This document states that “School safety is a shared responsibility that requires a commitment to cooperation, collaboration and communication. Schools and police must have a common understanding of each partner’s roles and responsibilities, as well as procedures they both agree on and clearly defined decision-making authority. “

As well, it is noted that *“Police should endeavour to develop and maintain relationships with local public and independent schools, parents (legal guardians or custodial parents), and youth to support positive development of the school community and the community as a whole. “*

Work has also been done in other provinces to outline the factors that they believe make for a positive relationship between schools and police, and to set provincial protocols for the establishment of effective school – police relationships. They include:

- [Alberta Ministry of Education - A Guide to Effective Collaboration between School Administrators and Police Working in Alberta’s Schools](#)
- [A Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol \(Ontario\)](#)

The Ontario document states that,

The Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol has been prepared for the following reasons:

- *to ensure a consistent approach in the local protocols developed by school boards and police services across the province.*
- *to promote dialogue and the establishment of effective relationships between schools and police based on cooperation and shared understandings; and*

- *to set provincial expectations for local protocols, while allowing police services and school boards to address service-delivery arrangements and unique factors and/or considerations that may affect individual jurisdictions.*
- [Nova Scotia School Police Protocol](#)

2. BC School Districts

The following information was collected through responses to a survey that was sent to various school districts requesting details about their programs. Information gained from their school district websites and the websites of the associated police departments is also included. Out of the 8 BC school districts surveyed, four districts indicated that their School Liaison Programs were being reviewed, most while the program was continuing to run in its existing format. All five of the school districts in other provinces across Canada that were analyzed for this report indicated that their programs have recently been or are currently in the process of being reviewed, and three of those districts have cancelled their SLO program entirely.

School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan): 31 elementary schools, 7 middle schools, 5 secondary schools

SD 23 has a School Resource Officer (SRO) Program in their schools. The program is in partnership with the RCMP and has existed for the past 15 years. Currently, there are four officers for schools in the City of Kelowna and one officer for the City of West Kelowna. All five officers are full time in schools and primarily support the secondary and middle schools. The district states that the officers are considered to be part of the school staff and often attend extra-curricular functions such as graduations, sports events, dances and parent meetings. The program is fully funded by the police department. To date, there has been no formal evaluation of the program.

Currently, SD 23 has restorative justice programs, and these are provided by school staff at the school level. The district is looking to expand the program and is working with the YMCA to bring a supported suspension program to the district. In the past, it was a directed suspension model that featured an alternative school site, volunteering at the food bank, and counselling.

The Superintendent of Schools and Police meet twice a year. The district states that they believe that their partnership with the RCMP is working well and, therefore, the SRO program will continue.

School District No. 36 (Surrey): 104 elementary schools, 21 secondary schools

SD 36 partners with the RCMP, assigning one School Resource Officer to each family of schools (one secondary school and its feeder elementary schools). The role of the SRO includes responding to non-urgent issues at the school as requested by the administration and participating in school events as a guest. SROs can also be asked to provide proactive programming in the form of presentations to students (i.e., Halloween safety, etc.). The RCMP provides a number of youth programs. The School Sports Program connects police officers with Grade 7 students in elementary schools across the city. The Wrap Program is in its 10th year and has three constables who provide support to youth at risk associated with gangs and exploitation. The department also offers a Citizen and Youth Police Academy in the summer.

Since 1998, SD 36 has had a Safer Schools Department funded through grants and various agreements with both provincial and federal governments. The department offers education, prevention, and intervention services, resource materials and programs for students, staff and families related to school and student safety, well-being and success.

There is a Safe Schools Liaison assigned to each secondary school in the district. This is a district employee who acts as a liaison between students who are perceived to be at risk and the school administration. As outlined in the job description for Safe School Liaisons, typical responsibilities include:

- Monitors student activity by patrolling the interior and exterior of school facility.
- Develops a rapport with students, staff and other members of the school community through positive interaction and effective communication to assist with identification of potential safety and security concerns.
- Intervenes where safe to do so, when student activities are inappropriate and reports situations requiring follow up.
- Responds to emergent issues and concerns by assessing the situation, identifying and utilizing the most appropriate response to resolve the issue or concern.
- Utilizes conflict resolution and diffusing techniques as response strategies to assist students in resolving minor conflict.
- Assists administrators with the identification and observation of activities and trends in the school, which may pose potential risks to the safety and security of students, staff, visitors and the facility. Reports and documents these safety and security concerns for administration. Assists administrators as necessary, in the development of positive, proactive and/or reactive strategies to ensure schools remain safe, secure, enjoyable places for all staff and students.

All programs are evaluated each August. The district states that restorative justice practices are used by the RCMP in supporting youth by encouraging them to understand the effects of the harm they have done and to provide them with opportunities to make amends.

Surrey is not considering any changes to its programs at the present time.

School District No. 37 (Delta): 24 elementary schools, 9 secondary schools

According to SD 37, the Delta Police and Delta School District have had a long and successful partnership. The School Liaison Program and Youth Officer Team support a continuum of Prevention and Intervention Programs across the district. The School Liaison Officers (SLOs) divide their time between school educational presentations, supporting schools in responding to high-risk student behaviour, and providing support to the district's most intensive youth intervention programs.

The program has been in place since 1996 and supports schools at all levels. There is one supervising officer, 4 officers assigned to 8 high schools and 2 officers assigned to elementary schools. Classes from kindergarten to grade 12 will be visited by their school liaison officer (usually through assemblies) for formal presentations on a grade-appropriate topic. Topics include strangers and safety awareness, internet safety and responsible social media use, various drug awareness topics, violence and dating, driver education and drinking and driving. The officers may also participate in extracurricular activities.

The district and police have a Memorandum of Understanding that is reviewed and renewed every three years.

SD 37 uses restorative practices as an alternative to suspension. The restorative practices are supported by the police, trained staff and volunteers. The district also pays for a prevention counsellor who works in the program. The district does not pay for the SLOs.

The program in Delta is currently under review.

School District No. 40 (New Westminster): 8 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 1 secondary school

For over 20 years, SD 40 has had Child and Youth Liaison Officers (CYLOs) with the New Westminster Police Department (NWPD). This program is currently under review and during the review, the CYLO officers have been reassigned to areas of policing outside of the school district.

Prior to this year's review the goal of the program as outlined in the MOU between SD 40 and the NWPD was to:

“Support students to learn in a nurturing and secure school and community environment, where they are engaged in experiences that create strong self-esteem, responsible behavior and a respect for the dignity and differences of others.”

Also outlined in the MOU was the role of the Child and Youth Liaison Officers (CYLOs):

- *Assist admin in emergency crisis planning, and support in critical incidents (e.g., tragic car accidents/other student or staff deaths where police may be involved) and in emergencies*
- *Establish and maintain a close partnership with school admin to create a safe school environment, free from criminal activity*
- *Be visible in the school community to build relationships with staff, students and parents/guardians*
- *Work with counsellors/admin to support conflict resolution and incorporate restorative justice practices*
- *Support referrals to other services or agencies as needed*
- *Connect with students in classrooms and other areas in the school*
- *Prevent youth offending through close contact and positive relationships with students*

The program consisted of three officers who work in schools four days a week. One officer supported the middle and elementary schools, one supported the secondary school, and one supported the district's three alternate programs. Two of the officers were considered school-based (working regular school hours) and the third was considered community based—able to work flexibly with students both during the school day and after regular school hours. All three officers also supported extra-curricular activities. The New Westminster Police Department offers a Student Police Academy in the summer and supports a Youth Soccer School in the summer for ages 5 to 10 years.

Currently groups of students from New Westminster Secondary and the Alternate Programs are learning about the CYLO program and are educating their peers on the program structure and what it supports. The students are creating a survey to get student feedback and suggestions to support program changes that would address any identified issues of systemic racism, inequity and trauma. The NWPD and the school district are also reviewing their MOU with a trauma-informed lens.

School District No. 41 (Burnaby): 41 elementary schools, 8 secondary schools

In School District 41, the district is served by the RCMP. The Safe and Caring Schools team works closely with the RCMP in developing school and police protocols. The Team supports safe and supportive learning environments for students. This includes response to critical incidents, substance abuse, violence, threats, intimidation and bullying behaviours.

The official partnership agreement was signed in 1999. Currently, there are nine constables who provide direct support to schools and to youth in the community. Officers are in schools as needed but not full time. The current program has moved to a focus on youth restorative justice, school support and threat/risk assessment.

All Burnaby secondary schools have a designated Safe Schools Specialist. Their focus is to create safe, caring and orderly schools. They assist administrators, staff, students, parents and members of the community in developing positive, proactive approaches, which enhance the safety and well-being of everyone in our schools and communities.

The district works in partnership with the City of Burnaby and Burnaby RCMP with restorative justice practices and the Restorative Circles program in classrooms. This program is cost shared.

The district is not considering any changes to their programs at this time.

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam): 45 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, 8 secondary schools

SD 43 has both an RCMP program and one with the Port Moody Police department. The RCMP officers are assigned to the schools on a family of schools basis (one secondary and its elementary feeder schools) but are not present in the school on a full-time basis. Their main focus is supporting school safety and addressing criminal behavior.

The RCMP Youth Detail unit's primary focus is to reduce youth involvement in crime, whether as victims or offenders. Youth Detail members are not first responders and their investigations are either self-generated or assumed through consultation. The Youth Detail will support other departments in the RCMP with interviews/follow-up, and with school district staff concerns.

The Port Moody Police Department has a Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) who focuses primarily on Port Moody Middle School and two secondary schools in SD 43. The YLO delivers presentations, enhances the safety and security of the schools, investigates criminal offences related to the school and serves as a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system. The YLO is involved in a number of initiatives that are not enforcement such as Cops for Cancer, grade 12 class discussions, school dances, and graduation events. The liaison officer intermittently attends the schools but is not full time at any school.

The district has a focus on restorative practice and justice. They have provided professional development to administrators, teachers and support staff. The district works closely with a community agency called Community Embracing Restorative Action (CERA).

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria): 27 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, 7 secondary schools

The Greater Victoria School District partners with the Victoria Police, Oak Bay Police, Saanich Police and the Westshore RCMP. The schools receive regular visits from the police department officers who act as a resource to the schools in the matters of drug prevention, school violence and citizenship. The RCMP will also work with the district on policy and procedure for safety issues such as Hold & Secure and Lockdown. The officers also participate at all school levels in activities such as a bike rodeo, sporting events, and information sharing meetings.

The program has been in place for approximately 10 years and there is no cost to the school district. The officers are full time, trained in working with youth and available to school administration.

The Victoria Board of Education passed a motion in June 2020 directing the Superintendent to form an ad hoc committee to review the current School Liaison Program.

3. Comparison Chart – BC School Districts

The following chart compares the programs as they currently operate for the 2020/21 school year.

Program	39	23	36	37	40	41	43	61
Have some type of SLO program working with schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers full time in schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	80%			
Have Restorative Justice Program in Schools	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Officers trained in working with youth available to schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers in full uniform including carrying a firearm when in schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers participate in extra-curricular programs at the schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers present in school programs on various topics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
District is reviewing the program	✓			✓	✓			✓

4. Other Metropolitan School Districts Across Canada

Edmonton Public Schools: 213 schools, 102,000 students

Until recently, the Edmonton Public Schools District had a School Resource Officers Program (SRO) which was replaced this year with a new model called the Youth Enhanced Deployment Model (YED). The original program began in 1979 in partnership with Edmonton Police Service and put 4 officers in high schools. In 2019-2020 full time SRO were assigned to 11 high schools, one K-12 and 7 junior high schools.

According to the Edmonton Police Department, the program is now cancelled in the public schools but continues in the Catholic School System and Independent Schools. *“Previously the primary function of the SRO was to assist school administration in ensuring a safe and caring place of learning for students and staff, balancing enforcement with prevention and intervention. The SRO program provided counselling, mediation, mentoring. It allowed students to see police officers as an adult they can rely on. The program was problem-oriented policing focusing on proactive support, education, inclusion, prevention of crime and victimization of students.*

The SRO made presentations on school safety, bullying, graffiti and vandalism, harassment or stalking. SROs run the PAYOFF program which had student atone for their minor offense by completing restorative work, assisting teachers with extra-curricular activities. With COVID 19, the department initiated the Youth Enhanced Deployment Initiative which supports students who are learning outside of the classroom. “

The new program began September 2020 – officers are not formally in schools but are trained to respond to youth issues and incidents. The officers are assigned to geographic areas and will respond to school calls and also have community policing duties.

While SROs do have a restorative justice program, the school district uses their own staff for this program in the schools. Their [Student Behaviour and Conduct Administrative Regulation](#) outlines restorative practice as *“an approach that brings together those who have caused harm and those who have been harmed to openly resolve the issue. Restorative practice can range in formality; however, it always involves an agreed upon action to repair harm and mend relationships”.*

The district is working on an MOU to outline the role of police working with schools around issues like Violent Threat Risk Assessments, searching lockers, criminal activity in schools and general support for school safety.

The previous SRO program was cost shared between the Edmonton Police Department and Edmonton Public Schools with the school district paying \$1.3 million annually.

Peel District School Board: 257 schools, 155,000 students

The Peel Police Department described their School Resource Officer Program as providing officers to Secondary Schools to assist in providing a safe learning environment. The full cost of their previous program was paid for by the Peel Police Department.

In addition, the department has Youth Education Officers who deliver presentations in all schools and operate a Children's Safety Village. There is also a youth employment opportunity for twenty youth aged 15 to 18 to work alongside police officers for an eight-week period in the summer.

As noted in a September 28, 2020 Peel District Memo to Principals, *"The Peel Regional Police have paused the School Resource Officer (SRO) program in Peel Region in order to engage in meaningful dialogue with diverse stakeholders and to consult with community members regarding the efficacy of such programming."*

A recent November 28, 2020 memo refers to the School District's Restorative Justice Program:

Over the last decade schools have been engaged in restorative practice training through the support of The International Institute for Restorative Practices. This training has been facilitated through the former Climate for Learning and Working department. Given the most recent Ministry of Education Review of the Peel District School Board it was acknowledged that restorative justice practices need to be considered as an important practice within progressive discipline and in lieu of consequences such as suspensions. The Ministry Review also identified there must be a greater emphasis on looking at all programs and practices through an anti-racism and anti-oppression lens. The Review spoke to the importance of community engagement in areas that are directly connected to student identity and lived experiences being acknowledged in the way that educators interact with students. In the next few months, we will begin the process of engaging the community, specifically those who identify as Indigenous, Black, African, and Caribbean, to co-construct the approach the board will take in restorative justice practices. There is an expectation that this new approach will be through an anti-racism and anti-oppression lens, and centres on student lived experiences and intersectional identities.

Calgary Board of Education: 245 schools, 125,000 students

The Calgary Board of Education has a School Liaison Program supported by the City of Calgary Police Services. It is in both elementary and secondary schools. The goals of the program are to:

- Develop a positive rapport with the school community and to enhance a positive image of policing
- Attend functions to foster an improved understanding of the role of law enforcement with students, families and school staff
- Work closely with school administrators on issues as they arise
- Intervention and prevention
- Investigation and law enforcement
- Mentor and role model through involvement with extracurricular activities and support the objectives of a safe and caring school
- Support teaching and participate in class activities as appropriate

The School Resource Officers (SRO) have office space in high schools. Their extracurricular activities include coaching teams to build relationships with the broader student community. There are regular meetings between the school district and the police services. According to the district, the program has evolved over time to balance the needs of the school population and police services.

The Calgary Police Services pay the cost of 17 constables and 4 sergeants. There is a shared cost for some expenses such as training. There is also a Student Police Academy where some expenses are shared.

The SROs make referrals of students to other programs sponsored by the Calgary Police Services. These include Gateway Initiative, Diversity Resource Team, Youth Mentorship Programming.

The Calgary Board of Education is not reviewing the program at this time, but the Police Services have hired an independent consultant to review their programs and the school district will participate.

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board: 103 schools, 50,000 students

The Hamilton Wentworth School District had a School Liaison Program until the Board approved a pause in the program in June of 2020. The decision was then made to disband the program entirely in September 2020. Prior to the cancellation, there was an MOU which outlined the responsibilities of the School Liaison Officers:

- Conduct proactive policing by patrolling school premises at principal's request
- Facilitate child and youth presentations
- Participate in special events at the school
- Counsel and advise students on police-related matters

There were 5 Community Service Officers for 158 elementary schools and 6 School Liaison Officers for 38 secondary schools and 3 divisional youth officers (this includes the regional Catholic and French School Boards as well as Hamilton-Wentworth). The officers spent 50 percent of their scheduled shifts in schools. The program was fully paid by the Hamilton Police Department.

The HPD continue to support schools with any concerns related to school safety and emergency planning (e.g., Lockdown drills), as well as emergency issues such as an individual who is considered threat to harm themselves, or others.

Winnipeg School Division: 78 schools, 33,000 students

The School Resource Officer (SRO) Program in Winnipeg School Division is a partnership with Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) which assigns constables to elementary, middle and high schools. The program has been in place since 2002.

The goal of the program is to build trust and understanding between police and communities and decrease the incidents of bullying, violence and graffiti in schools. The officers participate in activities with students, promote restorative justice practices, follow up with victims of crime and participate in extra-curricular and community events.

The role of the School Resource Officer is to provide support to the school community as a whole, which includes students, parents, school staff, and administrators. The core objectives of the program include the following:

- Making schools safer;
- Improving relationships between police and students;
- Educating students about the law;
- Helping students solve their problems.

The Winnipeg School Division has nine School Resource Officers and every school in the Division has access to dedicated officers. The school division funds approximately \$450,000 for the program with the remaining cost of the program shared between the city of Winnipeg and the provincial government.

There were District evaluations of the program in 2015-2016 and 2017-2018. On November 16, 2020, the Board of Trustees agreed to a recommendation from the Board's Finance/Personnel Committee that district administration develop a comprehensive consultation process to evaluate the SRO program. The administration is in the process of developing a survey to obtain feedback from students, staff and parents/guardians. A third party will be retained to consult with WSD community members and organizations to collect and compile feedback on the SRO Program.

5. Comparison Chart – School Districts in Other Provinces

Program Features	Edmonton	Calgary	Winnipeg	Peel	Hamilton-Wentworth
Has or Had a Police Officer Program in Schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Have Restorative Justice Program in Schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers are full time in schools and trained in working with youth	✓	✓	✓	✓	The officers were in schools 50% time.
Officers present in school programs related to various topics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers participate in extracurricular programs at the schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Officers in full uniform including carrying a firearm when in schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Current Status of Police Officers in School Programs	Cancelled and replaced with Youth Enhanced Deployment Model	Police Services is conducting an independent review of their program	Winnipeg local government reviewed the program, School Division now reviewing. Program is continuing during review	Cancelled program. Currently looking to replace program with other supports	Cancelled program. District continuing to review student equity programs

Program Features	Edmonton	Calgary	Winnipeg	Peel	Hamilton-Wentworth
Cost of program and who pays	Shared costs with Edmonton Public Schools \$1.3 million annually	Salary and benefits paid by Police department but shared cost of some expenses (i.e., training	School division funds \$450,000 and remaining cost shared between City and provincial government	Paid fully by police department	Paid fully by police department

D. INFORMATION ABOUT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

As part of this review, the Board of Education requested information on Restorative Justice models.

The following excerpt is from the [Government of Canada's Department of Justice website](#):

"...Restorative justice is commonly defined as an approach to justice that focuses on addressing the harm caused by crime while holding the offender responsible for their actions, by providing an opportunity for the parties directly affected by the crime – victims, offenders and communities – to identify and address their needs in the aftermath of a crime.

Restorative justice is based on an understanding that crime is a violation of people and relationships. The principles of restorative justice are based on respect, compassion and inclusivity. Restorative justice encourages meaningful engagement and accountability and provides an opportunity for healing, reparation and reintegration. Restorative justice processes take various forms and may take place at all stages of the criminal justice system."

In a Spring 2019 article in the [Canadian Teacher Magazine, "A Case for the Restorative Approach in Schools"](#), author Amy Hunt explains that a restorative approach in schools should not relate solely to discipline but should encompass all aspects of the school environment:

"A restorative approach in schools seeks to construct positive, inclusive and safe school cultures by fostering respectful and responsible relationships among school community members that are rooted in mutual respect, care, concern, and dignity. Disciplinary issues are not the core of this approach; rather, a restorative approach is attentive to the promotion and protection of positive relationships within a learning community (Llewellyn & Llewellyn, 2015). In other words, a restorative approach in school requires more than a restorative response to conflict, harm, and wrongdoing; it speaks broadly to a relational way of being, learning, and knowing with others in community."

Hunt recommends that schools or districts considering initiating a restorative approach consider the following:

"Restorative justice offers a common and predictable set of relational principles to guide practices and processes; it is not one fixed model or practice (Llewellyn, 2018). Taking a restorative approach in schools does not require purchasing an expensive toolkit that offers a one-size-fits- all model or delivering pre-packaged training modules. It is less about specific practices and much more about a relational way of thinking and being in community with others. Using the following relational principles for practice, we must frame the ways in which we make decisions, problem solve, teach, learn, work, and play together as being:

- *Relationally focused: understanding and positively shaping interconnections*
- *Comprehensive and holistic: not only incident focused, also taking account of contexts and causes*
- *Inclusive/Participatory*
- *Responsive: contextual, flexible practice; informed by data/ knowledge*
- *Focused on taking responsibility: both individually and collectively*
- *Collaborative/Non-adversarial*
- *Forward focused: Educative, problem solving/preventative and proactive."*

Specifically, restorative justice can be a fundamental change in how schools choose to respond to rule violations and misbehaviors. Whereas the typical response to bad behavior may be punishment, restorative justice attempts to resolve disciplinary problems in a cooperative and constructive way.

In some school districts (for example, the Oakland Unified School District in California) the entire district uses restorative justice for handling disciplinary problems. Their program is based on respect, responsibility, relationship-building, and relationship-repairing.

It uses a three-tiered approach:

- Tier I focuses on building a strong community within the school, laying the groundwork for responsibility and respect
- Tier II attempts to resolve conflicts and heal the harm students cause
- Tier III supports students re-entering the school community after a suspension or expulsion. It also provides individualized support.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

- Builds relationships.
- Strives to be respectful to all.
- Provides opportunity for equitable dialogue and participatory decision-making.
- Involves all relevant stakeholders.
- Addresses harms, needs, obligations, and causes of conflict and harm.
- Encourages all to take responsibility.

1. **IF CRIME HURTS, JUSTICE SHOULD HEAL.**
The focus is on repairing harm if it has occurred.
2. **NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.**
Those impacted feel welcome and safe to speak and participate.
3. **THERE IS SIMPLY NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PERSONAL.**
Building respectful relationships is foundational and an outcome of any process.
4. **THIS CAN WORK, I CAN LIVE WITH IT.**
Agreements are made by consensus
5. **I AM WILLING TO DO THIS.**
Participation is voluntary.

Source: [OUSD Restorative Justice Implementation Guide](#)

As noted in previous sections of this report, restorative justice programs are happening in different ways and at different levels in most of the school districts surveyed for this report. In some cases, they are programs that are initiated and implemented district-wide with designated district staff trained in restorative practices. In other places, it is happening in some schools or at some grade levels and is primarily supported by school staff perhaps due to an interest or perceived need at that particular location. In other districts, it is the police who work with students in a restorative justice program. Regardless of the level of involvement, all districts surveyed indicated that they recognize the value and positive impact of such programs.

E. APPENDIX

- 1. Appendix 1 – Memorandum of Understanding between the Vancouver School Board and Vancouver Police Department**

Memorandum of Understanding

between the

**Vancouver School Board and
the Vancouver Police
Department**

School-Liaison Program

INDEX

PREAMBLE

1.0	DEFINITIONS	p. 4
2.0	VISION	p. 4
3.0	GOALS	p. 4
4.0	PRINCIPLES	p. 5
5.0	STRATEGIES	p. 6

ROLES

6.0	ROLE OF THE VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD	p. 7
7.0	ROLE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS	p. 8
8.0	ROLE OF THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT	p. 8
9.0	ROLE OF SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICERS	p. 8

RESPONSIBILITIES

10.0	RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VSB	p. 9
11.0	RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VPD	p. 9

PROTOCOLS

12.0	ORIENTATION PROTOCOL	p. 10
13.0	DEPLOYMENT/ASSIGNMENT PROCESS PROTOCOL	p. 10
14.0	PLANNING PROTOCOLS	p. 11
15.0	COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS	p. 11
16.0	STUDENT INFORMATION DISCLOSURE PROTOCOL	p. 11
17.0	CRITICAL INCIDENT PROTOCOLS	p. 12
18.0	VSB/NPD COORDINATION COMMITTEE	p. 13

Memorandum of Understanding

between

The *Vancouver School Board* and the *Vancouver Police Department*

Regarding the School Liaison Program

PREAMBLE

The Vancouver School Board (the "VSB") and Vancouver Police Department (the "VPD") each have a mandate to serve the public through the provision of prevention, educational and intervention services. Towards this end, the VSB/VPD Coordination Committee has been struck to oversee the working relationship between the VPD and the VSB and further define the vision and protocols of the School Liaison Program. (Appendix 4)

The primary mandate of the VSB is to serve children and youth, whereas the mandate of the VPD is to serve the public at large. However, the VPD recognizes serving children and youth as an important element of its mandate.

The shared goal of the VPD and VSB is to work in partnership to develop socially responsible students who will contribute to healthy schools and neighbourhoods. The VPD and VSB are committed to working collaboratively with each other, and with parents, service providers and other community partners, to establish safe learning environments for Vancouver's children and youth, and develop structures that build resiliency in the students through utilizing a developmental asset approach.

The School Liaison Program (the "SLP") was developed in 1972 to meet the shared mandate and goals of the VSB and the VPD. The SLP involves VPD police officers, assigned as School Liaison Officers ("SLO"), working directly in schools with students, staff and parents. This places police officers *in* a unique role and relationship with youth. The goals of fostering socially responsible behavior in children and youth, and intervening when children and youth are critically at risk, are best met when trusting, respectful and positive relationships are established between students, school staff and the police.

The intent of this Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") is to clarify the working relationship between the VSB and the VPD and their staff with

regard to the SLP in order that the mandates, roles, policies, procedures and other matters relevant to each party are recognized and upheld.

1.0 DEFINITIONS

1.1 The definitions in this subsection apply in this MOU.

"child" means a person who is or, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, appears to be 5 years old or older, but less than 12 years old.

"youth" means a person who is or, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, appears to be 12 years old or older, but less than 18 years old.

"student" means a child or a youth, and includes both, unless the term is limited by specific additional reference to a child or youth, to whom the VSB provides services in accordance with its mandate.

2.0 VISION

2.1 It is the joint vision of the VSB and the VPD that students, parents, school staff, police, community members, service agencies and others will work collaboratively to ensure that:

- a. students learn in a nurturing and secure school and community environment, where they are engaged in experiences that create strong self-esteem, responsible behavior and a respect for the dignity and differences of others; and
- b. those students who are at risk or who have engaged in criminal behaviour, where intervention is required, will remain in or be returned, as soon as possible, to their communities, through timely and effective early intervention strategies, justice processes or referrals.

3.0 GOALS

3.1 The goals of the SLP initiative are to:

- a. create a safe and positive school and adjacent community environment
- b. provide students with experiences and meaningful relationships that will develop in them:

- i. positive values
- ii. a strong sense of self
- iii. social competencies
- iv. a commitment to learning that will support and empower them to make positive choices
- v. effective preparation for life's challenges

all of which are developmental assets and are conditions to building resiliency that students need in order to bounce back from risks, stress and trauma, and to experience life success

- c. address criminal and anti-social behaviours
- d. protect those at risk
- e. develop effective and timely communication links between the VSB schools and the VPD.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

4.1 Nothing in this MOU will be interpreted or applied so as to contravene obligations and procedures required by provincial or federal legislation, and the policies or regulations of the VPD and the VSB, including but not limited to the:

- a. *School Act*
- b. *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- c. *Youth Criminal Justice Act*
- d. *Criminal Code,*
- e. *Police Act*
- f. *Child, Family and Community Service Act..*

4.2 The VPD and VSB will engage in supportive, collaborative, and consultative processes, to develop and define the partnership at the school and district level.

4.3 Critical to the success of the SLP partnership is the understanding and agreement that supporting and enhancing education, promoting pro-social behaviours and positive student development, and involving parents and the broader community, is fundamental to asset building and resiliency in students.

- 4.4 All police officers are legally obligated to investigate criminal offences, and criminal investigations by SLOs will be conducted in accordance with the law and VPD policy.
- 4.5 In order to avoid miscommunication and unrealistic expectations, the VSB and the VPD will ensure that each other's relevant policies and procedures are understood and, where policies are in conflict, the matter is to be referred to the VSBNPD Coordination Committee.
- 4.6 The VPD and, in particular, SLOs will endeavour to understand the climate and culture of the school community, in order to maximize the potential for a smooth transition and continuity between mainstream policing and education services.
- 4.7 SLOs are essential to preventing crime and violence within the school community, and will attempt to identify students who are at risk of becoming involved with the criminal justice system and identify appropriate interventions and supports.
- 4.8 In accordance with the Youth Criminal Justice Act, alternative remedies from traditional disciplines will be encouraged, developed and applied.

5.0 STRATEGIES

The following strategies will be applied in order to achieve the goals set out in section 3.0 of this MOU.

- 5.1 **Prevention:** This strategy includes: education and awareness programs, role modeling, developing positive relationships, and building the capacity of schools and communities to create safe learning and living environments. (See Appendix 1 for a list of Prevention Topics in schools)
- 5.2 **Establishing Connections:** The establishment of credible relationships with all students will be pursued, with particular emphasis on the majority of youth who are socially responsible citizens, given that within this group:
 - a. victimization frequently occurs
 - b. there is an under-reporting of crime
 - c. the information of who is at risk is known
 - d. prevention can be delivered
 - e. positive mentoring, coaching, role modeling and youth leadership can be achieved, all of which are important assets in youth development.

- 5.3 **Information Management:** The collection, collation and dissemination of information in order to identify students who are at risk or engaged in criminal activities, is a priority for ensuring safe and healthy schools. Information from multiple and diverse sources will be brought together, in compliance with the provisions of the *Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act*, to assist in properly responding to students who may be in need of protection, assistance or enforcement.
- 5.4 **Early Intervention:** The earliest possible identification of students at risk of harm, exploitation, victimization or criminal behaviour is a major objective for the VPD and the VSB. Referrals, at the earliest opportunity, to agency partners and remedial processes will be pursued as a critical means to minimize the number of students who are harmed or who engage in harmful behaviour towards others.
- 5.5 **Justice System Processes:** The small group of students, primarily youth, involved in differing levels of statutory offences are required to be identified, investigated and processed through criminal justice processes.
- 5.6 **Establishing Partnerships:** The foundation and ultimate success of the collective development of students is based on working relationships. In order to ensure safe and socially respectful learning environments for students, collaboration and key new partnerships will be sought, and relevant current relationships strengthened, between the VSB, VPD, other institutions, organizations, parents and communities, with the goal of providing resources for students in prevention, intervention, relationship building and information sharing.

6.0 **ROLE OF THE VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD**

- 6.1 School District No. 39 (Vancouver) is subject to governance and control by a locally elected Board of School Trustees (the "Board"), which is charged by law to determine local policy in conformity with the *School Act*.
- 6.2 Policy has been developed to support the SLP and the Board will ensure that this policy is current and that staff are informed as to its existence and details.
- 6.3 The VSB will commit to participating in a VSB/NPD SLP Coordination Committee, which will be responsible for the review of, and all issues with respect to, this MOU, as well as for establishing and reviewing the Terms of Reference of the SLP.

7.0 ROLE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

- 7.1 School administrators are responsible for administering and supervising the school, including the following duties:
- a. ensuring the general safety and security of the school, including grounds
 - b. implementation of educational programs
 - c. placing and programming of students
 - d. student evaluation and assessment
 - e. reporting to parents, the VSB and the Ministry of Education
 - f. monitoring general conduct of students, both on school premises and during off-premises activities organized or sponsored by the school;
 - g. student discipline
 - h. ensuring the SLOs have access to the information they require in order to perform their duties, while maintaining the privacy rights of students.
- 7.2 School administrators are responsible for ensuring that students, staff and programs offered within the school are in compliance with the policies of the Board of School Trustees, which includes offering the services of the SLO under the supervision of the classroom teacher.
- 7.3 School administrators will refer any program components that require clarification to the Coordination Committee for clarification.

8.0 ROLE OF THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 8.1 The VPD is a police department duly constituted in accordance with the provisions of the *Police Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 367, and is mandated to conduct law enforcement investigations, among other duties.
- 8.2 The VPD also has a role in assisting in the development and undertaking of crime prevention activities, community and youth engagement, apprehensions and referrals of youth at risk.

9.0 ROLE OF SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICERS

- 9.1 SLOs provide a bridge between school communities and the VPD, and have a unique role in that they retain all the duties of a peace officer while also undertaking several other tasks relative to working in an educational setting with children and youth.

9.2 SLOs are not authorized to enforce school discipline, rules or regulations, and are to remain sensitive to and supportive of school policies and objectives.

9.3 The specific duties of the SLO include:

- a. delivering safety and crime prevention lessons to students, staff and parents
- b. acting as a legal information resource to students, administrators and staff
- c. counseling and talking informally with students
- d. working to enhance the safety and security of the school
- e. building relations between student and police, through activities such as coaching teams, joining clubs and escorting field trips
- f. investigating criminal offences related to the school and its population
- g. serving as a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system.

10.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VSB

10.1 The VSB will provide each SLO with the following:

- a. suitable office space in schools, which is not shared with other staff or support workers and is close to the office or counseling department if at all possible
- b. appropriate equipment (refer to Appendix 2). *

11.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VPD

11.1 The responsibilities of the VPD in relation to the SLP include the following:

- a. providing police constables to work as SLOs within Vancouver schools, both elementary and secondary, during the regular school calendar year and summer school
- b. providing appropriate internal VPD management to administer the SLP within Vancouver schools
- c. providing an acceptable budget to meet the program mandate
- d. payment of SLO wages and benefits, and providing SLOs with duty equipment, including cell phones, , laptops with wireless

access to police databases (including "Prime", "Altaris" and "CPIC") and vehicles, in order that they may effectively perform their duties

- e. in support of the SLOs, make available to the Youth Services Unit (refer to Appendix 3 for Unit description) a supervisor, investigators, and specialized partnership cars, including, as appropriate, cars Y177 (PC & Youth Social Worker), 278 (PC & Youth Probation Officer) and 86 (PC & Family Social Worker).

12.0 ORIENTATION PROTOCOL

- 12.1 The VSB assign a staff member as SLP liaison, and the VPD SLO supervisor will inform the VSB liaison of the SLO assignments prior to commencement of each school year.
- 12.2 The VSB will inform school administrators of their assigned SLO prior to school start-up.
- 12.3 Each school administrator and that school's SLO will meet prior to school start-up for the purpose of an orientation to the school, and the orientation should include:
 - a. a school administrator led tour of the school
 - b. a meeting between the SLO and school staff
 - c. providing the SLO with a school timetable
 - d. a review between the school administrator and the SLO, of school policy and procedures with respect to student code of conduct, student discipline, access to student information, investigative procedures and procedures for meeting students
 - e. the establishment of a meeting schedule between the school administrator, school staff and the SLO.

13.0 DEPLOYMENT/ASSIGNMENT PROCESS PROTOCOL

- 13.1 The VPD SLO supervisor and the VSB liaison will work together to ensure that SLOs are allocated to schools in a manner that will generate the greatest benefit to VSB students.
- 13.2 The VSB/NPD Coordination Committee will review, and has final decision-making authority in relation to, the allocation of SLOs.

14.0 PLANNING PROTOCOLS

- 14.1 Comprehensive, evidence based programs are to be vetted through the VPDNSB Coordination Committee, and such programs, upon approval, will be made known to school principals and SLOs.
- 14.2 The SLO will work with school staff in the planning and delivery of specific initiatives in the school.
- 14.3 The SLOs should seek input from the schools' Parent Advisory Committees and student leadership groups.
- 14.4 The school principal must approve programs/initiatives in the school.

15.0 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

- 15.1 As part of the SLO role is to intervene in critical police-related incidents within the school, the SLO will advise the school's administration staff whenever he or she will not be on the school premises.
- 15.2 Each SLO, his or her supervisor and the school principal will together provide a summary report of relevant initiatives, issues, successes and events to the VSBNSPD Coordination Committee at the end of the school year.
- 15.3 The VSBNSPD Coordination Committee will review school activities and successes as part of an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the SLP.
- 15.4 When staff changes in the SLP or in SLOs occur during the year, the SLO Coordinator and the VSB Liaison will notify each other of these changes and will update contact information as appropriate.
- 15.5 Complaints and concerns by either a SLO or school staff shall be brought to the attention of the VPD SLO supervisor, the school administrator or the VSB liaison, and where the matter cannot be resolved at that level, may be referred to the VSBNSPD Coordination Committee.

16.0 STUDENT INFORMATION DISCLOSURE PROTOCOL

- 16.1 The VSB and the VPD will manage student information in accordance with the privacy protection provisions contained in the *Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act* and, where applicable, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

16.2 VSB staff shall only disclose to SLOs the personal information of employees, parents and students, in accordance with section 33.2 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, of which the relevant portions read:

33.2 A public body may disclose personal information referred to in section 33 inside Canada as follows:

- (d) to an officer or employee of a public body ... if the information is necessary for the delivery of a common or integrated program or activity and for the performance of the duties for the performance of the duties of the officer (or) employee ... to whom the information is disclosed; ...
- (i) to a ... law enforcement agency in Canada to assist in a specific investigation
 - (i) undertaken with a view to a law enforcement proceeding, or
 - (ii) from which a law enforcement proceeding is likely to result

16.3 Personal information disclosed to and collected by SLOs from the VSB may only be used or further disclosed by SLOs:

- a. as necessary to carry out the common goals of the SLP, and more specifically, the roles, responsibilities and duties of the SLOs under this MOU; and
- b. for an investigative purpose, if the personal information was specifically obtained for such a purpose, or for any resultant court process or as otherwise required by law.

17.0 CRITICAL INCIDENT PROTOCOLS

17.1 The VPD hereby advises the VSB that the SLO should not be deemed to be the immediate point of contact in emergencies, regardless of the presence of a SLO in a school. In emergency situations, school staff are advised to call 911 for assistance.

17.2 To ensure the VSB is made aware of police situations that may arise in or around schools, the VPD will notify the SLO Sergeant on school-related issues, and the Sergeant will, in turn, notify the VSB Communications Manager. The VSB will notify the schools affected.

- 17.3 The VSB will make school administrators aware that no legal exceptions exist to limit police authority and actions on school property.
- 17.4 A SLO and any VPD police officer will make every effort to notify the school administrator prior to:
- a. arresting a student on school property
 - b. searching a student or any place on school property
 - c. interviewing a student on school property.
- 17.5 In response to concerns raised by a school administrator, the SLO or other VPD police officer will consider the feasibility of proceeding with the investigation and/or arrest outside of school hours.
- 17.6 Where it is not operationally practical to notify the school administrator prior to taking the police action detailed in s. 17.4 or any other similarly potentially disruptive action, the SLO or another VPD police officer will notify the administrator as soon as possible after the action has been taken.

18.0 VSBNPD COORDINATION COMMITTEE

- 18.1 The VSBNPD Coordination Committee will:
- a. act in accordance with the terms set out in Appendix 4
 - b. oversee the SLP and address issues that arise
 - c. periodically review this MOU and make any necessary amendments
 - d. be responsible for designing and delivering an orientation program for SLOs and school administrators, including delivering information on the Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act, interviewing students, this MOU, and any other matters that may impact activities pursuant to the SLP.

Appendix 1

School Based Prevention Topics

Including but not limited to:

- Education for Elementary Students:
 - o Stranger danger
 - o Substance abuse prevention
 - o Halloween safety
 - o Introduction to 911 and policing
 - o Conflict resolution
 - o Introduction to the SLO
 - o Gang recruitment
 - o Internet safety
 - o Bullying
 - o Theft & Shoplifting
 - o Abuse Prevention

- Education for Secondary Students:
 - o Substance abuse prevention
 - o Dating violence
 - o Conflict resolution
 - o Driver licensing
 - o Police department recruiting
 - o Drinking and driving
 - o Introduction to the SLO
 - o Gang recruitment
 - o Internet safety
 - o Bullying
 - o Street Racing
 - o Abuse Prevention
 - o Theft & Shoplifting
 - o Criminal Law

- Education for Parents and the Community
 - o Drugs
 - o Community safety
 - o Child abduction prevention
 - o Gangs
 - o Sexual exploitation of children and youth
 - o Crime prevention in the neighbourhood
 - o School safety
 - o Internet safety

- Education for Staff
 - o Current trends in youth crime
 - o Responding to intruders
 - o Response to critical incidents
 - o Drugs and weapons
 - o Threat assessment and responding to threats

Appendix 1 -Continued

- Education for Administrators
 - o Interviewing
 - o Case Law
 - o Drugs
 - o Weapons
 - o Restorative Justice
 - o Critical incidents

Appendix 2

Equipment Provided by the VSB

Minimum Requirements

- Locking office that is not shared
- Telephone
- Desktop computer and printer
- Locking (key lock) gun locker securely fastened separate from a portable upright metal locker
- Portable upright locking (combination lock) metal locker for clothes
- Filing cabinet with locking bar for reports and documents
- Bookcases for resource material and lesson plans
- Sufficient electrical outlets to support equipment (computer, printer, cordless phone, portable radio charger etc.)
- Printer connection
- School interior master key
- A VSB "school locations and boundaries" colour map
- Desk and extra chairs
- Desk supplies, pens, paper, tape, highlighter, stapler, etc.

Appendix 3

Youth Services Unit (YSU)

The YSU works in direct support of the SLO program and patrol members. The unit is primarily tasked with investigating and processing Youth Criminal Justice Act cases. Members generally patrol around schools and in city locales where at-risk youth are found. The unit also gathers information regarding youth criminality and of those at risk, as well as provides partnership participation with related youth service providers.

Appendix 4

The VSB/VPD Coordination Committee

Name of Committee:

Vancouver School Board/Nancouver Police Department Coordination Committee

1. Terms of Reference:

This Standing Committee is created under the authority of:

VSB Superintendent and Board
VPD Executive and Police Board

2. Mandate

To oversee the spectrum of working relationships between the VSB and VPD:

- develop a Memorandum Of Understanding between the VPD and VSB governing the SLO Program
- recommend Policy development - protocols and processes
- management and coordination.

3. Specific Goals And/Or Objectives

- to define joint VSB/VPD service delivery programs
- to pursue resources for identified needs
- to define roles of police and VSB staff positions and relationships
- to establish protocols, policies and understandings
- to clarify legal issues
- to provide a forum for coordination and communication.

4. Themes and Guiding Principles

Improve the safety and sense of community for staff and students through:

- establishing greater consistency and understanding of interagency work
- balancing this consistency with the needs of individual schools and communities
- prioritizing work and avoiding duplication of effort
- identifying gaps in service
- sharing knowledge with youth, parents, school and district staff and police.

5. **Responsibilities**

- Senior ranking member of each organization to ensure broad communication within approved policies and protocols within their organization.

6. **Membership**

The Committee will consist of four persons per organization.
For the VPD (4 Representatives): Inspector in Charge of Youth Squad Section, 3 others as determined by him/her (with Alternates)
For the VSB (4 Representatives): Associate Superintendent,
Representatives from VASSA and VEPVPA, Manager Social Responsibility and Diversity

7. **Conduct of Meetings**

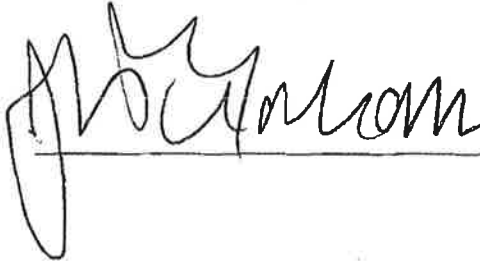
- Chair to be elected by the Coordination Committee: July 1 – June 30
- Chair will chair each session, coordinate agenda, notify re: meetings, generate minutes
- Committee will reach conclusions by consensus
- Regular meetings will be scheduled with extra meetings convened at discretion of the Chair
- Agenda will be developed by the Chair and distributed one week prior to meetings by clerical support
- Inclusion of delegations/invitees for specific topics on the Agenda to be determined in advance by the Chair
- formal minutes will be taken and distributed electronically to Coordination Committee members
- minutes will be stored by VSB.

We, the signatories, agree to the commitment described herein.

Chris Kelly Superintendent of Schools, Vancouver School Board

 _____ *June 23, 2006*

Jamie Graham Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department

 _____

F. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LINKS

The references listed here were consulted during the development of this resource and, where directly referred to, are cited in the body of the document.

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Appendix D: Written submissions – verbatim

We received many written submissions during the engagement period, beginning January 20, 2021 and ending February 19, 2021. Several additional submissions were received after this deadline and were also included. All submissions received are included verbatim, with names or specific identifying details redacted. Several submissions that were sent in with elaborate detail have been omitted and sent separately to School Trustees. Submissions that included a template letter are included with a full list of signatures (first names only and in no particular order) in Appendix E.

Dear Barb Parrot and esteemed Trustees,

I am [redacted] , a Vancouver School Board alternative high-school on Vancouver's East side. We work daily with students who are breaking through barriers of different kinds toward personal growth and graduation from Grade 12. Many of our students are racialized.

Systemic racism is firmly entrenched in Canadian society and racialized people, including myself, must struggle to survive against oppressive institutions, surveillance, laws, traditions, expectations, narratives and policing. In many contexts, people of colour rightfully feel unsafe in the presence of police because of their lived experiences. Police presence in schools is fraught with risk, complication, and potential cause for fear amongst students, especially racialized students. All this is true and a reconciliation is well overdue. I have been part of that struggle throughout my life and am encouraged to see that society is awakening to the need for change.

While I can't speak for the experiences with police at other schools or with other models, I am writing in support of the VPD School Liaison team at Total Education who have provided incredible personal support to our students and have also kept the peace at our school. We have relied on their skills, knowledge and expertise when there have been safety concerns or to help us support students beyond the walls of the school. They come only when we invite them to help with our education, safety, security and conflict resolution. They are rarely at our school but when they do come, they wear plain clothing and work respectfully and discreetly in supporting our students. They are friendly and familiar faces to our students rather than the intimidating strangers in uniforms who would arrive if our youth team were removed from their positions. At Total Education, this would have the opposite effect that we are searching for as we work to dismantle systemic oppression and racism in the education system.

For privacy reasons I am not able to give details about the work our School Liaison team does, but I can say they have prevented contraband, unwanted intruders and drug dealers from entering our school. They have de-escalated major conflicts between students, educated us about substance abuse, gang and prostitution recruiting and provided mediations and

restorative justice. They regularly connect our students with community supports, recreation, counseling and inform us of concerns in the community.

There may be other ways for these crucial services to be delivered, and other people that could provide them. This would take careful planning, funding and time for implementation. Right now, at our site, we have one example of a working model of police service in a school and they deserve to be commended. I am concerned that removing them would immediately create a less safe school. We want an end to systemic racism and we want our students to feel welcome, safe and equal. Yes, there is room for improvement but please do not rush to eliminate effective supports which, in our case, would leave a vacuum and students will be less safe.

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees of the Vancouver School Board,

First, let it be said, that I sincerely empathize with anyone who has suffered any indignity or brutality through the police force. The horrifying insights into police brutality the world has seen over and over again, deserves introspection of our current society and the role our biases and prejudices have played in keeping the status quo. I would like to think that by moving forward we are a part of the solution.

Schools, I hope, are a microcosm community of a bigger world. It is in these educational intuitions one should find acceptance, support and emotional well-being. In my experience working with various police officers, during my time as Department Head at Spectrum, I have found that they have enhanced the community. The officers I have worked with related to a population that frankly "hates" the police. It takes a special kind of officer to work with marginalized students, I have never been disappointed in the officers that were sent my way.

They brought in various programs such as self-defence tactics, gang intervention, weekly programs that support and explore, health and wellness, the media, substance reduction, safety plans and how to identify predatory behaviour and unhealthy relationships. The police rarely don cap and gun in the presence of students. I have personally witnessed the transformation of police as the enemy to champions for youth. There are too many students from Spectrum to count that have had conversations with their police liaison on how to be a cop. Student's running into trouble with the regular police in the community have invoked more than once, an S.L.O's name as advocate for them. I have found the police I worked with compassionate, caring, respectful and thoughtful towards students.

If the decision is made to remove the police from secondary schools, so be it. However, I implore you, Trustees, to look at all the positive involvement the police have had in the alternate world. Many thanks to [names redacted].

Sincerely,

[Name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

My name is [name redacted], I'm a resident of Vancouver. I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle.

Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

I sincerely hope you step up here and do the right thing. Every student deserves to feel safe at school, and having a school liaison officer does not create a safe and comfortable learning environment for many students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am only recently learning about the Vancouver School Board about the Vancouver School Board's SLO program, and the problematic review process conducted by Argyle. Were you aware that their leadership team is all White? What happened to all the feedback and requests from community members to keep explicit cultural sensitivity and safety in mind, in order to protect Indigenous and Black youth who attend these programs? Why hasn't anybody consulted with people who have lived experience and who have made themselves available for consultation?

Along with many other people, I **am here to express my outrage about how this review process was conducted, and to call for the racist and white supremacist SLO program to be terminated immediately**. Since this summer, there has been an outpouring of resources and literature made readily available on topics of the school-to-prison pipeline, how police target racialized people (and this starts very young), and how their presence in schools profiles and dehumanizes these students. Ignorance is not an excuse. I'm frankly embarrassed to live in a city that continues to push for a program that is so outdated and violent.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am a resident of East Vancouver and a former student of the VSB.

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

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2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black and Indigenous community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

As a born and raised Vancouverite, I witnessed continuous targeting of Black and Indigenous students by SLOs while I was in school, and 10 years later, these patterns of harassing students and families has not changed. This should be a point of shame for the VSB, and be addressed immediately.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Today I am writing to express my concern regarding the Vancouver School Board's review process, and to continue the call for an end to the SLO program. I believe that educational

spaces are the most important spaces available for transformation and a movement towards a justice oriented society. Policing is, as we know, an inherently violent system that disproportionately targets BIPOC folk. There is no need to bring a uniform that could be extremely triggering into an educational space, which should be a safe space for all people.

Furthermore, Argyle is a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team**. I really cannot understand how the obvious problem with hiring a company with an all-white leadership team to conduct a review regarding an issue that disproportionately affects BIPOC people was missed. Explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. This is a community issue, and therefore community consultation is a priority.

Therefore, I am asking you to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

I look forward to seeing a movement towards an education system that prioritized the experiences of BIPOC people.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Superintendent Hoffman,

Please demonstrate that the Vancouver School Board acts with integrity and transparency by:

1. Ceasing the School Liaison Officer program, and
2. Engage with Black and Indigenous communities and parents to create programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

To date, the VSB has acted in ways that demonstrate you are not committed to anti-racist practices:

1. Students, parents and Black and Indigenous community members have been loudly asked to be consulted by Argyle yet they have not be contacts. Is VSB actively silencing Black and Indigenous communities?
2. VSB contracted out the consultation process to an organization that holds a White leadership team on an issue that directly impacts the Black community. Is the VSB determined to uphold racism?
3. Many community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting. Is the VSB afraid of hearing the truth about their racism?

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I regret to inform you that the actions of the Vancouver School Board indicate that it has a trustee who consistently perpetuates white privilege and ignores systemic racism.

On June 25th, 2020, Vancouver School Board Trustee Fraser Ballantyne publicly apologized for his racist comments at a board meeting and resigned from his committee positions. He stated, "I hope that by resigning my committee positions, I am creating space for a new perspective. It is clear that I have not done enough to listen to, or centre, the voices of our racialized communities. I will do that critical work now." ([source](#))

The Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association called for Mr. Ballantyne to resign from his trustee position entirely. The president of the B.C. School Trustees Association said, "We need to provide the space for people to make mistakes but also for people to demonstrate humility and humbleness when they make mistakes and help them learn from those mistakes." ([source](#))

That was six months ago. Mr. Ballantyne has had some time to "do that critical work" and show some improvement. Let's check in on the work of the school board he serves on. ([source](#))

1. In October 2020, after multiple delegates spoke to collectively demand termination of the SLO program, the VSB reduced the amount of time they would listen to delegates.
2. The VSB also restricted which topics delegates may speak about.
3. After an acknowledged delay ([source](#)), the preliminary report is set to be released on February 3rd. Within the past week, we've learned that some of the groups that Argyle PR has specifically been hired to listen to and centre have still not been consulted.
4. VSB board members have promised the community that explicit cultural sensitivity and safety protection for Black and Indigenous youth during this consultation. There has been no indication that BIPOC youth have had their voices listened to, nor centred, anywhere in this process.

Mr. Ballantyne has had six months to learn from his mistakes, as the BCSTA president suggested. He has agreed to a set of performance-based criteria, which was to "listen to, or centre, the voices of our racialized communities." But unfortunately this trustee has not shown any improvement during this time.

Mr. Ballantyne remains as a trustee on a school board that consistently acts to either silence racialized communities, or fails to consult them at all. This is exactly the opposite of what he pledged to do. In his position as a VSB trustee, he has not demonstrated any ability to effect positive change on the broken process put forth by the VSB. He has been ineffective in preventing this outrageous perpetuation of silencing BIPOC youth — the ones who are **most** impacted by the SLO program.

He should not continue to work on a school board that is so consistently unable to recognize the community impacts of their fundamentally broken processes and procedures.

He should not continue to work on a school board that fails to recognize its own perpetuation and preservation of white privilege, and white supremacy.

He should not continue to work on a school board that is unable to gain any sort of perspective to see the systemically racist outcomes of their own collective actions.

No one should continue to work for such a dysfunctional organization.

I once again ask the VSB to finally listen to and centre BIPOC school communities. I join their call to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear VSB Trustee Chan-Pedley,

Please demonstrate that the Vancouver School Board acts with integrity and transparency by:

1. Ceasing the School Liaison Officer program, and
2. Engage with Black and Indigenous communities and parents to create programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

To date, the VSB has acted in ways that demonstrate you are not committed to anti-racist practices:

1. Students, parents and Black and Indigenous community members have been loudly asked to be consulted by Argyle yet they have not be contacts. Is VSB actively silencing Black and Indigenous communities?
2. VSB contracted out the consultation process to an organization that holds a White leadership team on an issue that directly impacts the Black community. Is the VSB determined to uphold racism?
3. Many community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting. Is the VSB afraid of hearing from the community about racism?

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am a disabled resident of Vancouver working with Vancouver youth. I am using this template to join in the call to make essential changes - Black and Indigenous youth deserve better.

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review

process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

My name is [name redacted], and I am a student at [redacted], as well as a member of [redacted]. Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's inadequate review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, **I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and**

Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Allan Wong

Barb Parrott

Carmen Cho
Estrellita Gonzalez

Fraser Ballantyne

Janet Fraser

Jennifer Reddy

Lois Chan-Pedley

Oliver Hanson

Ricky Huang

Suzanne Hoffman

Today I am writing to express my extreme disappointment around the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am extremely upset at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the feigned consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, **! continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you all to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison
2. Officer program
3. End events that bring police into schools
4. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

There are many solutions that can facilitate our learning and strengthening of community and safety initiatives. Reach out and ask. Use your privilege and place of power to listen and make change.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

My son was a student at [school name redacted] and experienced bullying and violence on multiple occasions. The SLO was involved. The advice the Officer gave to my son: keep your head down and don't provoke them. Legal action taken against the perpetrators: none. My son is now in a private school. To be clear, the violence was captured on video and uploaded to social media. Would the outcome have been any different if there was no Officer? No.

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

It won't be long before we look back in horror at how backwards our systems were. We must remove cops from schools immediately. It is unsafe for them to have a presence there. Listen to BIPOC, follow their guidance!!

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

There is a generic letter below, but I also wanted to remind the trustees that Indigenous and Black students face incarceration rates at a much higher level than any other marginalized student. The police are not a safe haven for them, and yet they continue to be victimized by them, even at your schools. This is where distrust begins. You can do better than this. Read the letter below for steps on how to make schools safe for every body.

[name redacted]

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Today I call for an end to the SLO program. Police in schools do not make schools safer. They instead threaten the safety and wellbeing of black and indigenous students.

I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Hello,

I am writing for an end to the SLO program. The VSB has actively silenced students, parents, and Black community members and is accompanying the bogus consultation process through Argyle, an all-white leadership team.

I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

It is absolute **hypocrisy** to be engaging in Black History Month and getting students to reflect on MMIWG2S while Black and Indigenous students are at risk of police violence in schools. The VSB is engaging in **the reproduction of white supremacy, anti-Blackness and settler-colonial genocide** by allowing police presence in schools.

I call for the immediate termination of the School Liaison Officer program and consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students.

A former VSB student and Vancouver resident,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I want my voice to be added to the many who find this unacceptable. I am appalled to learn the money being spent to have police in schools.

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Don't be afraid to stare systemic racism in the eye and eradicate it.

IT'S WHAT YOU'RE THERE FOR!

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am a parent of a VSB student. Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's "review" process and to call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program

End events that bring police into schools

In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I urge you to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

You've received ample correspondence graciously outlining the changes that need to occur to ensure the safety of all students, not only Black and indigenous students who are most harassed and targeted by police due to systemically racist practices. Institutions like the VSB have to learn from past mistakes and move forward intelligently. I implore you to listen and do right by these students' and community members' concerns.

Stop the willful ignorance and gaslighting of your constituents. As a taxpayer and alumnus of the Vancouver's public school system I demand you end the SLO program and meet the following demands:

- Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program

- End events that bring police into schools
- In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

WE NEED to DEFUND the police and re-route funds to programs that actually benefit our children and communities. Many school boards are moving in this direction, we can too.

DO BETTER, it is in your power.

[name redacted]

Concerned community member

Dear Trustees,

Hello again! My name is [name redacted], and I was born and raised in Vancouver, currently a student at UBC. I am writing to you folks today to express my worry surrounding the Student Liaison Officer program. The review process for the program through Argyle seems incredibly dissatisfactory, given the fact that Argyle's leadership team is all white. I stand with Black and Indigenous students, and believe that the SLO program must cease to exist immediately. As was originally promised, Black and Indigenous students and parents must be properly consulted with during the revision of this program, and I hope that their voices are prioritized as the program is up for debate once more.

Police presence is harmful to our city's students, especially Black and Indigenous youth. If you care about decreasing crime and fostering positive student-adult relationships, please put funding towards programs that centres joy and education, with proper consultation with Black and Indigenous students and parents. Please put an end to the SLO program immediately.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I was amazed to learn today that the review of the SLO program of the Vancouver School Board is being undertaken by a PR firm! Looking at the website of Argyle, I see that they have some experience is communicating about, and engaging the public in, various issues related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. What I do not see is any expertise in conducting a thorough program review with sensitivity and the needed trust, often built over years, with the affected communities.

Was there no thought given to a Black or Indigenous-led organization conducting this review?

It is even more disheartening to hear that most Black and Indigenous organizations have not even been consulted yet, even though a preliminary report is just days away

This terrible process is another blow to relationships between the VSB and marginalized communities. I urge you to suspend the SLO program immediately, and restart your review using an appropriate body with the necessary connections to affected communities.

Yours truly,

[name redacted]

Vancouver voter

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to you today because **I would like to address the incompetence of the Vancouver School Board to review the SLO program, and to again demand an end to the SLO program.** It is enraging to witness the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB and the ridiculous process taking place through Argyle.

Argyle consists of an **all White leadership team**, which is completely inappropriate for obvious reasons; and even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made to protect Indigenous and Black youth, there are still (to date) many individuals who are still awaiting consultation. It has also come to my attention that community members have been turned away from speaking at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Once again, I am asking you:

- 1) Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
- 2) End events that bring police into schools
- 3) In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

H

Hi,

What's this nonsense about hiring a PR firm with an all-white leadership team to conduct the SLO program review? Come on.

Vancouver continues to be embarrassing and anti-progressive. You have a duty to the children that the VSB serves – **ALL** children, not just whites – to create safer, less racist, more inclusive schools. That can't happen when you have cops involved.

I'm asking you to:

- End the School Liaison Officer program.
- Keep cops out of schools.
- Don't put white people in charge of stuff like this. (For the record, I'm white.)
- Take all the money you're currently wasting on cops and PR and instead put it toward programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students, particularly Black and Indigenous students.

Have a nice day!

[name redacted]

Community member and future parent

Dear Trustees,

I am a parent of two school age children: one who attends [redacted] in Grade 8 and another at [redacted] who's in Grade 2. Our family is Palestinian/Irish and we are deeply opposed to the current SLO program as well as the bullshit "review" process. Time to make a real change!

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, **I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely, [name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Today I am writing as a resident of Vancouver with a child in the school system to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

- Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
- End events that bring police into schools
- In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am a teacher of 12 years, and care deeply about all of my students. It is because of this that

today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

I know we can care better for all our students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear YSB Trustees,

I am flummoxed, exasperated and completely outraged over the Vancouver School Board's cover-up/whitewashing review process and I call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of teachers, students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through the Argyle Corporation. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

- 1) Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
- 2) End events that bring police into schools
- 3) In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted], educator/artist

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to express my expectation that you do better at uplifting the wellbeing of ALL students. Recognize that the true risk is failing to invest and heal colonial violence oppressing Black and Indigenous communities.

One step you can take towards meaningful repair is to see Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community

members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.
4. Take responsibility for anti-racism learning

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear VSB Trustees,

Today I am writing to voice my strongest support for the efforts to immediately remove SLO's from the Vancouver School Board.

I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all white leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and

Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable, shameful and harmful to the education and well-being of Black, Indigenous and racialized students who are already targeted disproportionately by law enforcement and authority figures both in and out of the classrooms.

Why are these decisions being made behind closed doors without consultation with community members and organizations?

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Hi,

What's this nonsense about hiring a PR firm with an all-white leadership team to conduct the SLO program review? Come on.

Vancouver continues to be embarrassing and anti-progressive. You have a duty to the children that the VSB serves – **ALL** children, not just whites – to create safer, less racist, more inclusive schools. That can't happen when you have cops involved.

I'm asking you to:

- End the School Liaison Officer program.
- Keep cops out of schools.
- Don't put white people in charge of stuff like this. (For the record, I'm white.)

- Take all the money you're currently wasting on cops and PR and instead put it toward programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students, particularly Black and Indigenous students.

Have a nice day!

[name redacted]

Community member and future parent

Dear Trustees,

While the following message is a template provided by community organizers, I have thoroughly reviewed it's contents & couldn't put it any better myself.

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I would like to express my extreme concern about the Vancouver School Board's review process and to call for an end to the SLO program. Meaningful consultation cannot take place with the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members, and the nominal consultation process taking place through a public relations firm. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Despite promises by various board members to respect explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review. This is a show of bad faith, and further evidence that the board and/or administrative staff did not intend to meaningfully include or consider perspectives of communities who have historically been overpoliced.

Although the consultants indicate they are ready to present the preliminary report to the board tomorrow, I have learned that there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation and that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and further makes clear that the board is using public dollars to undertake a performative rather than intentional process.

Therefore, I am asking the board to:

1. **Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program**
2. **End events that bring police into schools**

3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

As a parent of non-white children, a physician, and a clinician-researcher studying the impacts of structural determinants of health, I can attest to the need for resources for trauma-informed services and student-centered safety over and above police presence in our communities.

As February marks the beginning of Black History Month, we are doubly reminded of the need to move in explicitly anti-racist and anti-oppressive directions. It would be utterly disappointing to see the VSB protect a harmful status quo when they have within their power the ability to make meaningful change for our students who are furthest from justice.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

VSB Parent, Family Physician

Dear Trustees,

As a former student at a school that had a police presence I am writing with my concerns. As a student, I witnessed innumerable acts of racism in my school perpetrated by police officers who were supposed to be a beneficial force in my school. For example, as a white student, I saw that these officers informed white students when "random" drug searches were going to happen but did not do this for racialized students - protecting white students from criminalization while targeting racialized students.

Therefore, I am deeply concerned about the VSB's inadequate review process. We **know** that having SLOs in schools harms racialized students. And if a consultation is to go forward then certainly students, parents, and Black community members should not be silenced. I have been made aware that there are many individuals and groups from Black and Indigenous communities that have yet to be consulted by Argyle (a firm that happens to have no BIPOC people on their leadership team - which fundamentally calls in to question their ability to sensitively and appropriately conduct this review). This whole situation remains unacceptable.

That said, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Along with other community members, I support these further calls to action for the safety, care, and well being of every single student that you should be serving:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Project Lead - [redacted]

Hello,

I wanted to note my experiences with the SLOs at my different schools. I am not sure exactly what you want so I will give a moderate amount of detail and if you need any more specifics just let me know.

1. Context: last year a very emotional K student decided they wanted to go home at lunch because they missed mom – they told no one and left. After myself and the Supervision Aides realized someone was missing we did a sweep of the school and called 911. Eight police units were out looking for her in a matter of what seemed like seconds. I ended up finding her three blocks away at her house where no one was home and she was confused about what to do next. We stayed on the corner to wait for police. They kept us in that spot to allow for SLO to arrive.
 - a. Our SLO made it a priority to be on site right away to connect with myself and student
 - b. SLO transitioned us back to school
 - c. SLO talked to the student and mother - once mother arrived at the school
 - d. Connected with that class on the day of the incident as they had all heard about what had happened and were scared
 - e. Came back the same week to talk with the class about overall safety

Overall: the SLO undoubtedly was a huge help calming the student and family, reinforcing safety and connecting with staff about ways to handle similar situations going forward. SLO was so valuable in this situation.

2. Context: a Grade 6 student made a poor choice to take a teachers iPhone from their desk. The Student went home and gave it to their high school brother. Once staff had figured out the most likely scenario the phone was traced using GPS to the home of student. The next morning the phone made its way to the high school so SLO was called.
 - f. SLO was very available right away
 - g. SLO made it a priority to go to high school and get the phone back by recess that same morning
 - h. SLO had a relationship with students involved at the high school and was able to get the phone back with a couple of conversations
 - i. SLO gave the school guidance on how to proceed with the family (building trust)

Overall: the SLO rectified a tough situation quickly and without incident. I am still impress and very thankful several years later.

[name redacted]

I assume people who do not like a School Liason Officer in the school building will not call the police when they are victims of crime.

The police officer is a valuable element in the schools to educate students. I hope we will be mature enough to not generalize about the police force.

Police matters

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to add my voice to the many community members expressing concern and outrage about the VSB's sham review process. The School Liaison Officer (SLO) program must be

terminated. As I learn more about the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the completely ineffective consultation process taking place through Argyle, my outrage increases. Together we call for the termination of the SLO program immediately.

As I have come to understand, Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting. This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, the community has been put in a position to collectively demand once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

regards,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, **I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Contact with police has been shown to have a deleterious impact on the health of marginalized peoples and this exposure to the stress, violence, and trauma caused by police is especially

harmful for children. Police do not belong in schools, where children are meant to be encouraged, nurtured, and allowed to grow unhindered, not surveilled, policed and intimidated.

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

I hope that the School Liaison Officer Programme will not be discarded without getting some 'hard' data on how Elementary and High School students

react to it.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Vancouver Resident and grandmother of children in the School Board area.

Good morning!

My name is [name redacted] and I work for a low barrier youth drop in. As much as the intention of police in schools is safety, I do not think it is keeping people safe. Many Indigenous youth and other youth of colour have incredible trauma from police violence, stemming from the RCMP's historical roots in residential schools and robbing Indigenous peoples of their culture and ways of life. It is without a doubt that violence and harm can happen to young people, but the police don't offer a reprieve or antidote to this. What about more funding for drop in spaces, youth workers, counsellors, or cultural healers and Elders instead? Adding these supports to schools would allow youth to heal rather than have them feel more fear at the hands of the police.

Thanks for taking the time to read this email! I'm happy to elaborate more if there are specific questions. Please think deeply and critically about how the budget is broken down.

Warmly,

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to express concern about the Vancouver School Board's review process and the existence of the SLO program. I believe Black students, parents, and community members are being silenced by the VSB, and that the consultation process taking place through Argyle is inadequate. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Many of your Black students and other students of colour are at increased risk of profiling by police officers. I believe it is a risk to Black student safety by retaining liaison officers in schools.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away**

from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Greater Vancouver Resident

Police Liaison Officer (PLO) Recommendations

1. Police be plain-clothed without wearing gun type weapons, or protective Kevlar, while working at schools
2. The school police liaison office NOT be used for investigation or interviewing of students or staff - the office be only used for police liaison public relations
3. PAC, admin, and Staff Committee be involved in the selection / appointment process of the PLO officers from the VPD
4. Police Liaison officers have the following credentials – available on public resume – to the committee in #3: a) experience with community based policing and non-automobile community patrol b) certified training in anti-discrimination c) specific and proven experience with youth agencies, Young offender system, youth oriented workshops, services, community supports D) public relations of community committee liaison experience
5. That all PLOs undertake ongoing certified professional development in antidiscrimination, youth services, and community policing liaison throughout their appointment

6. Attendance at all local site school staff meetings and PAC meetings

I have had several years of experience on Police Liaison committees in Ontario. I also interacted often with Ontario Provincial Police in my capacity as a Safety Policy Officer at the Ministry of Transportation Ontario in the early 1990s.

I think that this issue can be solved with some intelligent compromises.

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am angered but also not surprised unfortunately at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I **continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.**

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting. This is unacceptable and violent in suppressing voices of those most impacted by the SLO program.

Therefore, I am joining many others in asking you all to:

3. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
4. End events that bring police into schools - we need more counsellors and helpers in school, not aggressive and dangerous cops that perpetrate the school to prison pipeline
5. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

I will be listening and watching and seeing what the Trustees do or do not do.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Dear Chairperson Cho:

I understand you are doing the best you can as an elected member of the Board....and it is not easy....BUT.....

I am old, very old. But not only do I STILL care very much for the well-being of ALL the students in Vancouver, I care even more so now. I understand that what they learn, and how they feel about issues in high school, remains for most for the rest of their lives. It's a very difficult world we live in, especially for young people for many, many reasons that I know you are aware of.

Some students need more help than others, and the Police Liaison Program can be of great help to many impressionable youth. Considering how often they hear "Defund the Police", the Police are bad, the Police are racist, etc.etc., now more than ever I feel it is essential for all students – which includes all the many impressionable youth – to get the correct understanding of who/what the Police are and stand for....and that they are there for help. Instead of being afraid (maybe because of what they have learned elsewhere), they can be taught that when they see a policeman or policewoman, or just a police uniform, they can understand that the police are not the enemy and can be trusted.

I cannot see any venue other than the school where this positive view and interaction of and with the Police could take place.

I hope and pray the School Board will vote to keep this extremely important program.

Yours truly,

[name redacted]

Superintendent S. Hoffman and the Vancouver School Board of Trustees-

It was my experience and that of my colleagues to find the VSB Liaison Program a very valuable addition to our total educational package.

Over many years I found the officers willing to be a positive influence in the many facets of the students high school life.

I can recall one graduating class devoting a complete page of the year-end annual (and that's precious!) to a particular well-liked officer.

Rather than eliminating police personnel, would it not be better if students mingled with them and found a "friend" rather than an "enemy"?

Do not eliminate a particular valuable sector of the educational program.

[name redacted]

Good afternoon,

As a parent of a VSB student, I find it essential that the SLO program be terminated. Policing is a means of redress for criminal behaviour and involving youth with the SLO program through recruitment and exposure to an institution which continues to disproportionately harm racialized youth is completely unconscionable, especially in 2021.

The research says as much. Please remove the SLOs from the VSB so that we can institute appropriate behaviour modification programs which are more compassionate.

Warmly,

[name redacted]

Hello,

I appreciate the work being done to look at this program and whether or not this is an effective way for students to be cared for. I believe that the events of 2020 have proven that there are many areas of our society which need drastic change.

I do not believe that having an officer in Vancouver schools is the right decision. I worry that it may actually increase the potential for harm, especially to BIPOC students. I would like to see resources dedicated instead to other methods which don't involve law enforcement (the

specifics of which I don't have the experience to recommend) so that students can enjoy a safe and less stressful environment.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

As a girl and a person of colour, I thoroughly felt empowered by the VPD self defense program. The officers contributed to creating a safe and encouraging environment – never did I feel uncomfortable or threatened. Every single woman in that room was a role model, and I left feeling braver than I did when I arrived.

[name redacted]

To whom it may concern,

I have worked 35 years as a Special Education teacher with VSB with students ages 5-19. Since I retired in June I have had some time to reflect on my career and the success of the system. My greatest success stories have resulted from collaborating with a multidisciplinary team. On many occasions I have reached out and relied on the experience of the SLO. In all instances I felt the SLO de-escalated the situation and was a huge asset to the team. I feel very grateful that over the years I had the opportunity to rely on their expertise and professionalism. I am fully in support of the SLO program.

Thank you for your time,

[name redacted]

Dear Ms Fraser,

I am writing you as a retired secondary administrator to oppose a motion before the Vancouver School Board to no longer have Vancouver police liaison officers in our schools. I served as an administrator in seven Vancouver schools for over sixteen years. The mover of the motion and her supporters believe that police officers in schools present uncomfortable threats to many minority students attending Vancouver schools and serve no purpose that could not be

otherwise achieved more purposefully with trained VSB staff. I seriously question the validity of such an argument. This long standing service which began in the 1970's has adapted to societal changes over the years. The police have always needed support in any democratic society. Our Vancouver School Liaison Officers have successfully helped administrators, teachers, parents and above all students within our school system and should not be replaced. The resolution of any real or perceived feeling of threat to some minority students can be successfully resolved with open discussion, understanding, training and appropriate action. I am convinced that a safe and healthy society requires respected police officers closely associated with our schools. To dismiss this service is not an answer to any problem. One of the reasons I served for two terms on the Vancouver Police Board was to defend equality. The changes in the make-up of the police staff over the last three decades reflect the new Vancouver demonstrating our diversity. We see more women and visible minorities in the force at all levels. The officers have made and continue to make contributions to our democratic society beyond their policing mandate especially helping students including minorities.

Educators have acknowledged the value of the PLO's in many ways whether it be protecting or counselling students that are bullied or feel unsafe at school , helping parents with real concerns about their child's safety related to traffic coming to and leaving from schools or fears of suspected child predators, investigating real threats to the personal safety of classroom teachers and assisting school administrators deal with suspected gang violence or possible drug problems in or around their schools among other issues. We have all experienced incidences where PLO's helped immeasurably addressing and resolving many troubling problems. I have contacted many of my former colleagues who recall how valuable such an ancillary service benefits the Vancouver school system. I am asking that the Board defeat this motion.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Regarding safety personnel in the schools

My daughter attended [information redacted]

[Name redacted] was in both regular classes and received special disabled considerations.

If not for the special constable, her tumultuous school years would likely have been even worse and possibly unbearable. Counsellors and the community officer made the moments of discrimination by fellow students much better such that with the comfort of some particular

student friends, the experience was made much more enjoyable than it would have been in their absence.

[name redacted]

Dear Trustees,

I am writing today to call on you to end the School Liaison Officer program. For a school board that claims to centre and protect the experiences of Indigenous, Black, and racialized youth, you are not centring them in your decision making. I want a school district that promotes safety for all.

I was very disappointed that you decided to do a review without pausing the program in June of last year. And I've been further disappointed with the process of the review. I don't feel that the results can be trusted, but I will be watching closely tomorrow at the meeting.

Argyle, a public relations firm with **an all White leadership team** was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, **there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation**, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been **turned away** from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. **Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program**
2. **End events that bring police into schools**
3. **In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students**

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear VSB School Trustees,

I am aware that currently, the VSB is involved in a review of the role of the VPD, in particular the role of SLO's , in Vancouver schools

As a retired Vancouver High school Principal in Vancouver ([redacted]) as well as Vice Principal ([redacted]) , in addition to direct experience in the field of anti-racist education ([redacted]) this is an issue with which I became very involved in my 22 years with VSB (1988-2010)

I am copying you with a letter(see below)which was published in the Vancouver Sun ,July 4 ,to express my support both for a review of the SLO program by the VSB, with a view to constantly update and improve it, and in a effort to also argue for maintaining such a service in all VSB schools.

Letter read as follows:

" Dear Editor,

I am a retired Vancouver high school administrator with twenty years' experience.

In that time, I had the privilege of working directly with the VSB/VPD school liaison officers in five different high schools in Vancouver. I also served for two years, before I went into administration, as the Race Relations Consultant at the VSB.

I will say, unreservedly, that the SLO program provides true value in the education of our youth and the involvement of community. Is it perfect? Absolutely not. Can it use some refreshment and re-setting: absolutely: yes! (What can't use that?).

A thorough review of such a program, working toward a refresh, with direct input from every segment of our diverse community--especially from those who are at greatest risk-- is always valuable, and in these times very much called for.

Abolishing the SLO program would only create greater distancing between our various communities and our police service, and result, in my view, in great long-term damage to all of us."

Respectfully,

[name redacted]

It is my sincere hope that your Board's review will result in a refreshed , renewed service in co-operation with the VPD . One that continues to have the trust and respect of of our community, and maintains the intent of this long standing service which has always been intended to

provide both safety in our schools, but just as important, to provide positive linkages between our students , families and the agency entrusted to "Serve and Protect" the community.

I ask the you as you consider changes, review purpose, mandate, and accountability, please do also consider the importance of maintaining the connection , linkage, and comprehension with the VPD,and not simply remove the connection altogether, without trying to fix it.

[name redacted]

I would like to put forth my support for the SLO program in schools.

At [school name redacted], our SLO has been integral in promoting good physical fitness and health amongst the student body. He has started a [sports name redacted] club and has worked tirelessly behind the scenes with our counselling department to help students navigate very challenging/dangerous situations. Anecdotally I have heard from more than a couple students how our SLO has been integral to their survival in high school.

On a separate note, with the amount of animus directed at police in the current political climate, I find it appalling that the solution to the police/public relationship is to further denigrate police rather than working with them (especially seeing how vitally important that relationship is to the well being of our youth).

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

The prospect of losing the SLO program in Vancouver saddens me.

As a retired educator, I'm writing to express my support and gratitude for this program that provided a rich and very positive dimension to the education system for all the years of my experience. Children had the opportunity to connect personally with officers and form relationships that were positive to carry them forward into adulthood. And, as an educator, I had the direct support of the VPD through my relationships with a variety of SLO's. Only good comes with the program.

I urge you to continue with this important part of school life in Vancouver.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Retired VSB educator

As a senior citizen and passed parent of students in the public school system I wanted to express my support to please continue with this service.

I was very involved with the PAC in our daughters school and could see first hand how great it was to have our liaison officer. He got to know the students and they trusted him and as parents we felt very confident if any issues that arose especially with drugs or alcohol, he understood and proved to be a super role model. The students who were troubled no longer feared the police.

[name redacted]

Dear Argyle Communications and the Vancouver School Board,

I know that for many, the years that the School Liaison Officer (SLO) program has been operating have made a remarkable and positive difference to a lot of kids, youth and teens. I am writing to lend my full support behind this valuable program and hope that the latest defund-police rhetoric will not cause this important program to be discontinued.

<https://vancouver.ca/police/organization/investigation/investigative-support-services/youth-services/school-liaison.html>

Kids and youth everywhere and their local police of jurisdiction need to develop good relationships with each other. Here it's the kids of Vancouver and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) we are talking about. School Liaison Officers, provided the Officers are a suitable fit with suitable training, is a unique and personable way for kids to know Police Officers, who they are, the good work they do, and how they can help society. And vice versa. For just one example of a benefit: fostering these relationships within the school system can help prevent a students' potential inclination to label all law enforcement with negative stereotypes, carrying this far into adulthood – something which they may have picked up from their friends and family, teachers, social media etc., especially of late.

Please continue to fund the SLO program and commit to its continuing longevity.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Hello,

It's been a long time (I graduated in 1990) but I still recall being a student in a classroom (at [school redacted]) listening to a VPD officer teach us how [subject matter redacted for sensitivity].

[name redacted]

Hope you are well.

Am writing to provide Argyle with my input re: the SLO program as a concerned step-parent of an Indigenous student, as well as an educator.

Am wondering why armed police officers are still stationed in our schools, when there is no data that proves that their presence is beneficial in any way? Am also wondering why the VSB seem to think that it is ok to have officers who have no specialized youth or long-term anti-racism training, and who represent an overtly racist and problematic institution, to be carrying weapons around our children? Whose interests are they supposed to be protecting?

Toronto, Peel, Hamilton and Edmonton have all suspended their SLO programs. They did so to respect the safety of BIPOC student, staff and teachers. Why has Vancouver not followed suit? There has been no dreaded spike in crime since these school districts suspended the SLO program. In fact,

"Following the termination of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), student suspensions dropped by 24% in just one year. This indicated 1,774 fewer suspensions than the previous year. With this, expulsions decreased by 53%, decreasing by a total of 34."

Black and Indigenous community members have very clearly voiced their desire for this program to be terminated, yet the VSB has repeatedly chosen to censor and disregard their voices, as well as the thousands of concerned citizens who have signed petitions and written letters to trustees demanding that the program be immediately suspended. Where is the justice in this? And more importantly, where is the Racial Justice in this?

To think that next year when my step-daughter starts high school, she will have to walk down a hallway where an armed officer will be watching her and her friends is beyond gruesome for me. I find it obscene that the police, who have been the main henchmen of genocide against

Indigenous Peoples in these unceded Indigenous territories, are now going to be surveilling her in a place where she is supposed to feel safe, welcomed and included.

Shame on the VSB and the VPD for refusing to listen to the voices of BIPOC communities, and shame on the VSB for not introducing any additional educational requirements or safety protocols for the SLO officers still stationed in our schools, despite covid, over the last 7 months that we have been waiting for this sham "review" to take place.

Please suspend the program immediately and take a step towards true Reconciliation in this country. If not for your own consciences, then for our children, whose best interests you are supposed to be protecting.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

In the past year we have seen events, in particular "Black Lives Matter" bring incidence of racism to the forefront and the promotion of questioning of existing structures and whether they are a result of systemic racism. This movement or others similar, may have, to some degree, directly influenced the examination of the existing SLO program in Vancouver Schools. Among some of the options that have been offered have been to discontinue the program all together and that a police presence is not appropriate in a learning environment. I believe that the review of a program is always of benefit as the needs of a community are continually in flux and changing and systems and structures must evolve to better meet the needs of that community.

I am an adult male of colour and an educator in the Vancouver school system and I have resided in Vancouver since 1992. Sadly, to this day, I am no stranger to racial profiling daily from hired security in stores to our own members in policing tasked with protecting society. Be that as it may, I am writing you to speak to the value of keeping the SLO program in our school communities for this very reason.

If we want to see change within the system and society for our future generations then what should be evident is that there is an opportunity to build bridges of communication and understanding between all parties and stakeholders. I recognize that there are members of these groups that may have felt victimized, profiled, oppressed, and traumatized in the past and may also live with these experiences, however I do not see removing the SLO as a productive answer to solving these problems. In fact, the removal may indeed widen the gap between any such stakeholders and the policing department.

Society runs in an orderly fashion due to the laws enshrined in the constitution that are upheld and enforced by law enforcement, in this case Vancouver Police Department. As with any such profession there will be a varying quality of those members who practice within the profession. By discontinuing the program, this may lead to supporting past narratives and assumptions and creating bias among stakeholders present and future (the children) without creating any further understanding or a space to address past grievances as well as an exchange of learning between both parties and a willingness to create best practices which will lead to a better functioning society.

I cannot think of a better place for this to happen than with youth who are the future leaders of tomorrow, but there needs to be a willingness on the part of all parties, including the VPD, to address past practices, and receive feedback and evolve to better know and serve their community. There needs to be a forum or space that can be created for safe dialogue, not just between SLOs and students but also their parents and extended family if need be.

Indeed, the SLO program in the past has been a tool to curb youth delinquency as well as create a safe and secure environment that include cyber-safety, in addition to providing mentorship and guidance through coaching and attending school events but there is opportunity to extend this role and its reach. There is opportunity to build or rebuild trust and confidence between all

parties. This would be enhanced by taking a multi-organizational approach. In addition, creating a specific mandate for targeted goals and best practice and continued dialogue would help create a safe school and neighbourhood community for our future generations.

If you think I may be able to advance any dialogue and collaboration between the involved stakeholders, please do not hesitate to contact me.

[name redacted]

I am writing this letter to express my absolute abhorrence at learning of the possibility of discontinuing the School Liaison Program in Vancouver schools.

As an employee of the Vancouver School Board for more than four decades, I had the opportunity in district-based positions supporting students with diverse and special needs, to learn, first hand, of the exceptional work carried out by the SLOs. The SLO's prompt and meaningful interventions often result in students not becoming cases directed to the Youth Criminal Justice system. The SLO's aptitude to work skillfully with troubled youth is a competence that not every officer would have developed.

The costs to students and to society are drastically reduced when the Criminal Justice system does not have to be involved. Resolutions through alternative measures result in appropriate supports being provided and legal and court involvement not being initiated.

It is, more than ever before, essential that the SLO's continue in their role ensuring schools are safe and caring places to learn; that student crime and problematic behaviours are averted.

The allocation of officers through the Vancouver Police Department is at a ratio of 196 officers to 100,000 population (2019). It is evident that every secondary school in the city should have one or more officers assigned, based on the size of the school. Vancouver secondary schools are larger than many communities in the province are; they are dynamic places, densely populated and unfortunately sites where illegal substances, weapons, cyber bullying, assaults and safety concerns can flourish when supports are withdrawn.

Yours truly,

[name redacted]

Over the last two years, Constable [redacted] has been very huge help in pushing me to reach my goals. I started my journey in running at the end of grade 10, and with the constant encouragement I received during my running sessions, I have come to develop a passion for running. I was even able to run a half-marathon just last year alongside Constable [redacted] and my fellow colleagues. Even when I wanted to give up after running for 30 seconds, had Constable [redacted] not been there to push me to never stop running, I would literally stay as the lazy person I was a few years ago. It made me realize just how important it was to have police officers at our high schools; they act as your friend in a way, and you develop a different relationship with them in comparison to high school teachers. It honestly made the high school experience that much more fulfilling.

[name redacted]

I feel the police liaison program should be continued and expanded. Developing respectful relationships with students of all ages pays huge dividends to all concerned for a life time. Our four children attended Vancouver schools for spanning a period...

Hi VSB Trustees,

Why is an all-white PR company involved? BIPOC communities have already been very clear with the VSB that the SLO program endangers BIPOC students. SLO doesn't need PR, or for action to be delayed with pointless consultation, it needs to be cancelled immediately. By keeping police in schools, the VSB is at this point knowingly failing to provide a safe learning environment for racialised students. Stop dehumanising BIPOCs by making us jump through hoops or re-live trauma to prove we deserve safety. You already know better, now it's your responsibility to do better: cancel the SLO program immediately, stop inviting police to schools, and engage BIPOC communities to create a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety for all students.

Thanks,

[name redacted]

Hello,

I have become aware that the School Liaison Officer program in Vancouver schools is being reviewed.

I am a retired elementary school principal who worked in different schools around the district. I met and had the opportunity to work with men and women who served in this role.

The roles they took varied but was mostly related to ensuring the safety of young children-- supporting and training the school safety patrol, giving talks on safety at Halloween, on stranger danger and where to seek help, on internet safety, etc.

I respected and appreciated their work and found them to be an important resource .

With respect,

[name redacted]

I am writing in strong support of the SLO program in the Vancouver School System . I was shocked to read in the Vancouver Sun about this program being cut. In my opinion, A very big mistake as more and more students are suffering from anxiety ,mental health ,drugs

and recruitment for gangs.

In my opinion, this is a very big step backwards and one that comes with a high price for schools and our society.

I spent my entire career working for the Vancouver School Board as an elementary teacher, Vice-Principal and Principal and have recently worked there as a Teacher on Call helping out during the shortage of Substitute teachers. I have always valued the work done by the SLOs and often told them how I wished they had more time available for the Elementary schools to work with the students we knew were at risk. The younger the student the more that can be done quickly to help families resolve problems. At the elementary level teachers frequently flag students who we know are headed for trouble down the road. There has never been enough time or hands on help to deal with these troubled students and now you are considering cutting one of these excellent resources.

As a teacher, I welcomed VPD officers into my classroom for many years and observed young students as they got to see and hear a police officer up close. I always found them able to relate to the children and patiently answered their many questions. I felt the VPD screened and picked the right officers to work in the schools. The children always wanted to see their guns which of course they never showed them but there was certainly never any fear or hysteria over having police in the classroom. The Vancouver schools are full of immigrant children who come from countries where people need to be afraid of the police. What better way than to have police welcomed into our schools and begin to see that they and their family can call on the police to help them when the need arises. Getting to see and hear familiar police men and women in our schools is very healthy if we are to have a civil society. In this way, become real people to our students.

As an administrator, I found the support of the SLO's invaluable. I called on them many times to seek their advice and support when dealing with tricky situations eg. Students caught shoplifting, mothers seeking help for spousal abuse, sexual abuse of students, reports of drug dealing to students in the neighbourhood, parents threatening each other etc. Administrators deal with so many heavy situations on a daily basis and they need MORE support not less to help the students in their schools. In my last school, parents told me how worried they were about their sons becoming involved in gangs as teenagers. I talked to the SLO and he arranged for two VPD members to come and talk at a parent night. Their presentation was excellent and they answered so many questions to a crowded gymnasium. Their talk empowered parents many who were new to Canada and what to watch for in their child's behaviour. We cannot put a

price on this Type of parent education. I have always felt we needed to put more resources into struggling families in the early years Which would prevent a lot of ruined lives later on.

The Vancouver School Board has benefited a great deal from the support of the SLO program in the schools for the Past 50 years. So many excellent resources have been cut during that time and society has become even more Complicated. I have never had any problem with any of the SLO officers over the years. In fact,I was always soGrateful for their time and knowledge and only wished they could spend more time in the elementary school To help build relationships with some of my troubled and at risk students.

Students, teachers and especially administrators badly need this resource in the Vancouver schools.

It would be a big mistake to cut this SLO program for the sake of a small group of disgruntled people

And not look at the bigger picture and all the good that has been done by these officers over the years.

To vsb

I recently heard about the vote for school liaisons to either stay in school or terminate their positions, as a student who has made a deep emotional connection with my school liaison it would mean a lot to not only me but fellow peers as well to not have their roles terminated, I believe their role ensures safety to a lot kids as well as overtime build connections with teens and make teens like me feel comfortable to report when things aren't safe at home as well if we're concerned for someone else's safety, they also help manage school environments by dealing with bullying and supporting kids through clubs for generally having fun and having a good time as well as setting good examples for instance every year since grade 8, [school name redacted] (my high school) has paired up with Vancouver police department to shop for less fortunate kids , one out of many things we've done. I look up to my school Liaison she's taught me important skills and provided me with opportunities as well as being my inspiration, I wasn't in good place and I was skipping school for months until I dropped out, yet she was always there for me which made me feel safe, she played a big role into motivating me to accomplish my goals, which was to go back to school, I don't know if it was something I could've accomplished without her support, she always checks up on me as well and I'll always respect and will be humbled by her actions and work. I know a lot of youth feel the same way i do about this situation please don't terminate the roles.

[name redacted]

Dear VSB,

I hope all is well. I am writing this letter to show my appreciation for the SLO Program. Throughout my high school years, Constable [name redacted] (my school's SLO), has continuously helped me grow as an individual.

Constable [name redacted] has guided multiple students, including myself, to joining [name redacted] and various other clubs and organizations like the VPD program. Furthermore, she has helped us improve our mental and physical health by just running with us, talking with us, and has often checked in and made sure we are doing well too.

Personally, Constable [name redacted] was a role model to me and has shown me many new opportunities to improve myself. For instance, she recommended me to join our school's running club and it has been an amazing experience. Running in the morning before school has helped me develop leadership, commitment, and helped me improve on myself. When I was not feeling well or was lacking behind, she would always be so encouraging to run with me or others who were also lagging behind. She has gotten many grants, donations from RunVan to support us and for those who do have the proper running gear, and the ability to participate in races. Without Constable [name redacted], we would not have a Running Club and many other clubs at our school.

Overall, having the SLO has impacted my life greatly as an individual and I hope that we keep the SLO Program so that the generations to come will also be able to experience many new opportunities and learn many new skills in life too.

[name redacted]

Dear Vancouver School Board of Trustees, VSB, and VPD,

I am writing this letter to share the positive experiences I had with Constable [name redacted], the Student Liaison Officer (SLO) Program at [redacted] and why it was such a crucial part of my experience during high school.

During my senior year, like many other students, I was taking difficult course loads, applying to universities, and participating in extra-curriculars. It was a stressful time; however, my friend asked me if I wanted to join the new running club. I decided to give it a shot. I recall stepping into the foyer before the first morning run and the first thing I notice is Constable [name

redacted] bright smile and positive presence as I was welcomed to my first run. I participated in the running club throughout the year and found that there was so much value in having an SLO in high schools. During these runs Cst. [name redacted] would continuously display unending support and positivity to all the students who ran. Not only was our SLO a bridge between the students and our city's community police department, but also a mentor who shared her core values through her actions and by going above and beyond.

Through Cst. [name redacted] cheerful attitude and unwavering determination during runs, I was able to learn these values and apply them to my schoolwork and personal life. During this time, I was also the senior representative of my entire grade. I can confidently say that Cst. [name redacted] was one of the most popular staff members among our graduating class, and none of us will ever forget that smile and positive attitude.

I believe the VPD is one of the pillars of our community and should be reflected so in our high schools. I wholeheartedly believe that there is an unquantifiable life-changing value that the SLOs bring to our schools. Cst. [name redacted] has helped me develop the core values of always pushing myself to be better, to always smile and be positive! These lessons had helped me navigate my way through a stressful senior year and into the current chapter of my life in university.

In this current climate, I believe it's evermore important for SLO's to be present in our high schools to bridge the gap between youth and police, enhance community safety, and to guide the next generation of leaders. I thank you for taking the time to read and consider this letter.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

My experience with having Constable [name redacted] as our school liaison officer has been a phenomenal experience for me. Throughout my whole high school career, she has played an important role in guiding and mentoring in personal development.

Not only has she started a running club here at [school name redacted], inspiring students to be more active, she has also changed a lot of student's lives including mine at the school with the constant donation of gear that she gives us and to just providing us positivity throughout the year.

Constable [name redacted] has played an essential role in my life, I live further than most schools, in Burnaby, so I have to miss out on certain opportunities that I would be otherwise such as collecting stuff within a time period.

What made a massive impact on my life and I still remember that day she delivered me lunch to my doorstep during quarantine when I couldn't be at school to collect lunches. She noticed that I haven't been able to pick up my lunches since I live so far, so she went out of her way to drove to deliver to me. Not only that, but she has also hand-delivered me medals and racing package from the running club and countless more.

In a way, Constable [name redacted] was my second parent that I had at school. I could always show up to the running club and she would brighten my mood with her kindness and her bright smile. Inspiring me every day and recommending programs to advance in life such as VPD Cadets.

I am forever grateful to Constable [name redacted] for being part of my life. Even though I'm only in grade 11 but she's left an impact on me that I will never forget in my life.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Vancouver City Council,

I am disappointed to hear of the motion to try and remove the VPD School Liaison Officers from Vancouver schools. I myself (a student) have had many great interactions and experiences with my SLO and it would be a shame for them to leave. I know at [school name redacted] the SLO there has started a running club and gets some funding from the Vancouver Police Foundation, this is just one of the many examples that VPD SLO's are there to help.

I would strongly recommend that you review your decisions and not let U.S politics cloud your vision of the real purpose of the SLO program. As a student I personally wouldn't feel safe without them, I would like the SLO's to stay in Vancouver Schools as they benefit the school community and public safety for students and staff.

Thank You

[name redacted]

To whom it may concern,

I am surprised to hear that a review is being conducted on our school liaison program. I am deeply saddened that this has come up at such a necessary time in our covid-19 school lives. I have come to depend on them and my personal thoughts are shared with you below. This is from firsthand experience and without judgment.

I have been with the VSB for 29 years and I have worked extensively with the SLO officers. I am a First Aid Attendant and beyond the injury management portion the following categories are not in my expertise and knowledge. The School Administrators get the first look at students involved in fights, altercations, suspected drugs, and other activities that are onsite. They are confronted with online bullying and harassment and are expected to find a solution. They immediately contact the School Liaison officer for the best course of action for the students and families. They come on site promptly and provide expertise as they are well trained in dealing with diverse cultures, situations, and sensitivities They guide us in a way that allows for the best use of administrative time through parent involvement and student safety. We are dealing with minors and the best outcome of the individual case scenarios must be legal and safe and supportive.

We really, really need this program to continue. The School Liaison Officers are the police but they are not meant to be intimidating and it is wonderful to see females take on this role. I have taken part in the Women's Police Safety Program on two separate occasions and have learned how to protect myself in a dangerous situation. I feel more confident and look around at my surroundings much more when I am on transit and walking home from work. I live in a safe area but the reminders stay with me. They were kind enough to come to our school and present a similar program to our PE classes and were very well received by students.

I sincerely hope this program will continue as it benefits so many people in our school environment. There will always be those who complain but that could be just a lack of understanding as are many of our situations nowadays. We need to be open minded and fair so that safety is a priority; as it has always been in the past, thanks to our brave, kind, intelligent and informed School Liaison Officers.

[name redacted]

I have had an amazing experience with Constable [name redacted], our school liaison officer and I believe that the VSB should keep this program. Not only has she made our school community safe, but she also goes above and beyond to make sure that students have their needs meant. For instance, Constable is the club sponsor for our school's running club and facilitates our weekly runs for staff and students to better their health. Additionally, she works hard and has successfully applied to many grants to provide running equipment for the club members as well as free participation in marathons.

What sticks out to me most is her enthusiasm and positive attitude. I am always the last person to finish the runs, but her positive sportsmanship has never made me feel discouraged and has only motivated me to strive for improvement.

As a student and a member of the [redacted] Community, I believe that the VSB should keep the school liaison officer, as myself and many other students can agree that we have had nothing except for positive experiences with the Constable. We believe that without our school liaison officer, our community will not feel as safe and as protected.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Hello School Trustees,

I am a school counsellor at [name redacted]. A few minutes ago, I was informed about the vote to eliminate school liaison officers in the schools. This is shocking to me.

For the past 12 years, I have been a teacher/counsellor with the Vancouver School Board. [name redacted], our school liaison officer has done so many great things. To sum it up, she is the police officer who is also a social worker at heart. She has done so many great things for our students and families, such as the running club, girls club, having students involved in the VPD cadets, helping out students and families with food security issues, providing countless scholarship references to students she knows, assisted in several mental health crisis' and most importantly developing meaningful, kind and compassionate relationships with the school community, especially those most marginalized. She is a positive influence and a big part of the school community. Many students look up to [name redacted] as a mentor.

There will be more harm than good, if school liaison officers are eliminated in schools. We need to work as a team, and start the conversation, moving forward. What needs to happen is to HOLD OFF ON THE VOTE NOW, and consult with ALL public stakeholders.

[name redacted]

To the Vancouver School Board of Trustees, the Vancouver School Board, and the Vancouver Police Department,

My name is [name redacted] , and I am a former student of [school name redacted] Secondary School. I am writing this letter to you to vocalize my support in continuing the School Liaison Officer (SLO) Program in the Vancouver School Board district. My experiences with the SLO in

my school when I was a high school student have informed my belief in the program's ability to create a safe environment for students and to build trusting relationships.

During my time at [name redacted], I had the pleasure of working with the School Liaison Officer, Constable [name redacted], by participating in the school running club that she organized. Constable [name redacted] took her passion for running and her role as the SLO and combined this into an opportunity for students to find personal success; she dedicated countless hours to training with students, building their confidence, helping them set individualized goals, and giving them advice and support to ensure they could achieve those goals. In addition, [name redacted] efforts to secure financial support from the police foundation and other organizations allowed the running club to support more and more students and provided ample opportunities to stay engaged. I was extremely fortunate to have access to these opportunities as a student, some of which included an all-expense paid trip to Seattle for a half marathon, and a number of other running events in Vancouver that were either subsidized or fully covered by those resources. The experiences that [name redacted] and the police foundation made possible have allowed me to improve on myself as a person while gaining lasting relationships with the students, staff and faculty at my school.

Constable [name redacted] work at [name redacted] is a shining example of what School Liaison Officers can do to create a positive impact in their schools. Their position within the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver School Board is unique in that they can help create safe, accessible spaces for students of different ages, languages, and abilities, by utilizing the resources and support of the police department. Through my own experiences with the SLO Program, I have seen the importance of this role in fostering a diverse community of students and providing them with a network to connect with even after high school. My hope is that you will take this perspective into account when considering the future of the School Liaison Officer Program.

Thank you for your time, and I appreciate your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Hi,

I currently work at [redacted]. I have been employed with the VSB for over 25 years, with 22 years of it in elementary. Throughout my time in various schools across the city, I see the necessity of having SLO's in schools. They do not pose a threat in the elementary school environment and only visit to check in but are always available when we needed them. In secondary schools, they provide of sense of safety and security amongst staff and students. My

SLO is very involved with the school by participating in sports activities, when it was possible, setting up scholarships for grads, supporting a volunteer group for the homeless, greeting students at the door when they arrive, and just doing everything he can to connect with students as a whole. He is friendly, personable, and available when requested by the school or students.

In 2012, I worked at an elementary school where suspicious mail was delivered to the school. Many police officers were involved in the case, including the SLO. This was a Canada wide case so it was beyond the scope of the SLO's duties, but I remember check-ins from SLO after the incident.

In 2017, my school was involved in a lockdown where the perpetrator entered my office area with me and my assistant in it. I was grateful for my SLO who quickly arrived to the school after the 911 call and apprehended the suspect right in front of me. It was a scary situation for everyone.

I am one of the first faces of the school and have had nothing but good connection, communication and experiences with all SLOs who have been assigned to schools. They have always been attentive and concerned in the well being of staff and students and the school in general. My frustration regarding this issue stems from the people who voice their uneducated concerns about this program and now it is up for unnecessary review. I don't know where their judgement comes from, most likely from media and what is happening in the USA, but Vancouver is unique and unlike the rest of the world; we cannot make claim that our officers act and react like they do in America. That's just stereotyping.....sure, there are some bad cops out there, but that shouldn't define that our VSB SLO program is bad and doesn't mean that those bad cops work in the schools. We are very lucky that the VPD does a good job at carefully selecting these people to work in our schools. One could say there are also bad teachers, but that doesn't mean that the school as a whole is bad. I hope to believe that the VSB and the trustees are smarter than this. I understand that you have to listen to people's concerns, but perhaps those concerned and those needing to decide on the program should come to the school and see firsthand at what an SLO does. Only after that can you make an informed decision on whether this program should be revoked or stay.

Thank you for your time in reading this.

[name redacted]

Dear Ms. Suzanne Hoffman c/o Vancouver School Board,

I understand the Vancouver School Board is contemplating the elimination of the "school liaison officer" program, currently staffed by the Vancouver Police Service, in our schools. I am respectfully imploring you to maintain these vital positions. I have 5 children who have been at 4 different schools in Vancouver. We have come to see our liaison officers as integral members of the community and a significant factor in guiding children to choose the "right" path on a whole host of issues that teenagers face as they approach adulthood. The officers serve as effective advocates for those children who have less than ideal home situations. The program also helps to demystify "police officers", making them far more approachable, when our children really need them. Given the unprecedented pressures and unhealthy choices facing today's teenagers, the liaison role is needed more than ever. Our youth need more eyes on them and as much healthy support and role modelling as we can provide.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Dear Vancouver School Board, Board of Trustees, VSB, and VPD

I am a current university student and during my time in high school, I was fortunate enough to have constable [name redacted] as my school liaison officer. To say that constable [name redacted] was positive influence on my high school experience would be an understatement. Constable [name redacted] founded and led my schools running club which was a huge part of my senior experience. She would lead runs and motivate us to stay active, showing the importance of hard work and dedication. She would sponsor our runs and allow us to attend different races. Outside of our running club, constable [name redacted] would patrol the halls during school time and ensure that students are safe and protected from one another. She acted as a guardian of sorts to prevent any danger and I genuinely felt safer at school knowing the constable was around. For that I believe that the School Liaison program should not be cancelled as students would greatly benefit from having a constable at their high school. I believe that all students should feel safe and have the positive influence of a School Liaison officer at their high school.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Mr. Chow,

I heard you interviewed on the CBC by Stephen Quinn this morning.

I just want to say how much I appreciate what you are doing and that I think you are doing an excellent job. I feel that, especially now in these trying times, it is important to acknowledge the hard work of the men and women of the Vancouver Police Department.

Also, I want to support the continued usage of SLOs in schools. Our SLO, [name redacted] , at [redacted] in a vital support for many at-risk kids. She is amazing with our kids and we are lucky to have her.

I hope this email will be forwarded to Mr. Chow

Thank you kindly,

[name redacted]

Hello there, My experiences with Constable [name redacted] have been very positive. I met her officially when I started attending Running Club in Grade 10. She encourages her students to take their time and not give up when things get tough during practices and during our marathons. Early November of 2020, I was followed by a strange man and I immediately called the police to report this incident. I was thankful to talk to Constable [name redacted] about this situation because I was scared and glad she helped me stay safe. I believe having police officers in schools creates a much safer environment and us students are able to connect with them if we have questions about being police officers or law related topics. The School Liaison program is important to us students because they are role models to us and help us become better individuals.

Sincerely,
[name redacted]

To: the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver School Board, and the Vancouver School Board of Trustees,

I am writing to share the impact that Student Liaison Officers have had on me as a teenager and now as a young adult. My first few interactions with SLO's happened when my high school SLO approached me about doing the Vancouver Police Department Student Police Challenge, a two-week boot camp that consists of team-building exercises and realistic exercises that aspiring police officers receive during training. As a South Asian female, I was on the fence about doing this challenge since police officers tend to not be regarded in a positive light in the South Asian community and I wasn't sure how I felt about associating myself with such an organization. I decided to apply anyways because I was interested in working in the criminal justice system after applying for and finishing a bachelor's degree. It would be an understatement to say this experience changed my life and guided the next few years of my life as I felt driven towards achieving a goal. I am now a 23-year-old young adult who is one

semester away from finishing her undergraduate degree in Criminology with a various amount of work and volunteer experience under my belt because my previous SLO in particular, [names redacted] had continuously emphasized the importance of giving back to my community and volunteering my time. As someone who has worked for the VSB, I have firsthand seen the impact that [name redacted] has had at [redacted] by engaging youth and creating meaningful relationships with at-risk youth. His work has been valuable in becoming a part of the school community and immersing himself in school culture.

Upon finishing my degree, I aspire to apply to VPD to work as an officer because I want to represent the diversity in the communities that VPD polices. When VPD officers are placed in schools, students who have had negative experiences with police, especially Black and Indigenous students, are able to speak to officers and get a sense of what their roles consist of, which in turn reduces fear and opens doors for communication. I understand the intergenerational trauma that students of minority groups have experienced at the hands of police and given my position as someone from a South Asian background, I can only empathize with them and want to do better moving forward to ensure inclusive practices are implemented. This can only happen if students are able to openly interact with officers at a young age to diminish fear and foster comfort while simultaneously holding officers accountable and asking hard but necessary questions which results in growth. SLO's also have the power to influence students, especially students from ethnic minorities such as myself, to want to work with law enforcement agencies to diversify the force and be more representative of the community.

Had it not been for the SLO program, I would have still found it really intimidating to approach police officers and ask for help when I needed it. The SLO program and the officers who have been present in our schools have been nothing short of approachable, respectful, and encouraging towards the student body in my secondary school and because I have found my career path through the support of my SLO, I would want others to experience the same. The value of the SLO program is more than what is seen on paper, therefore it is extremely important to ensure minority groups are given the opportunity to communicate with officers perhaps with the goal of one day wanting to change the composition of policing.

Warmest Regards,

[name redacted]

Dear Chief Adam Palmer,

My name is [redacted] and I am writing this letter in support of keeping School Liaison Officers remaining in our schools throughout Vancouver and beyond. I am completing my 30th year in the field of education, 23 of them as a school administrator.

Both as a teacher and then an administrator I have always had a close relationship with our school SLO's. As an administrator I consider SLO's a part of our core executive team of administrators and counselors. Our SLO's play a crucial role not only in helping to keep our schools safe but in educating our students in what it means to be a good citizen.

Over the years I have sat in meetings with my school liaison officers as we settled disputes among students, solved crimes, prevented crimes, provided social and emotional support, mourned losses and celebrated successes. I could not have been nearly as an effective administrator in executing my duties without the support and participation of my school liaison officers.

One of the key roles of a school admin team is to provide a safe and caring environment where our students can learn and flourish. I have been a Vice Principal in all parts of the lower mainland. They all needed the support and involvement of our school liaison officers at different times. The key to the success of a school liaison officer is the same as the keys of success for an effective school administrator. Relationship and trust. That only comes with time spent in the community you serve. It can't be had with a 911 call and a well intended constable. When times were sketchy and yes, dangerous on the job, it was my SLO that I most leaned on for hour to hour, day to day support. They must remain in our schools. To withdraw them would lessen the safety of our students, our staff and our administrators. It would also remove the best opportunity we have to build a positive image of our police with our children. A positive image they deserve.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to share the importance and the significance that the school liaison officer has impacted my education, and my decision making during my high school career.

My first encounter with a school liaison officer was during the introduction of my 12th grade. I struggled during the first few months of my last year in high school. The unfortunate passing of my grandfather and the chaotic submissions to multiple colleges was mentally draining. I was puzzled and lost, but my school liaison officer was able to guide me and help make my last year of high school memorable.

I first met with Constable [name redacted] , my high school liaison officer, during my submission application for the Vancouver Police Department Student Challenge. She is easy to approach, extremely motivated, and is ultimately someone I look up to. Her encouragement to participate in the Vancouver Police Department Student Challenge helped me experience things I would

have never thought plausible in my last year of high school. Constable [name redacted] optimism further encouraged me to participate in [school name redacted] Running Club. The running club holds multiple morning runs every week and more competitive runs throughout the year. In the Spring of 2018, I completed my first half marathon. These experiences still seem surreal to me, especially to accomplish these goals before my high school graduation.

These accomplishments were only possible because of Constable [name redacted] , and the community of school liaison officers. Their motivation further encouraged me to confidently apply for a degree in Criminology at [name redacted]. I am currently in my third year of my degree, and after my studies, I look forward to pursuing a career in law enforcement.

Sincerely,
[name redacted]

Dear VSB Trustees, VPD, VSB,

My name is [redacted] , a former student of [redacted] Secondary. I graduated in June 2020. I believe that the School Liaison Officer program should remain in Vancouver Schools. While unfortunate and troubling that a number of students feel threatened by the presence of School Liaison Officers, that doesn't mean that the officers have intentions of intimidating the students.

Constable [redacted] was the School Liaison Officer for [redacted] Secondary School from 2017-18 to 2019-20. She also was the School Liaison Officer for [redacted] in the summer of 2018. Constable [redacted] was always willing to have a conversation with me while she worked. In her position, she was always welcoming, and never mistreated or directly intimidated any student. Constable [redacted] took part in school events, like the 2019 [redacted] , and even ate the salsa I made for the [redacted] Cinco De Mayo party the same year! More importantly, when I entered a mental health crisis in summer school, she was more than willing to talk with me about what was on my mind. Constable [redacted] made sure I had nothing on me that I could use against myself, and even accompanied me to the hospital. She made sure I was in good hands before departing. I have her to thank for making sure I wouldn't harm myself that day.

Another School Liaison Officer was present for my mental health crisis. Constable [redacted], current School Liaison Officer for [redacted] Secondary. Both Constables [redacted] were taking part in a charity run before coming across me. They chose to spend the time with me in the ambulance to the hospital. They gave up that part of their day to be there for me. I am forever grateful to them for helping me out of the darkest spot in my life.

That is my experience with the VPD School Liaison Officers, and the impact they had on

my life. I hope this will help in the decision making for the VPD SLO program.

March 1 2021

VSB

Delivered Via Email: vsbengage@argylepr.com

Regarding Cops in Schools

To whom it may concern regarding cops in schools

All people need to make a complaint to the Office of the Police Complaints Commission about cops in schools and to the Vancouver Police Board, as I have done for the poor handling of the Lord Byng racist video. It was the SLO that investigated the Lord Byng racist video and he was in conflict of interest and he determined this racist act should not result in a recommendation to Crown to approve charges for a clear breach of the Criminal Code of Canada. NO COPS IN SCHOOLS. This represents that the VPD and its SLO do not take racist acts seriously and SLO should not investigate crimes students commit.

On the race front it has been proven the VPD, like all police agencies operate under systemic racism even though chief Palmer denies this. Please refer to the article below regarding Palmer's comments. In context, we cannot have cops in schools with a chief who denies systemic racism exists in his police force. To contradict Palmer's claim see the article believe on the RCMP that refutes Palmer. And know that the VPD is no different in this matter then the RCMP.

To continue the SLO program we must have a leader in the VPD that will work to make the necessary changes. Without that, cops in schools must be stopped.

It will be a political decision no matter what the survey results are. Surveying students who are more intense on playing video games, texting and some who are intimidated by the police makes no sense.

It is up to our elected officials to determine policy and if they need surveys to do their job they should not run for office or be in office. Read the report by a former justice about the RCMP and what he found is the same in all police forces and I quote " RCMP tolerates 'misogynistic, racist, and homophobic attitudes: No Cops In Schools as they do more harm than good especially with a chief that denies systemic racism in his police force or in any police force across Canada. Let me quote what the chief of the VPD said or part of it 'VPD chief says the suggestion of systemic racism in Canadian policing is offensive. The head of the B.C. Civil Liberties called that an "appalling comment." Leaders are important. Until the leader of the VPD is replaced or accepts the research and acts to solve these problems his cops should not be in schools.

Lastly, cops carry guns and are the 'Police force'. The last thing we as a city should want is our students seeing and accepting that force is the correct way to handle conflict. The police represent force and there are plenty of examples of VPD officers using excessive force.

No cops in schools, as their modelling of force is detrimental to our students. As to gangs recruiting students into crime, the VPD must crack down on these gangs and cops in schools should not be part of their crack down. It is well known that cops do not stop crime but respond to crime.

Please include this letter in your report to the board on SLO in schools.

Yours truly,
[name redacted]
President/CEO

To the VSB Superintendent, VSB Trustees, and the VPD,

Hello, my name is [name redacted]. I recently heard that schools are planning to take away the constables in high schools. As a student who the constable at my school has guided, I was very upset to hear this. Upon hearing the news, I have decided to send out this message to hopefully be one of the students that may change your outlook on this situation.

I am a graduate student from [school name redacted] Secondary School. In December of my last year in high school, [subject matter redacted for sensitivity]. At first, I was hesitant to say anything to an adult until I told one of my trusted teachers at the school. After I had told her my story, she said that she had to tell the constable. I was afraid since I did not know what would happen. However, Constable [name redacted] has tremendously helped me throughout the entire process. She made me feel comfortable telling my story as well as carefully telling me the steps that I could take. Constable [name redacted] has also referred me to my family services worker who has also been a big help.

In the end, I decided to file a case. Constable [name redacted] has been very helpful and consistent in updating my family. I know many students think that after they graduate, the problem won't matter and they would not help you anymore. However, this is not the case. After graduating, Constable [name redacted] has continuously helped me out with the on-going case. Some students may think that constables are intimidating, however, this is not the case. They are there for a reason. They are there so that the staff and students' safety is ensured.

Around that time, my mental health suffered a lot and so did my grades. I highly doubted that I would be graduating from high school. I had a conversation with Constable [name redacted] and she told me "I'll be there cheering for you in the front row," and that is exactly what she did. I had tears in my eyes upon seeing her while walking down the halls during our covid

graduation. In my head, I was thinking, "I really hope that I made her proud." since then, Constable [name redacted] checks up on me and still updates me about the ongoing case.

Now, I have come to the end of my story. I hope that with this I can be a part of the reason why you would reconsider your decision. The constables at our schools ensure that we are safe not just physically, but mentally. Not only that, but they are also capable of establishing a good relationship based on mutual trust with the students. I sincerely hope that you will reconsider the final decision about this. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely, [name redacted]

Hello,

I apologize for being slightly past the due date for SLO input submissions. I hope that you will consider my thoughts albeit I am two days late.

I was a Vancouver Police Officer for 26 years. For three years I was a SLO. The years were incredible; I had countless positive interactions with students from many different backgrounds (areas of the country or the world, different ethnic groups, different circumstances, families, etc.). I could write a book on the positive experiences, in this email I will highlight a few.

1. Administered the Duke of Edinburgh award
2. Volunteered with the outdoor program and accompanied students on the west coast trail twice
3. Spoke about safe driving strategies for new drivers, spoke females about personal safety,
5. Started a "woman's only" hour at the weight room (it was the late 1990's and females were less comfortable going to the weight room then)
6. Gave information and offered prevention strategies for illicit drug use.
7. Spoke to female teachers who had personal safety concerns.
8. Was available to standby for Principals and Vice Principals (primarily at elementary schools) who were meeting with a volatile adult/parent, upon their request
9. Spoke at elementary schools to children and safety and when to call 911.
10. Spoke about a career in law enforcement upon request

The above are just a snapshot of the things that I and other SLO's do. There was a gang war at the time that I was a SLO. So, at that time I was helpful in reporting about activity around the school that may involve weapons and violence. My understanding is that "racism" is listed as one of the reasons that SLO's are not welcome in the future at Vancouver schools. From my own perspective, I don't know how, I could have been racist. There were so many different backgrounds and cultures. The students were not treated as suspects, or criminals. They were treated as students, unless legal intervention was necessary for the safety of the student body.

At my son's school; [school name redacted], the next SLO was supposed to be: Constable [name redacted], she is South Asian, female and she attended [school name redacted]. I could not think of a better role model for the students. During woodworking class the teacher asked by a show of hands how many students like having an SLO. My son said all of them raised their hands. They said that they feel safer with a SLO in school.

Do we not "call-out" and report poor behaviour in authority figures? I believe that this would be a viable way to keep the program going. How can one incident of racism, or one racist cop, or several racist cops end a program of this nature. The program has run effectively for decades.

A few months before I retired a young South Asian Police Officer stopped me and said: "Are you [name redacted]?" I told him that I was. He said: "My whole career I have wanted to meet you. You were my SLO when I was in grade one. You came and spoke to my class. You were so friendly and I decided that day that I would dedicate my life to helping and to being a Police Officer. I am very saddened that this opportunity for a Police Officer to connect in a positive way with students of all ages is being taken away from them.

Please consider allowing me to speak to the DPAC executive. I would like the opportunity to hear concerns and to share my experience.

[name redacted]

Hello! I am a mother of kids in elementary school and in High school. My kids have had positive experiences with the SLO program coming to their schools. Children today need to hear about what the police do, to learn about ways to have a safe society and to where to go when they are in trouble. I am an immigrant and we are very fortunate in this country to have a police system that is less corrupt than the vast, vast majority of places in the world. And not having the police would be way, way worse than to have it. Just today, my neighbour who goes to Fraser Academy fortunately got help from the police. Some people high on drugs started swearing and coming at the high school girls as they were getting a drink at Starbucks. The school called the police and they felt safer. We need the police... far more beneficial experiences with them that outweigh relatively few negative ones.

We should be finding ways to better our police force, not to get rid of their programs.

There will always be bad apples in every profession... we read of that in teachers, lawyers, celebrities, firefighters... even pizza makers in the news. But does that mean we should defund these professions? No. We need them and we can grow and implement better measures to prevent bad situations from arising.

We need the police. The police are the first responders to a broad range of public-safety issues and serious crime.

Let's help the next generation and build positive links between community and the police.

Sincerely

[name redacted]

Dear Argyle communications,

For my English class a few years ago, we read the Outsiders, by S.E. Hinton. When we had finished reading the book, a police officer came in and talked to us about gangs and the dangers that they come with. The officer helped teach us more about safety and what comes with the job of being a police officer. The officer had some really cool stories to tell us, about their work and the experiences they had. My whole grade enjoyed having this police officer come and speak to us. At the end of his presentation, there was a Q and A time, and many people were actively participating and asking questions. Having this offer come in was a very good experience and I hope that you will not defund this program so many other students can have the same experience that my grade did.

A few days ago my friend told me that there was a rough encounter at her school with some drug addicts and someone even got pepper-sprayed. She said that the police were called and things were handled well and everyone felt a lot safer. If we defund the police, they may not be able to respond to calls like these, and more people could have been injured. I hope that this email will help you realize that while there are some bad officers out there, there is also a lot of good being done, and we should focus on that, and work towards making sure everyone in the police force is as kind and helpful and the ones I've met and had encounters with.

I am writing this letter in support of the SLO program. I found it helpful and interesting when the police came to my school for educational purposes. My friends in this school also found it interesting. I hope future students will get a chance to learn about the police as well. It should be part of our education as citizens to learn about our society and to have good relationships with law and law enforcement.

[name redacted]

Student

February 19, 2021

Please accept this as a submission of my input to the review that is underway of the Vancouver School Board (VSB) School Liaison Officer (SLO) program.

I am opposed to the continuation of the SLO program. Full stop. I strongly urge the VSB to follow other school boards in Canada that have ended their equivalent programs.

As I've learned from listening to activists, academics, and authors that we need to consider a few key points:

- The first police forces in Canada were created to keep enslaved Black people enslaved as well as keeping Indigenous people segregated on reserves and separating Indigenous children from their families.
- There are countless studies that show that non-White people are disproportionately surveilled, suspended, and criminalized in programs such as the SLO one
- The presence of armed police officers is traumatizing for countless students, and likely staff and teachers as well

Additionally, the current MOU for this program gives the SLOs far too much access to student information as well as connecting that to networks of other policing systems - such as immigration enforcement.

We don't need police officers in the schools. We need counsellors and youth supports services for the children who need them.

While the program is funded by the VPD, the VSB is choosing who to partner with. They are choosing a partnership that doesn't align with their commitments to anti-racism and trying to diminish trauma being experienced by students. VSB's partnerships need to be ones that provide programming that enhances and advances the well-being of students; not harms them.

Studies have also shown that when school districts have programs like this, students are more likely to get disciplined by an SLO in cases where that discipline should have been more appropriately handled by educators.

All of this is critical for VSB trustees to consider but ultimately what matters most is that BIPOC students and families are telling VSB that they experience harm and trauma by the presence of SLOs. Period. Why would public education trustees want that on their watch?

Kyla Epstein
Parent, Van Tech Secondary
PAC Member

Hello,

My name is [name redacted] and I am a [redacted] at Hillcrest Centre. I would like to write this email in support of the SLO program with the Vancouver School Board. We ran a program that was geared to newcomer Filipino youth in the Riley Park/Tupper area. Please see below.

Rise Basketball is an after-school basketball program that is led by School Liaison Officers from the Vancouver Police Department and in Partnership with Youth Services at Hillcrest Centre. Piloted in the spring of 2018, Rise Basketball provides youth participants with an added avenue to seek out healthy, recreational activities and establish relationships with strong role models. In addition to full court basketball games, participants may also work on drills to practice specific plays/maneuvers. The purpose of this outreach and recreation program is to provide youth with the opportunity to practice and play the sport they love on a year- round basis, while helping to develop positive, informal relationships with police mentors and role models. Rise Basketball provides participants with not only access to an indoor court, but also opportunities for personal development, growth, and leadership.

Participants for the Rise Basketball program are recommended by teachers, support staff, administration and/or Vancouver Police Department School Liaison Officers on the basis of providing additional recreational programming. All participants must be students in grades 8 through 12 attending either John Oliver or Sir Charles Tupper Secondary. Preference is given to youth participants who may not have other recreational programming opportunities and/or are newcomers to Canada with limited knowledge of outreach and recreational activities. In addition to basketball, some program sessions also feature an educational speaker/ presenter who will share their knowledge and experience with participants in relation to their area of expertise. These short presentations are designed for youth and are meant to provide an introduction to important topics related to crime prevention, community safety and/or leadership. For example, the pilot period saw the Rise Basketball program partner with ICBC in order to provide participants with information regarding the dangers of driving under the influence and distracted driving. Future presenters and topics will vary, but each will be targeted to be of benefit and inspiration to the youth participants. At the end of each session, all participants share in a warm meal together in order to nourish the body after strenuous physical activity, as well as to build connectivity and community.

Hillcrest Community Centre has played in the evolution and growth of this program. During the pilot, the program was run out of the small gym at John Oliver Secondary and while we were incredibly grateful for the space, there is just no comparison between the two facilities. In addition to the beautiful new gymnasium, the use of the multipurpose/games rooms provides us with a separate space in which to accommodate speakers and host program meals, which vastly increases attentiveness and conversation without the distraction of the gym.

This program would not have been able to run without the support and dedication from Student Liaison Officers, Constable [name redacted] and Constable [name redacted]. There were able to identify a need for these newcomer youth and provided additional community connectedness and worked with myself to ensure this could happen. I highly support having

SLO's in our school systems to provide and build a positive relationship with students and the VPD.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Hi,

I hope all of you and your families are well. I am emailing you guys in regarding school liaison officer's. I believe it is crucial to keep the officer's in schools as I have personally witnessed bullying and fights take place and the school liaison was there to help!

I would kindly ask you guys to rethink your decision and ponder deeply on what benefit would it bring in taking away officers who keep the school environment safe.

[attached audio file]

Best,

Hassan

Hello,

I hope all is well. I am emailing you in regards to keeping school liaison officers in our schools. Please hear my thoughts in the video attached below.

It is critical to fully understand the impact School Liason Officer have in schools before making such a massive decision. This decision can have a major impact on many students, so please get a full understanding of how crucial liaison officers really are. Listen to the students who actually interact with School liaison officers! Not the few people who see them in the hallway and make assumptions and judge them.

[attached video file]

Thank you,

[name redacted]

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the Vancouver police program in elementary schools. These days, both children and adults are getting a host of opinions and viewpoints from both reliable and unreliable sources.

The Vancouver police school program provides a good view of the broad range of work that the police do and far beyond the typical stereotype portrayed in mass media.

It also provides an important link between our police force and the community.

When considering whether or not funding should continue for this program, please take these thoughts into consideration.

Regards,

[name redacted]

I have been an employee of the Vancouver School Board for over 20 years. My role of Youth and Family Worker affords me the opportunity to work and collaborate with a variety of VSB staff and community partners with the goal of supporting students and their families.

This feedback is from my experience of working directly and indirectly with the SLO program. Working and collaborating with the SLO program has often been integral to my role of supporting students and their families. My role often leads to knowledge of what may be going in the lives of students outside of school. I view the SLO as an important part of the school community and have experienced the SLO program to be a pro-active and invaluable program. The SLO's role is multifaceted to the VSB school community.

Given the confidential nature of my role I am unable to go into specific details of how the SLO has often been literarily a liaison - being a connecting link to students and their families in the midst of sometimes unfortunate situations and circumstances outside of school hours. Over the years in my role I am aware of officers who volunteer their time after hours to connect with students through sports and extra-curricular activities. The officers in the program are in the school to display a positive and supportive portrayal of law enforcement. Having the SLO's in the school is an opportunity for the school community to have positive contact and experience and hopefully not just viewing the police as law enforcement.

That positive influence starts in the elementary schools with presentations on road safety and internet safety. The SLO's are part of organizing and assisting with lock down drills to ensure the safety of all in the schools. Many students in the Elementary Schools look forward to the lunchtime basketball and volleyball matches between students and the SLO's. Pre-COVID 19 the SLO's show up during the Christmas Season to delivery Christmas hampers families. KOPS for Kids is a program spearheaded by the SLO's where they provided individual Christmas gift to

kids in the school community. I know of high school students who have joined the police cadets and have considered a future role in law enforcement and gone on to study criminology due to their contact and connection with the SLO. In the high school there have been students who graduate and later return to visit school staff and ask about the SLO and express gratitude of the SLO being a positive part of their educational experience.

I appreciate the fact that the VSB is willing to be sensitive to the current collective consciousness and concerns of the community and having the SLO's in schools. Indeed when we all have an opportunity to voice our lived experiences and know that our voices are being heard it sets the tone for all of us to live in a more welcoming diverse collective society. I am an individual who is a visible minority and I am fully aware of the angst of systemic racism. An important element of being in a progressive society is the ability to review, modify and adapt in order to enhance the quality of life for all. As we take part in this review process of the SLO's within the VSB it is my hope that it be recognize that the role of SLO is seen as a valuable segment to the safety and well being of all in the school community. In the midst of any adaptation or modification that may be required to the SLO role it is my hope that we do not throw out the "proverbial baby with the bath water".

Thank you

[name redacted]

Dear Argyle reviewers and Trustees,

I strongly support the disbanding of the SLO program and the removal of VPD officers from schools.

The SLO program is a constituent element of the structural racism faced by Black and First Nations students.

The VPD's history of racism and harm to Black and First Nations students is a tragedy. Removing the SLO program is an important first step in showing Black and First Nations students and families that we are serious about acknowledging the harm that has been done and preventing future harm.

In addition the SLO program causes harm to LGBTQ students and disabled students. More so when more than one of these target identities intersect.

Neuro-atypical and mentally ill students in meltdown are endangered by intervention by a police officer - such interventions (for example prone restraint) have resulted in the deaths of autistic children.

This week I saw an email from a VPD officer arguing the benefits of the SLO program and encouraging parents to write to you in support of the program. She wrote that the SLO program is important for children to know that the police are a resource that they can depend on when they're in need. There are other ways to go about this, and we know that for many in our population this is a not a truth.

This failure to acknowledge the reasons for the campaign against the SLO program encapsulates why it should go - the VPD are not serious about taking substantive steps to address structural racism.

Please show our Black and First Nations, LGBTQ and Disabled students and families that the VSB is listening to them and their fears for their children at the hands of police officers and get police out of our schools.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Hello there,

My name is [name redacted] and I'm a resident of Vancouver East. I wanted to write to you to let you know that I absolutely do not support the School Liaison Officer (SLO) Program in our schools.

We do not need a school-to-prison pipeline here in Vancouver or anywhere in Canada. These types of programs always tend to disproportionately harm BIPOC students the most, when we should be doing everything we can to support their education and empower them to succeed. It is hard enough in a majority white country - built undoubtedly on enslaved people, indigenous genocide and white supremacy - for people of colour to thrive, without being subjected or targeted by racist policies like SLOs while they're only children trying to get a decent education. We know that a solid education is a major indicator of success in our society, and I do not support any initiative aimed at, or with the side effect of, stripping any vulnerable racialized group of this opportunity.

I am writing to you to ask you to please end the SLO program and remove police from our schools. This only furthers racism and injustice, neither of which should have any place in our civilized society.

Thank you,

[name redacted]

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a BIPOC high school teacher working for the VSB for over 20 years, I would like to express my thoughts on the SLO topic so far. I've attached the contents of an open online document below, that allows people to enter verifiable facts about SLOs in our community in an objective and respectful manner. It feels like people are picking sides on the topic and talking to like-minded people, which is generating a sense of fear and hostility. The online document is an attempt to let people state points, ideas or questions about the topic and let the reader come to their own conclusions.

I believe that people in the schools are doing their best to support a safe and positive school & community environment. It is heartbreaking to hear that there are students who have negative reactions when they see an SLO in a school. One option is to remove the SLOs completely from the Vancouver schools. However, after speaking to people who work closely with SLOs (counsellors, Indigenous workers, and admin) they had the same message. They would like to keep the SLOs in the schools. This has led me to believe that keeping the SLOs in our schools is important.

The fact that the administrators, counsellors and the Indigenous worker at my school (and others) were on the same page and felt strongly that we should keep the SLO program, influenced my decision to support the SLO program. The more people I speak to who have actually worked with the SLOs directly, the message stays the same, keep the SLO program.

I spoke to 3 Indigenous women who have all worked in the VSB for decades and in different roles (counsellor, admin, Indigenous worker). They all said that, yes there were issues with policing outside of the school, and yet they would like to keep the SLO program. They saw the SLOs helping students and tried to keep them out of the criminal justice system. One of them told me that people did not want to hear that message [and felt marginalized]. Yes, not all BIPOC students (teachers or VSB employees) have negative reactions towards SLOs, though they are not vocal, this should be considered. Due to the political climate, they are scared to speak out. There is a majority at my school in the BIPOC community who are fine with the SLO in our school. These are some of the things that I've heard about the SLOs:

- how BIPOC girls who participate in programs that are offered by the VPD have their confidence strengthened in a way that they will carry it forward for the rest of their lives
- Indigenous students who can see the SLO in a positive light and how special it is because of their interactions with the SLO at the school
- how you cannot repair/build a relationship if one of the members (SLO) is not present

- how a BIPOC student experienced a horrific crime committed by another student and only wanted to talk to the SLO officer because of the trust that was built
- how an SLO officer would prevent a [BIPOC] student from entering the criminal system and helped that student down a different path (where a non-SLO may not know the student well enough or to take the time to recommend alternatives and end up processing them into the criminal justice system)
- how a school that does not have an SLO officer would like one

I could understand suspending the SLO program, if there was an issue that was being experienced at all VSB high schools and in a manner that concerned counsellors, administrators, or Indigenous workers to stand up and speak out against it. However, this is not happening. The movement to suspend the SLOs seems political. Points that I've heard against it, refer to incidents that occur outside of the Vancouver SLO program. People are projecting VPD/RCMP issues, or even things that are happening in the United States onto the Vancouver SLOs. I believe that it is misdirected to suspend the SLO program due to policing issues that are outside of it. Those issues should be addressed directly with those policing organizations. To put all students' safety at risk for a political statement seems reckless, especially when this service is not costing the VSB any money. This is very concerning to me and the people I spoke to. There are real threats to students' safety within our schools.

Some are only focusing on Black and Indigenous students when other students could have similar reactions to SLOs for different reasons. I understand that there are issues, and at the same time to discriminate like that again marginalizes the other BIPOC people. It ranks certain people's emotions as more important than others, which I find discriminatory. Not all Black and Indigenous students or staff have negative reactions to SLOs. Again, it seems more political than really trying to help the students and the community.

I do not see the SLO policing the students. We do not go through metal detectors, the SLO does not walk into the classrooms and arrest students, or walk up and down the halls intimidating or harassing people. As a BIPOC person, I have found the SLOs that worked at my school to all be approachable. Some of the research brought up to support the removal of SLOs does not pertain to schools in Vancouver, they are often references from the United States or Toronto. It is very important to distinguish which ones apply to the Vancouver community and which do not. A petition to suspend the SLO program had about 3000 digital signatures contained references that applied elsewhere like the States or Toronto. This is misleading people and concerning.

If there are students who are having a negative response to the SLO officers, then we need to look at that and find a way to help these students, without putting students' safety at risk. As those feelings could negatively affect their wellbeing. Students should be safe and feel safe at school.

I recognize that there are issues with policing in Canada and changes need to occur. I see the Vancouver SLO program as something that is working in our community to help our students in different ways. If there are issues with the Vancouver SLO program, then I prefer that we look at modifying the program and making adjustments rather than removing it from the schools. I see the Vancouver SLO program as a bridge between the VPD and our community that allows us to build trust and understanding from both sides. Student safety is very important. The SLO is there to protect everyone in the school. A strong majority of teachers and counsellors at my school would like to keep the SLO program. If students have a negative emotional response to an SLO, then those students should have support to communicate that and address it in an inclusive and restorative justice manner. If additional supports need to be implemented, then add them, but do not remove the SLO program.

[name redacted]

Hi there,

I am e-mailing to share my thoughts on the SLO program as a VSB teacher. I believe the program has great value, and I have witnessed the great effects it has had in my own school, [school name redacted]

From colleagues, I have heard about the immense positive impact that the SLO program has had on our school historically. There were very serious issues at [school name redacted] decades ago, including gang violence. Many of my colleagues share that the presence of an SLO helped to make school a safer place for students and staff.

Granted, this was long before my time. All I can really share is my own experience. For many years, [school name redacted] was lucky to have Cst. [name redacted] as our SLO. Our community was heartbroken when he retired, as he was a huge, very positive part of our community. [name redacted] was roaming the halls all the time, but not in a patrolling or authoritative way. His style was proactive, never reactive. He was so good-humoured and knew many of our students (and staff) extremely well. He always had a smile on his face and did not take himself too seriously - this really helped him connect with our kids.

With the courses I teach, I often get to know students who face challenges, both academically and in their personal lives. Kids that get sent to the principal's office or are labelled "difficult" by some. [name redacted] **knew** these kids. He could level with them, joke around with them, and they listened. He was known, very affectionately, as "Gilly" by many of them. He impacted their lives in a positive way.

When SLOs embody the qualities that [name redacted] does, they can do amazing things for a community. They need to be thoughtfully chosen - not everyone is meant for this unique and very special position. It makes me sad to think that not all experiences with SLOs have been as positive as ours.

Ultimately, in this climate, I think that getting rid of the SLO program sends a dangerous message. The police are not going anywhere. If we take the SLO program out of schools, we are affirming to teenagers, to very impressionable young adults, that the police should not be trusted. How is that productive? What dangerous situations might arise from suggesting this? When a young person witnesses an overdose, might they be scared to call 911? When a teenager sees a family member being abused, might they hope the problem will solve itself?

I am not saying that our justice system is perfect - it isn't. But can't we focus our efforts on fixing what is broken, all while listening and attending to the needs of our most vulnerable learners?

I am happy for you to quote this email, if need be, but I would prefer to stay anonymous . Thank you.

[name redacted]

Hello,

I am writing to share my point of view on the SLO Program for schools. I was fortunate enough to have a great experience with this program and am so thankful for the support my Constable gave me.

I went to [school name redacted] grade 8-10 and then [school name redacted] grade 11 and 12. I believe I only met the Constable at [school name redacted] once but he was not really present and didn't have much connection with the students. The transition from [school name redacted] to [school name redacted] was quite a change for me and having Constable [name redacted] really helped me get through this change. He created multiple programs at our school such as a ball hockey team for students who needed an outlet and connection with other students/authority (other police officers). We also had the Mental Health Peer to Peer Club which was a club that would learn about different mental health issues that you might see among other classmates and go to Elementary schools in the area to teach grade 6-7 students this as well.

I have kept in close contact with the officers I met including [name redacted] and they have also helped guide me career wise now that I am well out of high school.

I can understand the argument to discontinue this program however I truly believe the pros outweigh the cons. This program gave me a lot of insight into the 'real world' and gave me so many wonderful opportunities that have helped me to this day. I remember we did a walk

around Hastings Eastside Downtown Vancouver and now I work in Mental Health with Fraser Health. I'm sure that without that experience, I wouldn't have much interest in this field.

I believe that if the Officer has a genuine interest in making connections with the students, the upcoming students entering our schools will appreciate the connection.

If you would like any further information from myself, please feel free to email back or give a call on my cell at [number redacted]

Thank you,
[name redacted]

SLO REVIEW

I would like to share my thoughts regarding the VSB SLO program from two perspectives: as a parent of a student of colour in the VSB and as a high school counsellor in the VSB.

I am the parent of an adopted child of colour. We adopted our daughter from Zambia in 2012 and she is a student in the VSB. Her journey as a student of colour within the VSB hasn't been easy as she is easily identifiable as "other", she's always the different one. She has been blessed by compassionate teachers who want to make sure that she is comfortable, safe and included in the classroom, as all kids should be.

Last year, when the Black Lives Matter movement started in the US, we had many conversations in our home about the unjust treatment of people based on their skin colour. We talked about the incidence of systemic racism within various societal structures in Canada and the US and how this impacts people of colour. Watching media reports of the injustice and violence that was happening in the US was very difficult for our family. Our daughter internalized that because of her skin colour, she would be treated differently by the police. A new fear of police took hold as a result of what she was seeing on the media. When police cars drive by us, she ducks down in the car, or if we are walking and she sees police, she hides behind me. As a parent, this is distressing to see this kind of behaviour as a result of media influence. In the hopes of undoing her thinking, my strategy is to create a different experience for her so that she knows that what she sees on tv does not necessarily have to be her experience. When we walk by police, I engage them in conversation to show her that they are real people who care about others. When we are driving, I tell her that they are not interested in her because we are not doing anything wrong. I want her to know that the police are a helpful resource within the community and not something to be feared.

The notion of removing police from her experience because of a media induced fear seems irrational to me. I want her to know that just like her teachers, the Liaison Officer is another caring adult within the building who is there to encourage and support her. For her, having

exposure to the Liaison Officers is essential to her understanding of them as community members who are not to be feared. They are someone you talk to when you need help. They are a mentor, an encourager, a supporter, a coach and a valuable resource within our school community. They provide students with a human version of police and demystify the role of the police officer within our society. I want my daughter to have this experience. To rob her of this human interaction, this opportunity for mentorship, this exposure to a compassionate adult, in my mind, seems like the wrong approach. For her, a lack of experience with the police will only exacerbate her idea of what police are all about and how they might respond to her. As a parent of a student of colour, I want her to encounter the Liaison Officer within her school and know that they care about her just like they care about any other student regardless of her skin colour.

I have been a school counsellor for over 20 years. I started my career in SD43 (Coquitlam). My first school was in Port Moody right beside the Port Moody Police Station. Our relationship with the Port Moody Police was so helpful. They were in and out of our building all the time because we were so close. They knew our students, they knew the community, and they were a great resource to us as educators and amazing mentors for our students because they were so present and they knew the students. It was a great example of what the liaison officer program could be.

After several years, I moved to a high school in Coquitlam, as RCMP jurisdiction. At the beginning of my tenure there, we had a Liaison Officer program with the RCMP which was also really good. Our Liaison Officer was very connected to our Youth Worker and they often sat together counselling students and speaking into their lives. As educators, we benefitted from this close relationship with our Liaison Officer because we would often find out things that were going on in our community that impacted our students. This helped us to meet students where they were at, address their needs (both social and educational) and helped us keep them in our school and attending to their education. Our Liaison Officer was so good with the students and was a real mentor and resource for them.

Unfortunately, the RCMP cancelled the Liaison Officer program and after many years of a fantastic relationship with the Coquitlam RCMP, we were left with nothing. If we had a problem, we simply had to call 911 and if we were lucky, we would get whatever patrol officer was in the neighbourhood. This officer had no connection to our school, did not know our community and did not know our students. If we were unlucky, and it was a busy day, we would not be able to get any help. As a school this was not only a loss for us as educators, but a loss for our students who had come to rely on the relationship they had with our Liaison Officer. We were all left with nothing. There is no substitute for relationship.

After 15 years in SD43, I moved into the VSB. I started out at [school name redacted] where our Liaison Officer had an office and was available to us almost on a full-time basis. He knew all of our students, he knew their families, he knew the neighbourhood. I would often find students hanging out in his office shooting the breeze, seeking advice and taking advantage of that

opportunity for connection with a caring adult. It was common for him to go out into the neighbourhood to bring students to school, or we would do a home visit to try to encourage a student to come back to school, or I would find him supervising in the fitness room after school, or coaching a team. This is where the relationships with students were built. This is where the process of demystifying the police happens. This is where the experience of police as a community member and caring adult happens. This is where they make the difference in the lives of students.

I have witnessed this kind of relationship building in each of my schools over my 10+ years in the VSB all over the city, eastside and westside. In every case, our Liaison Officer seeks to connect with students on a meaningful level. They want to make a difference in the lives of students. They want to help guide, support, advise students when they get into tricky situations. I have had Liaison Officers accompany students to court to sit with them when they are nervous giving witness testimony. They met beforehand at school, talked through what would happen, what the day would look like, and tried to do everything to help prepare the student for the court experience so that it was less stressful. I have watched Liaison Officers speak to kids when their homelife is in turmoil and compassionately give them options and advice. They have spoken into the lives of students who are not making good choices and tried to steer them back and help them re-prioritize in order to make better choices. They have helped my students navigate dangerous assault cases and have been nothing but compassionate and caring.

In all of these experiences, the Liaison Officer has approached the student, not based on the colour of their skin but as a person whose life is in the midst of a tricky situation. The student has needed an advocate, mentor, advisor because of their circumstance and the Liaison Officer has been that person for them. I've had several students of colour, over the years, turn to a career in the policing because of the difference the Liaison Officer has made in their lives. Now, these students want to give back to the community in the same way. I can't help but think back to my SD43 days when I didn't have the resource of the RCMP Liaison Officer. I think about how my students in the VSB would not have had access to the support that we are so fortunate to have with our Liaison program. As I found out in SD43, when there is no longer a Liaison Officer program, there is no alternative.

In my mind, one way to enhance the Liaison Officer program is to expand it, not disband it. I believe that if the Liaison Officer was more present their positive impact would be more widespread. They would have the opportunity to speak into more lives, mentor more students, create more change. At present, because our Liaison Officer has so many schools, they only come to the school when there is an issue. This always raises the antennae of the student population. I believe that if we had more access to our Liaison Officer and they were able to be more present and more visible in the school, we could effectively dismantle and demystify the role of the police in our society for all students.

This is what I hope for my daughter, that she would have the opportunity to see and interact with the Liaison Officer on a personal level and know that she will be treated as a person of

value, regardless of her skin colour. This is what I hope for all of my students, that they would have the opportunity to be known by a caring adult who can speak into their lives and this has been my experience with each and every one of the Liaison Officers I have had the pleasure to work with in the VSB. I humbly ask you to save this valuable program for the students of the VSB so that they have the benefit of the program that I have seen over my 20+ years as a School Counsellor.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Hi there,

Hope you are well.

Am writing to provide input re: the SLO program as a concerned step-parent of an Indigenous student, as well as an educator of over 20 years.

Am wondering why armed police officers are still stationed in our schools, when there is no data that proves that their presence is beneficial in any way? Am also wondering why the VSB seem to think that it is ok to have officers who have no specialized youth or long-term anti-racism training, and who represent an overtly racist system, to be carrying weapons around our children? Whose interests are they supposed to be protecting?

Toronto, Peel, Hamilton and Edmonton have all suspended their SLO programs. They did so to respect the safety of BIPOC student, staff and teachers. Why has Vancouver not followed suit? There has been no dreaded spike in crime since these school districts suspended the SLO program. In fact,

"Following the termination of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), student suspensions dropped by 24% in just one year. This indicated 1,774 fewer suspensions than the previous year. With this, expulsions decreased by 53%, decreasing by a total of 34."

Black and Indigenous community members have very clearly voiced their desire for this program to be terminated, yet the VSB has repeatedly chosen to censor and disregard their voices, as well as the thousands of concerned citizens who have signed petitions and written letters to trustees demanding that the program be immediately suspended. Where is the justice in this? And more importantly, where is the Racial Justice in this?

To think that next year when my step-daughter starts high school, she will have to walk down a hallway where an armed officer will be watching her and her friends is beyond gruesome for me. I find it obscene that the police, who have been the main henchmen of genocide against Indigenous Peoples in these unceded Indigenous territories, are now going to be surveilling her in a place where she is supposed to feel safe, welcomed and included.

Shame on the VSB and the VPD for refusing to listen to the voices of BIPOC communities, and shame on the VSB for not introducing any additional educational requirements or safety protocols for the SLO officers still stationed in our schools, despite covid, over the last 7 months that we have been waiting for this sham "review" to take place.

Have you stopped to think about how it might feel for Indigenous students who have family members that were forced to attend residential "schools" to have armed VPD or RCMP officers stationed in their present-day schools?

In the name of true Reconciliation, please suspend the SLO program immediately. If not for your own consciences, then for our children, whose best interests you are supposed to be protecting.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Hi VSB Trustees,

Why is an all-white PR company involved? BIPOC communities have already been very clear with the VSB that the SLO program endangers BIPOC students. SLO doesn't need PR, or for action to be delayed with pointless consultation, it needs to be cancelled immediately. By keeping police in schools, the VSB is at this point knowingly failing to provide a safe learning environment for racialised students. Stop dehumanising BIPOCs by making us jump through hoops or re-live trauma to prove we deserve safety. You already know better, now it's your responsibility to do better: cancel the SLO program immediately, stop inviting police to schools, and engage BIPOC communities to create a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety for all students.

Thanks,

[name redacted]

Dear trustees,

I am writing once again to ask for the immediate termination of the SLO program in Vancouver schools, and to end the silencing of black and indigenous voices.

Canadian police forces were originally created to oppress indigenous and black peoples. To this day, police violence and racial profiling continues to disproportionately effect black and indigenous Canadians. The Vancouver police department has a long and violent history with black and indigenous communities. From 2008-2017 15% of police street checks preformed by Vancouver police involved indigenous peoples, despite indigenous people making openly 2% of the Vancouver population. In 2018 data shows that Fifteen percent of fatal police encounters in British Columbia had an indigenous victim, while only 6.6% of the British Columbian population is indigenous. This data also shows Nine percent of fatal police encounters had a black victim, while less than 1% of the British Columbia population is

black([addresshttps://www.pivotlegal.org/anti_black_racism_in_policing](https://www.pivotlegal.org/anti_black_racism_in_policing))

A police system that was created in the name of such oppression, and continues to harm Black and Indigenous communities in Vancouver, throughout the province, and across Canada has no place in Vancouver schools. As a student at a Vancouver School, I want all of my peers to be able to learn in a safe environment, and the SLO program prevents many students from having a safe learning environment.

Black and indigenous students and communities are put at risk because of racist police system, and I urge you to prioritize their voices while the review of the SLO program continues. As leaders in our communities, I urge you to be the positive change we need.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear trustees,

I am writing once again to ask for the immediate termination of the SLO program in Vancouver schools, and to end the silencing of black and indigenous voices.

Canadian police forces were originally created to oppress indigenous and black peoples. To this day, police violence and racial profiling continues to disproportionately effect black and indigenous Canadians. The Vancouver police department has a long and violent history with black and indigenous communities. From 2008-2017 15% of police street checks preformed by Vancouver police involved indigenous peoples, despite indigenous people making openly 2% of the Vancouver population. In 2018 data shows that Fifteen percent of fatal police encounters in British Columbia had an indigenous victim, while only 6.6% of the British Columbian population is indigenous. This data also shows Nine percent of fatal police encounters had a black victim, while less than 1% of the British Columbia population is

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able to learn in a safe environment, and the SLO program prevents many students from having a safe learning environment.

Black and indigenous students and communities are effected by an unjust police system every day, and their voices must be prioritized while the review of the SLO program continues. As leaders in our communities, I urge you to be the positive change we need.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Superintendent Hoffman,

Please demonstrate that the Vancouver School Board acts with integrity and transparency by:

1. Ceasing the School Liaison Officer program, and
2. Engage with Black and Indigenous communities and parents to create programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students

To date, the VSB has acted in ways that demonstrate you are not committed to anti-racist practices:

1. Students, parents and Black and Indigenous community members have been loudly asked to be consulted by Argyle yet they have not be contacts. Is VSB actively silencing Black and Indigenous communities?
2. VSB contracted out the consultation process to an organization that holds a White leadership team on an issue that directly impacts the Black community. Is the VSB determined to uphold racism?
3. Many community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting. Is the VSB afraid of hearing the truth about their racism?

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Dear Argyle reviewers and Trustees,

I strongly support the disbanding of the SLO program and the removal of VPD officers from schools.

The VPD's history of racism and harm to Black and First Nations students is an inexcusable tragedy and removing the SLO program is an important first step in showing Black and First Nations students and families that we are serious about acknowledging the harm that has been done and preventing future harm.

The SLO program was founded on a racist premise and is a constituent element of the structural racism faced by Black and First Nations students.

In addition to perpetuating structural racism, the SLO program causes harm to LGBTQ students and disabled students. More so when more than one of these target identities intersect.

Neuro-atypical and mentally ill students in meltdown are endangered by ham-fisted intervention by a police officer - such interventions (for example prone restraint) have resulted in the deaths of autistic children.

This week I saw an email from a VPD officer arguing the benefits of the SLO program and encouraging parents to write to you in support of the program. She wrote that the SLO program is important for children to know that the police are a resource that they can depend on when they're in need. This officer's complete failure to acknowledge the reasons for the campaign against the SLO program encapsulates why it should go - the VPD are not serious about taking substantive steps to address structural racism, if it is even possible to effectively do so given the history and culture of policing.

Please show our Black and First Nations, LGBTQ and Disabled students and families that the VSB is listening to them and their fears for their children at the hands of police officers and get police out of our schools.

Yours faithfully,

[name redacted])

Social media, a realm that heavily encompasses creating connections and forming new friendships, memes, keeping up with current events and news, and most importantly, a platform in which is used to view and to express our political views. Over these five years in which I have been actively tuning into social media, I have witnessed the aggravation of systemic racism, especially in America, where police brutality is predominantly affecting the black community. This is a perennial issue which supports the failing and the corrupt system, as we know how the union will always seek loopholes to protect those of authorities. For instance, the four police and the killers of George Floyd, were not held accountable for their actions until the outburst of rage from the media, following a peaceful protest.

This is just one incident and the epitome of the failure of the system, I can assure you there are dozens of similar incidents where injustice continues, such as the Breonna Taylor incident, where it had taken them months to terminate the two officers responsible, even after millions of petitions being signed and the news report. This is the epitome of how flawed the justice system is, and it is infuriating for anyone to have to consistently hear about the deaths of innocent lives being taken away.

Now, when we discuss the issues and the presence of cops in school, there are reasons why many students refute the idea of their attendance. One of them is intimidation, seeing the officer in uniform, equipped with weapons, such as a gun, and because of the consistent reports of police brutality on the news. When we look at the roles of the SLO program in Vancouver which are: counsel and talk informally with students, work to enhance the safety and security of the school, coach teams, join clubs and escort field trips , investigate criminal offences relating to the school and its population ,serve as a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system. (Source:Vancouver.ca) . I'll like to ask, are they really doing their roles? Are they serving their purpose? If not, which is the reality, then why are they still here, present in our school? Vancouver, or in general, Canada has little to no reports of gun violence in contrast to our neighbouring country, The United States. We are aware of the issues happening in America, particularly how often the occurrence of gun violence happens at schools, however, that is not a conventional nor a reported incident here in Canada. The crime rates are astronomically lower, and I have not heard nor been aware of any incidents within years of there being violence at school, where police must stand at guard and protect the students. The SLOs at school in fact, are essentially causing more harm than good, especially with how they can further provoke anxiety for BIPOC students.

For instance, the most recent report of authority exploiting their power, immorally and physically hurting a student, was reported on the news in Kissimmee, Florida. This happened in January, 2021, where a video shows that a sheriff slams a black female student who reportedly had a verbal altercation with the officer, being slammed to the concrete, leaving her unconscious and those around here tormented in witnessing the situation. The officer said that the student, now identified as Taylor Bracey, 16, was "not complying to orders," but the footage shows his horrendous tactic in dealing with the situation. The Osceola sheriff officer claimed that she was "fine," but she now suffers from memory loss, headaches, sleep deprivation, and blurry vision, according to her mother. Despite there being concrete evidence of what the police had done to the student, the consequence of his action was only to be on paid leave, which means he was not fired nor held accountable to the fullest extent.

This form of action is appalling, yet the officer is not punished for what he had done, even with

there being evidence showing the student being slammed head first into the ground, and violently treated by the cop. This was highly unjustifiable, and anyone who has to see the video surfacing on the media, would be revolted, simply because the system remains and allows bad cops to continue their "duty."

There are alternatives, such as a paralegal, who can better guide students and assist them with questions regarding the law. Students should not feel intimidated at school, and the environment must feel safe for them. With the continuation of the SLO program and the news reports on police brutality, and the fact that many students are uncomfortable in an atmosphere with their presence, we must create change. The system will not change if student voices are not being heard or considered, thus the reason why we are having this discussion in the hopes of change, now.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

The tragic death of George Floyd and many other Black people such as Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Elijah McClain,... has shown us the cruel and vile reality that not only Black people but also Indigeous and people of colors' communities are living in. Police brutality has long been a problem that we all know but choose to ignore; and the voices of the BIPOC community regarding this problem have also been silenced and oppressed. Witnessing the violence that police brought upon the BIPOC communities, I feel scared and infuriated by those vile actions. Scared of the heinous actions that the police can bring upon innocent citizens, infuriated that this has been going too long without anyone putting a stop to this.

School is supposed to be a safe and welcoming place to help you prepare you for the future and help you become the best version of ourselves; but with the presence of police, school becomes a place where BIPOC students feel that they have to be in a state of constant fear and always worry for the worst. The presence of police in school makes students' lives, especially BIPOC students' lives, more stressful than it already has been. Not only do we not offer to help relieve some of the trauma that students carry, but we also help adding to it.

This is why I am writing this letter with a proposal of removing the SLO program from the school board. This program, with no record of who or how it is running for the last 49 years, has proved to not fulfill its tasks which is to build connections with the school community. There are better and more positive alternatives to the program we could help implement in school to make all students feel safe and comfortable, such as hiring a paralegal to offer legal support or a police rep, who is not present in school and we can call on to ask for input on students. By eliminating the programs, we can bring real positive changes to the school environment.

I strongly demand the board remove the SLO program so that me, along with other students, can feel safe and comfortable when we are at school.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Please accept my letter in support of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) School Liaison Officer's (SLO) continued involvement within Vancouver Schools.

I have two children in elementary school in Vancouver and I feel that it is very important to for them to interact with police. I feel that it is important because it teaches them that police are approachable and are there to help members of the community.

Through the years my daughters have come home excited talking about how they were able to play hockey with police officers at lunch time. My oldest daughter was taught rugby by off duty Vancouver Police Officers and they even arranged for local tournament between the schools. My daughter's school have also partnered with the VPD running a pediatric cancer fundraiser in the form of a pancake breakfast. Each of my daughters have received street safety and internet safety talks from the VPD.

I believe that separating the SLOs from the Vancouver schools will have a negative result for our children. We need children to know that they can trust the police and can go to them if they are in trouble. By excluding these casual everyday interactions, the children may be too intimidated or nervous to approach or call the police when they truly need help.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

February 18, 2021

Argyle Communications
vsbengage@argylepr.com

Attention: Vancouver School Board Trustees/Superintendents,

I am writing you today to express the importance of keeping the Vancouver Police Department's (VPD) School Liaison Officers (SLO) inside the Vancouver School system.

My two daughters go to [school name redacted] and have benefitted from the VPD's involvement with the school. The SLO's and other VPD officers have attended my children's classrooms to discuss both street and internet safety. VPD and other Law Enforcement partners participated with my daughter's school to fundraise for Cops for Cancer through a pancake breakfast. The riders even attended the school on the last day of their tour to thank the children for their support. Prior to COVID, the VPD Neighbourhood Police Officers ran a lunch hour sports lunchtime activity for interested children twice a month.

My daughters know that when they are in danger, they can call the police for help. My daughters feel comfortable talking to police officers and wave and smile at passing police cars. I know that when they go to high school, they will feel comfortable approaching the SLO if they are dealing with complicated issues like cyberbullying.

I feel reassured in this knowledge because of the community and relationship building that the VPD have done with their elementary school. These positive early interactions with police will serve them well as they develop through adolescence and into adulthood.

I implore you not to remove the Vancouver Police SLO program from the Vancouver School system, it is too important of an initiative to lose.

Thank you for your consideration,

[name redacted]

Good day,

It has unexpectedly been brought to my attention regarding the recent Vancouver School Board (VSB) decision to consider the removal of Vancouver city police officers assigned as School Liaison Officers (SLOs) from Vancouver schools. I had also been informed that VSB had contracted your agency, Argyle Communications, as a third-party consultant to review the Vancouver Police Department's (VPD) SLO program and that Argyle was seeking public input on the matter. For the other VSB Trustees/Superintendents CC'd on my distribution list, I was also advised to forward this input to you. This brings me to the purpose of why I am contacting you, which is to provide meaningful insight from my own very personal involvement with the VPD's SLO program 20 years ago. Hopefully it will assist in the VSB's decision making process on this issue and result in a positive outcome for both the SLO program and VSB students so that it can continue to be of benefit to those students and educational staff alike as well as the greater community.

The SLO program was a positive and largely impactful aspect of my high school coming of age experience which affected the direction of my life 20 years ago as a young teenager. It directly served a very influential role in shaping my character as a developing young man, and established the foundation for the personal decision making which led to me becoming the person that I am today. To describe who I am in present times would involve several personal and professional labels, especially given the decades of time that have passed since my experience with the program. The one that is most relevant is that I am a former graduate of a VSB school; specifically, [school name redacted] Secondary, Class of 2001.

When I look back at my formative years in high school, it is with fondness, nostalgia, and sometimes a desire to go back in time and relive that chapter. At the same time, I also cannot

help but shake my head at the impressionable innocence and naivety of the adolescent version of myself that I could barely call a young man. Perhaps that is why I have a desire to rewrite my high school history. We all learn as we mature, and as we progress through life, it really is a never-ending continuous learning process. While I am only grateful to the educators I was privileged enough to have been schooled under, I also have to say that regardless of how gifted they were at delivering their academic material and ensuring that it was understood by their students - perhaps even very successfully - , there are limitations. Teachers are typically bound by their subjects and for the most part remain within those boundaries. Classes are based upon whatever subject they are categorized under and this is reflected in the curriculum. These statements are obviously evident, however the point I am about to make is that while the education system has structured school in a very organized and thoroughly thought-out manner, there is no class or curriculum specifically focused on how to develop successful people/social skills, how to develop character, how to determine your personal values, or how to become the adult that a young teenager yearns to mature into as well as the path and life obstacles involved with that. In short there is no formal education on how to be a person.

When I attended [school name redacted], our school was blessed with various resources. Each grade had a counsellor that remained with that overall class until it graduated. We had a careers advisor, and we had a course we had to take during some years/terms called Career and Personal Planning (CAPP). I would even say that generally speaking our teachers served as positive role models for the most part. I am grateful for having benefited from those resources and people, but they did not directly develop my value system, give me confidence and make me any less shy, they did not help me come out of my shell any more than anything else did, they did not help me become any less socially awkward, and the list goes on. These social and personal aspects are largely left up to the individual to develop outside of class, whether that is with peers, family, extracurricular activities, or any number of other external factors. These are factors which are highly influential given the young impressionable mind of an adolescent. As great as my educators were, they were just that. They were educators not mentors. It was in this "education gap" that the SLO program filled the void. Before I continue on with expanding on this detail, I will add that I am not dismissing the importance of any of these other educational resources or staff. They had their role to serve and they did that very well, but those roles do not address everything in the adolescent development of a young impressionable teenager that is maturing into adulthood. While this is also something that is individual and situational, everything in life plays a role directly or indirectly in helping to shape our actions, choices, and who we are or become. However, when you consider the totality of all those factors, some play a greater role than others.

In my adolescent years attending DT, I was a very different person compared to who I am today. Yes, the two decades of life experience between then and now as well as the challenges, relationships, and lessons in that time probably played a large factor. However regardless of whatever journey a young person pursues, each path in life requires an initial start before progressing through any direction. In high school I would be what I would classify as an outsider. I felt for the most part that I did not fit in or relate very well with most classmates. This

is not to say that I had issues with bullying or conflict. While that did occur occasionally, I would say that it was fairly rare and not any more than what most other students would have likely experienced. I lacked a lot of confidence, was shy and socially awkward, overly sheltered (some of which was also self-induced), and did not really know how to get started in life. When I reflect, I can only be thankful for the family life that I had growing up, but like many teenagers, I did not always see things the same way my parents did either. My parents, particularly my father, and I were often at odds. I genuinely don't believe that I learned self-confidence or how to step out of my comfort zone from inside my home. This is where the schooling void I previously mentioned was addressed by our school's police liaison officer. I still remember when I met our SLO for the first time in front of the school office in what I believe was grade 10. Cst [name redacted] was the new SLO to [school name redacted]. Assigned SLO's also typically remained constant for a number of years allowing students to establish familiarity and a relationship. I did not know the previous one very well and while he was around and available, for whatever reason I just didn't think to utilize that resource until I met Joe. I remember we hit it off right away and got off on the right foot.

While I highlighted who I was as a young high school student, I am not suggesting that at the time I felt these issues were necessarily even concerns. I don't think I had the maturity then to realize that. I just simply took those quirks for who I was without giving development or improvement much thought. Therefore, I didn't approach Joe with personal problems of bullying, or a difficult home life, or how I felt about conflict fitting in, etc. even though he was certainly available for those matters. No, it was quite a lot simpler than that. I just thought it was very beneficial and reassuring to have an open minded, down to earth adult in the school that I could easily approach in an informal manner, be put at ease, and quite literally be able to discuss whatever I felt like. I remember topics ranged from school obviously, future goals, career thoughts, lifting weights, hobbies, interests, life, friends, volunteering, growing up, crime, his life, what was happening in his job, and so on. In this regard Joe also portrayed a very inspiring role model and one that I looked up to. Our interactions were mostly casual discussions during free hours on school time, lunch, or shortly after, and the occasional extracurricular activities following class. One particular highlight was when Joe discussed with me about and recommended me in my senior year to participate in the annual VPD Student Challenge which was a week-long junior introductory police academy for students from various Vancouver high schools. I won't get into the details of that but it was a unique high school experience that stands out amongst others.

As mentioned previously I had several educators in my life, but [name redacted] filled that of a mentor when I probably needed one whether I realized it or not. In reality I would say that most people regardless of where they are in life could probably benefit from a mentor, but particularly those young and impressionable high school minds. Without guidance, those minds are left to their own devices, and open to all sorts of influence. I found that from my interactions with Joe that there was a man behind the uniform that I could aspire to and share my concerns and perspectives with. There is oftentimes this wariness to authority that comes from the presence of a police officer, but [name redacted] was very easily able to dispel this

apprehension. Regardless, I did not have anything to worry about because I wasn't a student that actively went seeking trouble, but Joe was able to professionally represent the VPD positively in a welcoming and accessible manner that shows at the end of the day police officers are people just like anyone else and that they are also individuals. It was a school presence that I benefitted from whereby our interactions I not only learned how to hold a conversation and develop confidence, but it sparked a change that allowed me to not fear going outside of my familiar element and enter into situations that I would have otherwise found uncomfortable. Despite that being quite a long and drawn-out explanation, in short, the SLO program, specifically Joe, played a significant role as a mentor in my social development and maturing process in the personal context that other educators did not - and that is simply because it was outside of their scope and role.

I believe that the complete school experience to include maturing through adolescence entails more than just the in-class academic environment and that it is fairly common that most would agree. There are the relationships and social dynamics involved with school, as well as extracurricular aspects, sports, clubs, etc. Personally, growing up and attending high school, I certainly did not have this, and felt that those various factors were not very well balanced, quite skewed towards the classroom, and ignorant of those outside. To frame this in an adult context, I definitely did not have a very healthy "work-life balance" for most of high school. While I eventually began to become more externally involved and socially adapted, this was a process that was not that facilitated from within the classroom by my teachers but instead from outside by [name redacted], the local SLO. In terms of providing a well-balanced school experience, the educators do a great job conveying the academic curriculum, but their hands are full and they cannot/do not fulfill the mentorship aspect - at least not completely enough.

The majority of my high school tenure took place in the 1990's. Drugs were very available and gangs were highly prevalent. While I don't track statistics and do not know the actual numbers, I have been credibly informed that while current gang activity is different, levels near parallel the scale similar to 20 plus years ago. This indicates that while things may have improved over time, certain factors either deteriorated later on or remained unchanged. Those that remember the 1990's can probably recall an era where gang violence in East Vancouver, and the rest of Lower Mainland BC for that matter, was rife, brazen, and high profile. While this fortunately did not enter my life, I will say that there was gang influence at DT as well as other VSB schools and there were active investigations being conducted behind the scenes that students and faculty were probably highly unaware of. I know this because I met up with [name redacted] last year after 19 or so years of no contact, personally had a conversation with him, and he told me. Aside from the mentorship aspect, which personally and directly involved me, the SLO also provided a degree of protective safety, which also affected me without my realizing it at the time. In fact, I believe that most people in the school were also affected/protected without realizing it. This is a good thing that the school population is unaware because it means the SLO is doing an effective job of creating that safety barrier and suppressing risks to the staff and student body without disrupting the education system. While gang activity appears to have remained at or returned to a similar level, this along with modern adolescent factors from our now more

complicated and ever-changing society, demonstrates a continued need for community safety in our schools. New forms of student concerns such as cyber bullying with advances in technology and increased use of cell phones - something that did not exist for the majority of people in society let alone teenagers when I was one - illustrates a whole new dimension of youth challenges with a school situation more sophisticated than it ever was during my time. With all the modern-day distractions, pressures, and potentially negative influences on easily impressionable young student minds from the previously listed examples, this directly calls for intervention, protection, and risk reduction, but also counselling and mentorship. These are requirements addressed with the SLO program.

The VPD's SLO program was established in April 1972. It serves to "combine education, investigation, law enforcement, counseling, crime prevention and community relations to meet the diverse needs of residents in the school community." This is direct from the SLO Unit's webpage found here: [School Liaison Unit | Vancouver Police Department](#). I'm not going to detail the official list of SLO functions and objectives, you can visit the website, but like the social mentorship factor I spent so much time addressing earlier, this is a gap in the academic system/high school student life that educators are not able to and are not meant to fulfill. To put it into plain perspective, after 49 years of success, the VSB is now considering cancelling this program. That is nearly a half a century of how many countless cases of constructive collaboration, successful relationships, unknown diffused situations, unpublicized mitigated risks, social support, and examples of positive mentorship such as my own direct involvement with the program, amongst others. I am deeply perplexed why after all these decades of progress, that it is now when things are possibly more uncertain and complex, that the VSB is considering this decision. I am a firm believer in facts and results speaking for themselves. If this half a century of success I mentioned really is the case, it is pretty substantiating evidence that the SLO program and people like Joe have done their role exceptionally well. I have been out of school for a long time and therefore am probably quite out of touch with current internal affairs, but if the school situation is as unpredictable and precarious as outlined with all the previously discussed challenges, then perhaps the VSB - maybe even the VPD - need to consider developing more resources for our schools, not doing away with them.

In summary, I would like to thank you for your time and consideration in reading my input on the VSB's potential decision. I know it was lengthy and probably quite time consuming to get through, but I hope if you've made it to this point that it does not fall on deaf ears. Regardless of whatever the VSB decides, at least it will be as informed as possible and made for the right reasons. Those should be reasons that factor into account, and prioritize, the best interests and safety of our students in our schools. When I think of how many numerous other youth in our school system there are that could be in the same socially and developmentally confused state of navigating through adolescence that I was in, I also think of how they could benefit from having a mentor like [name redacted]. Guidance and mentorship were a crucial component of my high school years that I did not really realize or appreciate until much later after I matured at some point following graduation. I would hate for the education system that I grew up in and gave me a start to what I have, as well as our future generations of young students to

experience this loss because ultimately it would be their benefit to lose. Again, I would like to express my sincere thanks as well as gratitude for the secondary education and overall high school experience that I was privileged enough to have benefitted from, especially as one of the recipients CC'd on this e-mail, [name redacted] , was an old principal of mine at [name redacted]. I believe who we are is a result of our experiences and that each unique experience and those we interact with, particularly those people that are most impactful in our lives, have a strong influence on who we become. With that said, I am also enormously thankful for the VPD's SLO program and specifically Joe Danielli, as I truly feel this aspect of my high school experience remarkably determined the direction my life took in those early coming about years and where I went onto afterwards. I am open to any questions that you may have, and am also willing to assist in any other way I can if the VSB requires anything further from me in their decision making on the matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there's anything else I can do to help.

Kind Regards,

[name redacted]

[school name redacted], Class of 2001

Hi there,

The SLO issue is a complicated one and rather than a blanket yes/no we need to look at the dynamics of each school and see if the program is working with each school system. Also, increase the diversity standards/training for the officers who wish to be SLOs.

best,

[name redacted]

Vancouver School Board of Trustees

VSB

VPD

Hello, my name is [name redacted] . I am a former VPD Cadet and a graduate of [school name redacted] secondary school. I was a cadet in the program for two amazing years and thankfully got to volunteer for three years. When I heard that the positions of school liaison officers may no longer continue, I was very disappointed, my entire cadet journey started with the encouragement of my SLO, (Constable name redacted)) who I had been talking to every chance I had, asking for advice and what someone at my age could do to prepare themselves for a career in law enforcement and when the VPD Cadet program had been announced he brought it to my attention. His door was always open for me and others for assistance on our applications. SLO's were not only there to help those who want to become police officers, but they were someone people could confide in, knowing it would be a place free from judgement

and scrutiny. Many students who were going through tough times could seek help from our SLO and they were always respectful. They would always be open-minded and willing to give second chances to students who may have experimented with drugs and alcohol. He would help students get back on track with their schoolwork and abstain from such activities while talking about the effects drugs and alcohol can have on you and how it is not worth it. Never arresting people but being compassionate, understanding, and sympathetic. I feel that without school liaison officers, people, especially young high school students may have a negative image of police officers instead of the friendly and encouraging school liaison officer I had the privilege of interacting with and someone who helped inspire me to pursue a career in policing and countless others. I hope you will reconsider and see the importance of school liaison officers in our high school.

Thank you.

Respectively,

[name redacted]

My name is [name redacted] and I am a 12th grade student at [school name redacted]. I remember since grade 8 Constable [name redacted] would give a speech at assemblies in the beginning of every year about bullying and keeping the school safe. Although I am not a troubled student nor have I experienced bullying before, it was assuring to know that there is a trustworthy and experienced person I can turn to if I ever needed to. I first met Constable [name redacted] in grade 11 when I joined the running club. Prior to joining the running club, I have only heard great things about her and how she is very dedicated and passionate about helping the community. Having known her for little over a year now, I can say I am not afraid to approach her if I am struggling in any way. I think it is crucial to continue with the SLO program because I believe many students rely on and turn to them for help.

February 13th, 2021

Dear Vancouver School Board of Trustees, the VSB and the VPD:

As a [school name redacted] Secondary School alumni, I am extremely proud to say that many of my happiest memories from high school were made possible because of our School Liaison Officer Program (SLO) and officer, Constable [name redacted]. Not only is she a great officer, she is a wonderful friend and an incredible mentor.

Constable [name redacted] had been a major part of my last two years during high school. She is a founder of the running club which started off with only a few members and has now expanded to over 30 students. This club provides a fun and safe environment for students to exercise and to make new friends. Constable [name redacted] has also poured countless hours

of effort into building connections with students and making sure that opportunities are made available to them. An example of these opportunities include trips for running in different cities as part of the running club. She has also spent time carefully applying to grants in order to provide shoes and clothes for the students. During the pandemic, our school liaison officer has delivered food and necessities to [school name redacted] students as well. Furthermore, she regularly supports student events and is an active part of the school community.

My experience with the School Liaison program involves being able to volunteer and giving back to the community. Constable [name redacted] is a great role model that encourages students to be more involved and to be kind. For instance, along with other SLO program officers, we helped out during their annual Christmas Toy Run, where students and officers pair up to purchase toys for children during the holidays. [school name redacted] also has a club called the Girls' Group that Constable [name redacted] regularly attends and leads which provides a safe space for girls to voice their concerns and make new friends.

While I have had positive experiences with the school liaison program and the police force, I understand that others may not have. However, I can say that from all my interactions with Constable [name redacted] as our school liaison officer, her passion and kindness for building positive relationships with [school name redacted] students is endless. Constable [name redacted] has been such a big part of [school name redacted] Secondary, and it would truly be a loss to cancel the School Liaison Program.

Sincerely, [name redacted]

To whom this may concern, Cst. [name redacted] had asked me to write about my experience with the school liaison program. I had changed schools near the middle of the year during grade 11, and had joined running club as a way to quickly meet people. Cst. [name redacted] ran the club, so she became one of the first familiar faces, particularly amongst the staff. Everyday that I saw her, the Constable was very warm, and cheery, while being someone that I could turn to for help with personal problems (which I did a few times). Alongside that, I appreciated all the she did for running club. From supplying athletic wear, to managing practises, I got to see how dedicated the Constable was. I got to also help select Christmas gifts that the VPD was giving to some elementary school kids. A benefit from this, was that I became more comfortable talking with police.

It was also neat having her present in my law class about the VPD and becoming a police officer. Although I'm sure it isn't necessary that a school liaison officer presented this, it connects to how my perception of police. With the current events relating to systemic racism and police accountability etc. there are many who have a negative association with police/authority. In response, mind my has often drifted to Cst. [name redacted] . This is because, to me, she is the opposite, of the stereotype/generalization of an authority abusing, violent cop. This is the same reason of why learning the education requirements and physical testing of police, did little to

enhance my understanding or increase my appreciation of what it takes to be a cop. Instead, I would argue that it was more the person who was telling us the info, and the personal stories, that were more impactful. It is those things that make me sympathize with police who get flak for the actions of other individual officers or from the symptoms of a systemic issue.

I hope this helps you with your decision.

Regards,

[name redacted]

Good morning Mike and Jason,

I hope this email finds you both well and that you had a great weekend.

I just want to follow up on an incident that occurred at [school name redacted] last Thursday, January 31st and would like to commend the work of the Constables in attendance who helped get the situation under control.

In brief, we have a student and who had a violent reaction to a situation. He started throwing things and became escalated to the point where he was flipping large bookcases, smashing iPads and emptying the refrigerator all over the room. The student is a big boy and it was quite an event to witness. We did a room clear to get staff and students out of the room to safety. I called 911 as we were fearful for his own safety. Two patrol officers were on the scene first (Unfortunately, I can't remember their names) and then Constables [name redacted] and [name redacted] attended as Constable [name redacted] was on Field Trip to Chinatown and the lower east side with the grade 10's. All the police officers were calm and respectful of the student. They did have to handcuff the student as he was picking up glass and they did not want him to cut himself. They were patient when they escorted him to Car 87, which they called in order to get him to Children's. The student's mother would not come to get him as she has a small child at home and is fearful of her older child. It took approximately 45 minutes to walk the student down the hallway to where the car was waiting. All officers remained on scene until he was in the transport vehicle. Because the SLO's are used to dealing with youth and many times with youth who have mental health issues, they were able to keep the student calm. They were gentle and treated him with dignity by ensuring we cleared the halls of all students and any stimulus which could further escalate the situation. His hands were kept covered by his hoodie and his hoodie was kept draped over his shoulders as the student had entirely ripped his own t-shirt and it was cold outside.

We are truly grateful for the assistance of our VPD officers in situations of this nature as they are heart breaking to witness.

Regards,

[name redacted]

My experience with Constable [name redacted] and the SLO program at [school name redacted] has been very positive. Through joining Running Club back in September 2018, I quickly noticed how Constable [name redacted] goes above and beyond for the students at [school name redacted]. From races or half marathons to running gear, and protein bars, Constable [name redacted] has provided the group with countless opportunities. Constable [name redacted] made it clear that this club was open to students of all running levels. Throughout my time at Running Club, she encouraged and motivated us to challenge ourselves and strive to improve at our own pace. It wasn't long before I came to love running and found comfort and a sense of belonging in the group. My favourite memory of high school is the Seattle half marathon trip with the Running Club.

It was a super exciting trip, as for many of us it would be our first ever half marathon, after countless hours of training. Being able to cross the finish line surrounded by cheers and the Running Club was the most amazing feeling. Not to mention, the Seattle trip made us have an even closer bond with one another as we shared meals and explored the city together. Furthermore, Running Club has allowed me to accomplish things I initially thought I was not capable of, such as completing half marathons. Not only was I able to strengthen my running abilities, Constable [name redacted] helped me grow mentally stronger, and taught me to not give up so easily. Eventually, I learned to apply this stronger mindset to situations outside of running, such as academics or personal problems. Instead of giving in to negative feelings of hopelessness when faced with obstacles, I have learned to deal with them head on by being more resilient. Initially, I joined Running Club to simply be active, I never would have thought I would gain so many valuable experiences and life lessons. Constable Z is someone I admire greatly. She constantly finds ways to better our school and make it a safe and welcoming community. It is reassuring to have her at [school name redacted], as I know that if a problem arises, she'll be more than happy to help. All in all, if it weren't for the SLO program, myself and other [school name redacted] students wouldn't have met Constable Z and gained all the amazing experiences and important life skills that she has provided us.

Sincerely,

[Name redacted]

Dear Vancouver School Board of Trustees, VSB, and VPD

There are people in society that do not trust police and for good reason too. However, there are also people in society that have put their trust entirely on law enforcement when it comes to the safety of society. In Canada, law enforcement is not only there to maintain safety but also to build a sense of belonging with people in the community. This is how I feel about my SLO as well. I think she is an essential part to the community due to how she keeps us safe and how she supports all the people in the community as well.

Whenever I am at school and I happen to pass by her, I always seem to feel safer that she is her and that she is in uniform. She always seems to walk with purpose and seems to know what she is doing. There are many cases in where she does not have to use anything on her uniform (for example, her handgun) to solve problems. Instead, she uses her critical thinking skills to solve the problems that might arise in school. For example, in our school we had a cyberbullying incident, and she was able to find out who the cyberbully was without resorting to physical violence.

Our SLO is very good at keeping the security at our school and community but she is also very good at establishing a sense of community at our school. I happen to go to [school name redacted] Secondary School and our SLO runs a program called running club. Before COVID times I would go every meeting (which was before schools on Tuesday and Thursday's) and I would go run 4-5 km a meeting. There were a lot of people that also went regardless of the weather. We would always cheer people on when we were finished and our SLO would always run with the slowest person to make sure they do not feel left out. Running Club was also the reason why I have found out about VPD cadets and was able to join this amazing program.

Our SLO builds a sense of belonging and community while making sure she does her actual job as a police officer. She always seems to genuinely care about my insignificant problems and seems to always have a smile on her face. If it were not for my SLO I think I would be a very different person right now.

From,
[name redacted]

February 17, 2021
Argyle Communications
vsbengage@argylepr.com

RE: IN SUPPORT OF THE VPD SLO PROGRAM WITHIN VSB SCHOOLS

I am writing to offer my full support of continuing the VPD SLO Program within the VSB. When I first heard about the program possibly being in Jeopardy, I was shocked and in disbelief! I could not imagine the VSB schools not having an SLO present. It just does not make sense. I have so many positives to share – I cannot think of a negative.

I have been an employee with the VSB for 25 years, as an Office Support Worker. Twenty of those years have been in the Secondary Schools. I currently work in an Elementary School. Throughout my first twenty years, I worked in 5 Secondary schools. While at each school, I had the fortunate opportunity to work with several VPD Student Liaison Officers. These officers - all different personalities, strengths, qualities – shared one thing in common. These officers proved to be professional, supportive and cared for students and staff alike within each school they represented. As an office support worker, we worked closely with the SLO's, especially as the office is where the students in need where mostly present. Sometimes on a daily basis. It was evident that these students where provided crucial guidance and care they clearly needed by the SLO and most often in a team setting with the School Administrator(s). Especially those students who struggled within their homes or bad choices they made with the company they keep at school and on the weekends. The SLO was not present to arrest and ridicule. Rather, they were there to ensure safety and to guide these students to a better life path. I have personally witnessed many positive outcomes.

The SLO is initially present at a school as a police officer to improve safety in schools, however, they are also present as a mentor, a confidant and someone students can look up too, trust and feel safe around. When the SLO would walk through a hallway, students would see a familiar and friendly face. Students were comfortable having conversations with the SLO and if necessary, seek them out for help or guidance. I have seen SLO's take their personal time after school hours to assist students in the weight room, running programs, lunch time sports, and other extra- curricular activities within the school.

When I came to work in an Elementary school, I was surprised to see the lack of SLO presence. I have been in elementary for 5 years, and I believe I've seen an SLO on school grounds only a handful of times. I am aware that the secondary school SLO is attached to several elementary schools, however, I know they are spread thin and are unable to be at all places at once. While working in elementary I can see that the need for an SLO is greatly needed. I have heard some grade 6/7s say they "hate cops" and do not have anything good to say about police officers. This is awful to hear and the more reason why SLO's should be introduced to the Elementary level as a trusting figure and a positive role model. I understand I am not in the position of providing recommendations, however, I believe having an SLO present in an elementary school could provide a positive foundation for students and parents. More so for the Intermediate grades. Having a Student Liaison Officer around during these early years could provide many learning advantages, resources and expectations that could be offered in conjunction with the Secondary SLO Program to students and families.

Please allow me to share a personal experience with you. [subject matter redacted due to personal identifiers]

My positive experiences, views and stories are endless and I could write pages. There are many exemplary and unique reasons as to why the VPD SLO Program has proven to be an integral part of the VSB Schools. Are there negative experiences? Probably. Negative experiences happen everyday. Everywhere. We learn from these negative moments, we move forward and we turn them into positive ones.

I think it would be in the best interest to expand the VPD SLO program, not to end the program. The Student Liaison Officer is imperative in a school setting. For students. For Families. For Staff. It would be detrimental to end the VPD SLO Program with the VSB Schools.

Thank you for allowing me to share my views, experiences and full support of the SLO Program. I trust the final decision about the future and of the program will be in favour of continuing and possibly enhancing the SLO Program within the VSB Schools

Patricia Paone (Rosselli)

Although I haven't known Constable [name redacted] for long, my experience with her and with the SLO program in general, have been overwhelmingly positive. In late 2019, I decided to join the school's Running Club in order to push myself to be more active. Despite not being the greatest runner or the most in-shape person, I quickly began to enjoy Running Club because of the welcoming and supportive environment that it provided. Constable [name redacted]

consistently encouraged the Running Club members to try our best. Regardless of our running level, she supported us and gave us the chance to improve and challenge ourselves in a fun, dynamic way. Although I joined later and haven't been able to participate in many running club events due to the pandemic, over the years, Constable [name redacted] has provided

the Running Club members with countless opportunities. Whether that be half-marathons, access to running gear like shoes and jackets, or other group running events, she has given so many memorable opportunities to our team.

While my main experience with the SLO program comes from Running Club, I know that Constable [name redacted] is also constantly working to make our school a better and safer place. Having her at [school name redacted] makes me feel safe and lets me know that if I have any problems or emergencies, she'll be there to help.

Overall, if the SLO program didn't exist, myself and many other [school name redacted] students wouldn't have had so many great opportunities and experiences.

[name redacted]

To whom it may concern,

My name is [name redacted]. In my final year of post secondary school, I joined the Vancouver Police Department Cadet Program. I was given incredible opportunities, I was given a family, and I was given a chance to prove myself by being promoted to Sergeant with my own team to lead. Unfortunately, I found out about the Cadet program four years too late. I was placed in schools without School Liaison Officers throughout high school, and because of this I was only made aware of my life-changing opportunity by an unlikely occurrence. Without an officer assigned to my school to build community and provide a role model, I started to go down a difficult path. Because my initial high school did not have a School Liaison Officer, I had a lack of career goals and an absence of motivation with few people to look up to. Because my high school did not have a School Liaison Officer, I was unaware of the signs of an abusive relationship. Because my high school did not have a School Liaison Officer, I failed to recognize unhealthy coping mechanisms. Because my high school did not have a School Liaison Officer, I began carrying a flask to school to make it through my day. I only found out about the cadet program through an advertisement booth set up in my final year of school which I almost missed. I could have had four years of community, family, a chance to figure out what I wanted to do with my life early on, and a future I wouldn't have to suffer to obtain. Because my school did not have a School Liaison Officer, I took courses in high school catered towards a medical career that I didn't want. This led to poor grades and poorer mental health, and while I'm lucky to be in post-secondary, I could've achieved so much more with my high school years.

I am an extremely lucky person for finding the cadet program, even for a year. But I am not the majority. You know what state the VSB is in. I couldn't walk into a locker room without someone either vaping, smoking weed, or dealing something. To let the actions of a tiny percentage of police in another country take away from one of your most promising resources in the fight for our youth is not only an abysmal idea, but a dangerous one. Now, more than ever, students need a Liaison Officer to steer them on the right path, offer support, give advice and be a friend.

The amount of students who won't have a second chance as I did is staggering. Please. Make the right decision. Collective punishment for the events of an unrelated topic in an unrelated setting is unfair, unjust and unintuitive.

Best,

[name redacted]

My Stance on the SLO program

Dear VSB Trustees, VPD, VSB,

My name is [name redacted], a former student of [school name redacted]. I graduated in June 2020. I believe that the School Liaison Officer program should remain in Vancouver Schools. While unfortunate and troubling that a number of students feel threatened by the

presence of School Liaison Officers, that doesn't mean that the officers have intentions of intimidating the students.

Constable [name redacted] was the School Liaison Officer for [school name redacted] from 2017-18 to 2019-20. She also was the School Liaison Officer for [school name redacted] in the summer of 2018. Constable Jackman was always willing to have a conversation with me while she worked. In her position, she was always welcoming, and never mistreated or directly intimidated any student. Constable Jackman took part in school events, like the 2019 [event name redacted], and even ate the salsa I made for the [school name redacted] Cinco De Mayo party the same year! More importantly, when I entered a mental health crisis in summer school, she was more than willing to talk with me about what was on my mind. Constable [name redacted] made sure I had nothing on me that I could use against myself, and even accompanied me to the hospital. She made sure I was in good hands before departing. I have her to thank for making sure I wouldn't harm myself that day.

Another School Liaison Officer was present for my mental health crisis. Constable [name redacted], current School Liaison Officer for [school name redacted]. Both Constables [names redacted] were taking part in a charity run before coming across me. They chose to spend the time with me in the ambulance to the hospital. They gave up that part of their day to be there for me. I am forever grateful to them for helping me out of the darkest spot in my life.

That is my experience with the VPD School Liaison Officers, and the impact they had on my life. I hope this will help in the decision making for the VPD SLO program.

Hello,

My name is [name redacted] and I am writing in regards to the opposition of removing School Liaison Officers (SLO) in Vancouver BC.

Being a 2018 graduate from [school name redacted], my SLO named [name redacted] built many great relationships during his 5 years at [school name redacted]. During lunch break he would socialize with many students, building many trustworthy relationships. My personal experience with my SLO was amazing and I don't think it should be taken away in Vancouver school boards. Reason being is because in between grade 8-10 I was unsure about my career choice and whenever I had the chance to talk to [name redacted] he would give me great insight in pursuing policing as a career. With his dedication and commitment he mentored me in joining specific programs called the VPD Student Challenge. Without [name redacted] advising me about this particular program, I would've missed one of the best 8 day camps that is offered to only grade 11/12 students. Currently, I am working on my bachelors in Law Enforcement and am hoping to become a regular member later on down the road.

Apart from my personal experience with my SLO from [school name redacted], I feel having a SLO present in the school building can deter students from misbehaving. Therefore, this would lessen the amount of students vaping and smoking during school hours. Having a SLO present can expose many students the stigma of police officers posed as "bad guys". Meaning, as mentioned before on [name redacted] making great relationships with the students in school. This would ensure and make students more comfortable to approach their own SLO or even a police officer on the streets, whenever they're seeking help or advice.

Lastly, please consider my message as I think SLO's are great in school boards.

Kind regards,

[name redacted]

Hello,

It has been a few years now since I graduated high school, but I will never forget the service and assistance of my school's Service Liaison Officer. High school was not easy, whether it was due to undue stress from my peers or even the school staff, but I could always count on my SLO for support. Looking at what I experienced in high school, I could not imagine how different my last years would have been without the support of my SLO. During my time in high school, I can recount various incidents where not only myself benefited from their support. At my school, we had multiple suicide attempts, and I could not imagine how differently they would have ended without the right support and staff to deal with the matter at hand. I remember hearing chatter about the incident, not only with my friends but with the staff. I can even remember seeing the incident unfold in front of my own eyes. It was clear something was wrong that day. My school had closed off a part of the school, and all I could see was the SLO and a student in the hallway. It was not an easy situation to handle. The teachers were already stressed out with their own, schedules, and situations like these were out of their reach. I could not imagine if they had to deal with emergency situations like those alone, especially without our SLO.

The School Liaison Officers do more than just patrol the school. They help support the staff and students with difficult situations that could have severely ended in despair, especially in my own experiences. Forwarding to now, I can only imagine how different the school environment is with students yearning to get back to school, and even socialise with friends. COVID-19 has not just affected those who have contracted the virus, but it is affecting those who are dealing with the consequences of lockdowns and social distancing. Kids need support, especially right now. More now than ever are students looking for support and guidance to help them during this difficult time. I can only imagine how hard it is now for kids, compared to a few years ago, but with the right support, like I had with School Liaison Officers, many kids will be able to lean on a shoulder for support and even protection from emergency events like I witnessed in high school. These kids need School Liaison Officers.

Thank you for your time,

[name redacted]

To whom it may concern,

Over the last two years, Constable [name redacted] has been very huge help in pushing me to reach my goals. I started my journey in running at the end of grade 10, and with the constant encouragement I received during my running sessions, I have come to develop a passion for running. I was even able to run a half-marathon just last year alongside Constable. [name redacted] and my fellow colleagues. Even when I wanted to give up after running for 30 seconds, had Constable. [name redacted] not been there to push me to never stop running, I would literally stay as the lazy person I was a few years ago. It made me realize just how important it was to have police officers at our high schools; they act as your friend in a way, and you develop a different relationship with them in comparison to high school teachers. It honestly made the high school experience that much more fulfilling.

Sincerely,

[Name redacted]

Over the past few weeks I've heard comments such as "School Liaison Officers are unnecessary" and "we don't need their intimidating presence in the school". These notions sprout from the lack of understanding between police officers and the public, exemplifying the need to keep SLOs in our school system.

Whether or not you support the police, it is a fact that they are a part of our society and to coexist peacefully, there must be understanding. One of the ways of fostering this understanding is with SLOs; these officers act as the bridge between our schools and the world of policing. Dispelling misconceptions, providing education, creating positive connections with students, and breaking the barriers between youth and the police: although simply stated, these goals require active and continuous effort and are the ultimate objective of the SLO program.

Speaking from personal experience, Constable Chan, my SLO, has been a helpful and positive presence in the school. From presenting on important topics such as gangs and crime to providing counsel to students, her presence in the school goes beyond the typical duties associated with the uniform she wears.

Before joining the Vancouver Police Department Cadet program, I was uneducated about the role of police in society and the goals associated with law enforcement. After having connected with numerous members of the Vancouver Police Department and becoming better educated

on the intricacies of policing, my resulting enhanced understanding afforded me a more holistic outlook on policing. Although different from the VPD Cadet Program, it is this type of understanding that the SLO program is striving to achieve.

Without the consistent civil discourse between students and SLOs, young members of the community will grow up with a less comprehensive view of the role of police in society, forcing them to formulate their opinions largely based upon what they see in the media. This, in turn, will drive an even larger wedge between the public and the police, leading to a more fragmented society.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Superintendent Suzanne Hoffman and the Vancouver School Board of Trustees,

I've heard that there has been a recent push to terminate the police liaison program in Vancouver schools in response to students stating the uniform makes them uncomfortable in light of recent events. In my opinion, that is a very rash decision to make when you consider the weight of the benefits of the program compared to the negatives. The liaison program offers a chance for students to educate themselves on the policing system in Vancouver and a chance to ask their schools officer questions. The program, at least in my experience, reduced stigma on police officers and the way the policing system runs. As well, the presence of an officer in schools such as mine reduces crime rates. I don't know about statistics or how much crime a school liaison officer deals with, but I know having an officer in the school makes some students second guess their choices before they act on them. They know if they get busted, let's say, selling weed on school grounds, the consequences will go further than a meeting with their parents. It's the same thing as police officers patrolling neighbourhoods. The people in that neighbourhood know there are eyes on them and to watch what they do.

The liaison officer at my school is Constable [name redacted], but her and I have become so close we're on a first name basis. I've known [name redacted], Cst. [name redacted], since I was in my first year of high school. I felt a bit lost as I had moved to Vancouver in grade seven and hadn't made many friends. Her and her team helped introduce me to Girls Group, a program now known as [name redacted], where students who are having trouble fitting in get selected to come join in. In the group, we had snacks, talked about our day or anything that was bothering us, went on super fun free field trips, and were included in a safe place. We were also part of youth initiative programs such as buying Christmas gifts for elementary students whose family income is low. I excelled in the group and made connections with community leaders and even mentored the younger grades in Girls Group as I got older. The program was exactly what I needed to feel like I'm part of the school community and I continue to benefit from it to this day, as I have many credentials I can use on applications to University and scholarships.

Another program [name redacted] runs is running club, which I was briefly a part of as well. In this club, we strived to create an inclusive environment where students can come out in the mornings and get some exercise. One of my favourite parts of this club is the line up of high fives we do at the end of the run to make sure every student feels congratulated for coming out, no matter how fast they ran that day. This club helped me find a way to manage the anxiety I feel as somewhat of an overachiever and made me feel even more a part of my school community. [name redacted] is the master of getting grants to give students at my school more opportunities. Each year, running club gets to travel to a location out of Vancouver to join a race. The grants [name redacted] gets cover travel, food, accommodation, and race fees, all of which a lot of students in the club wouldn't be able to afford. This gives students more opportunity to enhance their high school experience while also again, being a part of a team.

The programs [name redacted] ran and continue to run were vital to my success at [school name redacted]. Her generosity and thoughtfulness surpassed most of the rest of the staff at my school. Through programs and one-on-one talks with students, [name redacted] has made my school feel more like a community than anyone else has, which is why I am very opposed to the liaison program being shut down. Instead of abruptly shutting down a program that does significantly more good than harm, instead we should continue to break stigma about police officers with the help of the liaison officers in schools. At my school, everyone knows they can go to [name redacted] with any legal or personal problem they might be experiencing. Potentially it's not the same at other schools, which isn't the fault of [name redacted], who would be greatly affected by the halt of the liaison program. We should post more informative videos online and encourage other liaison officers to be more like [name redacted] More information would, in my opinion, be more beneficial than removing the program. The presence of police will still be present in Vancouver schools whether or not the program stays running because of the reality of the culture in Vancouver, so why not keep the students familiar with one officer than have unknown officers come in and out of the schools to deal with conflict?

Please take this into consideration before you move on with the plans in place, as it would greatly affect many people in a negative way.

Sincerely,
[name redacted]

Feb 13, 2021 9:04 PM

I have had a positive experience with the SLO at my school. For almost two years I have been in one of the sports programs, and it has helped me a lot with my physical health. I believe that it's important to have SLOs in the school because people will be deterred from activity that would violate either the school's conduct or the law. If someone were to do this kind of activity regardless of consequences, it would be much harder for them to get away with it. Removing the program could make these problems much more frequent.

[name redacted]

February 14th, 2021

Re: School Liaison Officer Program

To the Vancouver School Board of Trustees, the Vancouver School Board, and the Vancouver Police Department,

My name is [name redacted] , and I am a former student of [school name redacted] Secondary School. I am writing this letter to you to vocalize my support in continuing the School Liaison Officer (SLO) Program in the Vancouver School Board district. My experiences with the SLO in my school when I was a high school student have informed my belief in the program's ability to create a safe environment for students and to build trusting relationships.

During my time at [school name redacted] Secondary, I had the pleasure of working with the School Liaison Officer, Constable [name redacted], by participating in the school running club that she organized. Constable [name redacted] took her passion for running and her role as the SLO and combined this into an opportunity for students to find personal success; she dedicated countless hours to training with students, building their confidence, helping them set individualized goals, and giving them advice and support to ensure they could achieve those goals. In addition, Constable [name redacted] efforts to secure financial support from the police foundation and other organizations allowed the running club to support more and more students and provided ample opportunities to stay engaged. I was extremely fortunate to have access to these opportunities as a student, some of which included an all-expense paid trip to Seattle for a half marathon, and a number of other running events in Vancouver that were either subsidized or fully covered by those resources. The experiences that Constable [name redacted] and the police foundation made possible have allowed me to improve on myself as a person while gaining lasting relationships with the students, staff and faculty at my school.

Constable [name redacted] work at [school name redacted] Secondary School is a shining example of what School Liaison Officers can do to create a positive impact in their schools. Their position within the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver School Board is unique in that they can help create safe, accessible spaces for students of different ages, languages, and abilities, by utilizing the resources and support of the police department. Through my own experiences with the SLO Program, I have seen the importance of this role in fostering a diverse community of students and providing them with a network to connect with even after high school. My hope is that you will take this perspective into account when considering the future of the School Liaison Officer Program.

Thank you for your time, and I appreciate your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

[name redacted]

Constable [name redacted] came to [school name redacted] in 2016, when I was in 8th grade. I met her when I decided to join Girls Group in 2017 from to a friend of mine. During my first year or two in girls group, I was able to share my thoughts and feelings with others, and get to experience and bond with many other girls within the school. At the time I remember I was having a difficult time with my family as I had a new step dad, and I was fighting with my mother for over a year about moving in with him. I remember I had a talk with Constable [name redacted] about my issue at the time, and she made helped me a lot, in which I eventually moved in with my family. At each Girls Group meeting Constable [name redacted] would start little discussions about how our day would be and we would talk about certain goals and topics involving personal growth, and this encouraged me a lot. We created many memorable moments, as we were given lots of opportunities to learn and try new things whether it was something crafty or a new sport. My favourite moments were when we went to shop for Christmas gifts for children, and when we went to go rock climbing and skiing. I also recall, when I was thinking about careers I got to have an in depth talk with Constable [name redacted] and her experiences as a police officer. She inspired me so much on how hard she worked to be where she is at, and how she overcomes those difficulties along the way. These experiences helped me overcome my fear of falling, and how I am now able to get back up after each time I fall. As well as on the day we went skiing, I found the courage to apologize to one of the girls I had a misunderstanding with in Grade 8, and we have been very good friends ever since. Girls Group allowed me to meet a lot of the good friends that I now have.

This is only the beginning of my experience from the SLO program. Later after Constable [name redacted] founded the running club, I started to join the running club in the mornings. As I am not a morning person, I tend to have a very hard time waking up for morning runs since I live over an hour away from the school and was always late for class. Although my poor sleeping habits never stopped me from waking up at 5am and coming to running club as I got to bond with many wonderful people, Constable [name redacted] being one of them. Also, at the time, I was dealing with a lot of stress from over-eating, so running club helped me both physically and mentally, as it also helped me come to class on time, and wake up at a reasonable time. Due to running club I was able to meet Student Council Members, which inspired me to join, in which I am now the Co-President. My greatest experience in Running Club was when we went to Seattle and I was able to finish my very first half-marathon. I'd say that would've been one of my biggest achievements in my life. Running club was not only made for self-growth but for teamwork and growth as a group all together, where we all help each other to reach the same goal of finishing a race.

Another experience was a few months ago, I had my purse and wallet stolen at school. Luckily, Constable [name redacted] was there and witnessed the person who took it. Afterwards, she found the boy within a day, and eventually tracked down my purse and wallet, and I was able to retrieve it a few days later. This moment really made me think how cool she is, and how she was able to recognize the person with just a glance. Constable [name redacted] made me feel like I could feel safe at school, and I was able to talk or reach out to her whenever I had any troubles.

The SLO Program gave me the chance to meet an amazing and outstanding person like Constable [name redacted] . Encouraging and supporting one another is one of the biggest aspects of both Running Club and Girls Group, which really motivated me whenever I felt like I was ready to give up. If I never had the opportunities from Girls Group and Running Club where I was able to attend and learn so many things, I wouldn't be the same me I am today. As I would've ended up being influenced by others and picking up poor habits. I am so thankful, and I have grown and learned so much into who I am today, which made my highschool years very memorable for me. I will continue to strive for myself, and achieve much more goals as Constable [name redacted] is my lifelong role model. She is an amazing and outstanding mentor, liaison officer, and friend, whom I respect very much. I hope that in the future, other students similar to myself, will be able to experience and grow to be wonderful individuals themselves through the SLO Program with lots of opportunities and meet somebody as marvelous and inspiring as Constable [name redacted].

[name redacted]



Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

February 19th, 2021

RE: SLO Stakeholder feedback

Dear Argyle PR,

The Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association represents teachers in the K-7 and Adult Education programs. Our Association acknowledges the inequity faced by Black, Indigenous people and People of Colour and the need for local and global solidarity with those impacted most by inequities in the policing, education, judicial and medical system.

Police presence in schools is not neutral. We recognize that incarceration rates and the experiences of police violence, racial profiling, and criminalization impacts Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour disproportionately. When members of our society are speaking out about this issue, as educators, we have a responsibility to hear that call.

The role of School Liaison Officers has changed significantly over the years, and the presence of armed, fully uniformed police in schools has an uneven impact on our students and families. Teachers, members of the public, and student families have been asking for teachers' support in reducing police presence in schools. Our organization passed a motion that calls for the suspension of police presence in schools until work has been done by the VPD and the RCMP to look into their practices and undertake anti-racist work in their organizations and in their communities.

This motion was brought by Vancouver teachers, because of concerns that were raised by their students, families and school communities. When students have experienced police brutality, witnessed police violence toward their parents or loved ones, we have a responsibility to honour that trauma. The presence of VPD in schools challenge teachers' ability to provide a safe and equitable learning environment for all students.

Some of our schools have already enacted these changes in support of their school community's call to action, but without a district mandate those efforts require a lot of time and emotional labour that should not be put on BIPOC teachers, parents, and students.

In our letter to Vancouver Trustees, date January 20th, 2021, we outlined our concerns with the consultation and engagement process of this review. We feel that there is an irreconcilable difference between the direction and format of participation and the scope of the review



Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

requested by the trustees. In public meetings, we heard from members of the BIPOC community and we hope to see recommendations from trustees that reflect that feedback.

As an organization that is committed to reconciliation and anti-oppression work, VESTA acknowledges the work of the BIPOC community, we honour our members, students, and families who have been impacted by police presence in our schools, and extend our support in recommending the suspension of the SLO program in Vancouver schools.

Submitted on behalf of the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association,

Joanne Sutherland

President



Appendix E: Written submissions – template letter and signatories

Dear Trustees,

Today I am writing to express my outrage about the Vancouver School Board's sham review process and to again call for an end to the SLO program. I am enraged at the active silencing of students, parents, and Black community members by the VSB, and the bogus consultation process taking place through Argyle. Alongside many others, I continue to call for the termination of the SLO program IMMEDIATELY.

Argyle, a public relations firm with an all White leadership team was chosen to conduct the SLO review, even though explicit cultural sensitivity and safety requests were made by community members to protect Indigenous and Black youth in the process, and promised to the public by various board members. To date, there are many individuals and groups from Indigenous and Black communities still awaiting consultation, despite the preliminary report set to be presented to you in less than a week. I have also learned that community members have been turned away from being able to speak at the February 3rd meeting.

This is unacceptable and shameful.

Action must be taken.

Therefore, I am asking you once again to:

1. Immediately terminate the School Liaison Officer program
2. End events that bring police into schools
3. In consultation with school communities, particularly Black and Indigenous parents and students, create and increase funding for programs that take a restorative and trauma-informed approach to creating safety and well-being for all students.

Signatories: 151 names (first name only and in no particular order)

Brenna	Marys	Jodi	Justinne	Daniela	David
Emily	Rebecca	Robyn	Nazanin	Jessana	Caitlin
Farah	Kaleb	Ali	Emily	Cole	Katie
Noah	Qwisun	James	Teresa	Andrea	Alyse
Dagoberto	Carly	Hayden	Diana	Rafi	Hayden
Michael	Navreen	Ashleigh	Max	Winston	Tamara
Alysha	Lucy	Corey	Beth	Alyssa	Keyonna
Sara	Jennifer	Becca	María	Peyton	Samantha
Adrienne	Nathan	Kurtis	Rita	Arvin	Kat
Nym	May	Hailey	Phuong	Cam	Zena
Katie	Rory	Katherine	Christie	Ethel	Theodore
Katherine	Tristin	Arlo	Christina	Maniya	Tresha
Emma	Irwin	Kareem	Sydney	Marita	Asthma
Harrison	Esmé	Stella	Sydney	Peter	Harley
Val	Melissa	Jordan	Jane	Merav	Emily
Rian	Sukhleen	Taitania	Daisy	Lily	Nourrah
Paulina	Lindsay	Eleni	Ashley	Karan	Lena
Navi	Tillie	Denise	Sejal	Jessica	Shelby
Chelsea	Larissa	Joy	Mac	Mary	Alexis
Emily	Maika	Rebecca	Megan	Emily	Amal
Joshua	Alison	David	Erin	Marion	Mary
Rachel	Ariel	Victoria	Nicole	Frankie	Anna
Peggy	Erin	Kelly	Miya	Andrew	Lizzy
	Mercedes	Magin	Aja	Kate	Drew
			Andrée-Anne	Leila	Sue
				Ivy	Mo