

September 14, 2020

Greater Victoria School Board District No. 61

556 Boleskine Road
Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8

Attention: School Board Trustees

RE: Ad Hoc School Police Liaison Officer Program Review Committee Draft Terms of Reference

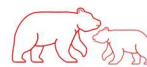
Dear Trustees,

Moms Against Racism is a registered non-profit with a mission to educate moms in anti-racism in order to dismantle racism within ourselves, our families, our communities, our organizations, and our institutions. Our advocacy mandate areas are healthcare, childcare, education, and kid sport. We currently have over 1,000 Canadian members and almost 5,000 American members.

It was some of our local members, and SD61 Parents, who wrote in emails and letters regarding the School Police Liaison Officer Program (“SPLO”, “SLO”, or “Program”) for the Board’s June 22nd meeting. As an organization, it is our stance that SLOs should be removed from schools.

Although we do not agree, we understand the hesitancy to remove the program without first doing a review and appreciate the creation of the Ad Hoc committee. That said, to ensure an unbiased review of the program is done, and not just an exercise in confirming the status quo, we request the following:

1. Rewrite the Draft Terms of Reference in a way that **does not presume the continuation** of the Program. The first question this Committee should be answering is not how to improve the program but if the program should continue. If the program is deemed best to continue, then improvements should be addressed. Suggested edits below:
 - a. *Purpose, 2: “Develop recommendations, as required, on what changes should be made to the program to improve its value to the school community”* should or could read
 2. *Develop recommendations, as required, on what changes should be made to the program to improve its value to the school community* **or,**
 3. ***Develop recommendations, as required, on the steps to be taken to terminate the program should the Committee find this to be the best course of action for the school community.***
 - b. *Deliverables, 3 “Prioritizing the “Relationship Building – Enforcement Continuum” – This include identifying important stakeholder groups within the school and community as well as pathways for regular and ongoing communication.* This deliverable needs to be removed or clarified as it assumes all students want to have, will benefit from, or are ready to form, relationships with police officers. This is not the case.



- c. *Deliverables, 5 “Characteristics of a Trauma-Informed and Culturally Committed SPO.* If we are looking at **if** the program should remain this is deliverable is premature. If it is assumed that the program will stay, then I can see why you would want to research and understand what the characteristics of a Trauma-Informed and Culturally Committed SPO would be. If the program is cancelled, there is no need for this information.

2. The SPLO Program is bigger than just officers in schools. It is more than just police officers playing soccer with kids. The research and depth of understanding of this complex issue needs to include an understanding of the history of policing in Canada, how officers in schools can impact the mental and emotional health of racialized students, and on how trauma is intergenerational. Just because the racialized students in schools today may not have individual traumatic experiences with police officers, does not mean they do not carry trauma caused by police officers. We request the following be included in the Deliverables:
 - a. Provide a comprehensive report on the history of policing in Canada including the origins of the RCMP and race-based incarceration statistics.
 - b. Provide a comprehensive report on the psychological effects of “grooming”, “gaslighting” and “exposure to the threat of violence” on child development.
 - c. Provide a comprehensive report on racially based intergenerational trauma.

3. The Membership scope needs to be increased to include more voices. If this committee is to be thorough in its research, behind each of these identified members should be a sub-group of members. As we know, it is possible for not all persons of a particular group to share the exact same opinion. It would be foolish to assume accuracy of information, and easy to skew the information, with so few voices from each member cohort. We would also like to note, that although there is Indigenous representation identified amongst the members you have no specific Black or Anti-Black Racism groups identified as members. Black students, of which SD61 has many, are also impacted by the SPO program. These voices must also be heard.

This is a good start but show us that you are starting from an unbiased position. Show us the outcome of the School Police Officer Program is not preordained. Show us that you are committed to your own racism unlearning and that diversity and inclusion are not just buzz words for School District 61.

Sincerely,

Kerry Cavers
Founder & President

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