

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC AGENDA

Tuesday, June 8, 2021, 7:00 pm
Zoom Meeting

	Pages
1. Call to Order - Vice-Chair of the Board	
2. Approval of Agenda	
3. Delegations (Oral)	
3.1. Mae Mason, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	4 mins 1
3.2. Hailey Dash, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 3
3.3. Lily Walsh, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 5
3.4. Ramona Karimi, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 7
3.5. Grace Hill, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 9
3.6. Andrea Vasquez-Jimenez, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 11
3.7. Magda Osman, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 13
3.8. Lindsay Dorder, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	2 mins 15
3.9. Faiz Jan, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	17
3.10. AmaturRaheem Salam-Alada, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	19
3.11. Linda Berry, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	21
3.12. Moksha Singh-Sharpe, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	23
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4.23.	Thea Lewis, re Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools	98
5.	Briefing from the Chair of the Board	
6.	Briefing from the Director	
7.	COVID-19 Update	
8.	Report from Statutory and Other Committees	
8.1.	Advisory Committee on Equity, 29 April 2021	99
8.2.	Special Education Advisory Committee, 5 May 2021	110
8.3.	Parent Involvement Committee, 12 May 2021	122
8.4.	Audit Committee, 19 May 2021	131

8.5.	Indigenous Education Advisory Council, 20 May 2021	137
9.	Matters for Discussion:	
9.1.	Report 21-049, Presentation of the Policy and Practice Review of Police Involvement in Schools (M.J. Farrish)	144
9.2.	Report 21-046, Examination of Elementary and Secondary Program Pathways and Achievement Outcomes (M. Giroux, N. Towaij, E. Hardie)	294
10.	Information Items:	
10.1.	Report from OPSBA (if required)	
10.2.	New Ministry Initiatives Update (if required)	
10.3.	OSTA Update (if required)	
11.	New Business - Information and Inquiries	
12.	Adjournment	



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Mason

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Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

1. systemic racism at OCDSB

- disproportionate, negative impact of surveillance and punishment models/policy/police on Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour

- racism literally written into the names of the schools

2. systemic rape culture at OCDSB

- personal experience as an alumna

- and the recent news coverage of D. Green

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

- dismantle systemic racism and rape culture at OCDSB

- act on the issues raised by Black, Indigenous and People of Colour students, their families, alumna, staff, and community members as well as 2SLGBTQAI+, and gender-oppressed students, their families, alumna, staff, and community members

- identify all barriers to equitable education that target Black, Indigenous and People of Colour within your schools

- acknowledge the systemic roots of these barriers and acknowledge the Board's historical role in upholding them

- identify all barriers to equitable education that target 2SLGBTQAI+, and gender-oppressed people within your schools

- acknowledge the systemic roots of these barriers and acknowledge the Board's historical role in upholding them

- consult with students, their families, alumna, staff, and community members who have experienced these barriers to equitable education in OCDSB schools

- visibly and materially commit to prioritizing their needs and actually implement their suggestions

- the above point should include but limited too: curriculum, police presence, school names, fund allocations

- two more detailed/personal opinions for solutions: cops out of school, educate people about and change racist school names, and education on power and consent

Date: *

5/31/2021

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Dash

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Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Speaking on the matter of SROs and the OCDSB SRO review

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Will be referencing Asilu Collective's forthcoming report on SROs in Ottawa which lists various recommendations

Date: *

6/3/2021

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[Redacted]

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Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I'm a student who wants to voice my concerns and opinions on SRO's in my school and city.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Promoting anti-racism efforts within the the school board and our school communities.

Date: *

6/3/2021

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Karimi

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[Redacted]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

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Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I'm a high school student looking to provide my thoughts and suggestions relating to the topic of SROs in schools.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

I would recommend implementing more anti-racism practices in schools, and promoting a safe and comfortable atmosphere for all youth.

Date: *

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Grace

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Confirm Email Address: *

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Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

SORs in schools

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

No more SROs in school and instead use that money to invest in mental health resources

Date: *

6/3/2021

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Delegation issue information

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Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Having a police-in-school program is a violation of human rights and entrenches the school-to-prison/deportation pipeline.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Full removal of the SRO program. Deprioritization of the use of police as an instrument of last resort. Equity lens for resource reallocation to ensure the conditions to support all students that is healing centred/engagement practices and relationship centred.

Date: *

6/3/2021

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Osman

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[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

SRO's

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Get SRO's out of schools

Date: *

6/3/2021

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Lindsay

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Dorder

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Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Speaking on why the SRO program is not needed, and that this program is not isolated to Ottawa. The issues are local and mirrored nationally.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

I recommend that the board deeply considers and accepts the recommendations from the ASILU Collective.

Date: *

6/4/2021

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Jan

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[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/21/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I am a student concerned about the SRO system. I have been personally impacted and I am asking to be able to share the experience of myself and others with this system.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

End the SRO system.

Date: *

6/6/2021

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Salam-Alada

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Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I'm an an OCDSB student who wants to voice their opinion on SRO's in Schools.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

I think we should do what needs to be done in order to make all students feel safe and welcome at school.

Date: *

6/4/2021

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Linda

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Berry

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Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I am an OCDSB student who would like my perspective and voice to be heard on the subject of having SROs in OCDSB schools.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

I believe that we should do what is necessary to keep students in OCDSB schools safe.

Date: *

6/4/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Moksha

Last Name: *

Singh-Sharpe

Address: *

[Redacted]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[Redacted]

Phone Number: *

[Redacted]

Email Address: *

[Redacted]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I am a student who will be sharing my opinions on School Resource Officers in our schools.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Do what needs to be done to keep everyone in our schools safe.

Date: *

6/4/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Marian

Last Name: *

Nur

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Nepean

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

SRO's in school and the impacts their presence has on Black and indigenous students learning and safety

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Removing SRO's from schools

Date: *

6/4/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Maya

Last Name: *

Basudde

Address: *

[Redacted]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Yukon

Postal Code: *

[Redacted]

Phone Number: *

[Redacted]

Email Address: *

[Redacted]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

This month, we celebrate Pride. School Boards across Ottawa hold events and wave the pride flag in support. But it's important to remember that Pride was started in response to police violence against the 2SLGBTQ+ community. One of the most notable voices of the beginning of this movement was a Black transgender woman, [REDACTED]. How can our school boards express their support for gender-oppressed students while upholding the same system of policing that has contributed to their oppression? This month we also celebrate National Indigenous History Month. I want to hold space for the 215 Indigenous children who were killed in an Kamloops Indian Residential School, a genocidal system which has only evolved to further push Indigenous students out of schools-- a direct result of SROs and other forms of policing. It was a system of policing that took these children from their homes. The same stands for Black students who on a daily occurrence digest news of police violence towards children as young as them. Through my own research and life experience I have witnessed that that does not stop when they enter school doors. This speaks to a systemic issue. Policing is violence, which is consistent with the findings of Asilu's report. We must end this now through the complete termination of the SRO program in all four Ottawa public school boards.

Students need care instead of cops. Our educational institutions have focused on how students will be punished when the focus should be how they can be supported, uplifted and taken care of. When policing is funded instead of mental health resources, or extra-curricular activities, we tell students that they are not worthy of their dreams but of policing.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

End OCDSB's SRO Program

Revise all relevant contractual commitments and policies to limit police involvement at all OCDSB schools to only what is provincially mandated

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Julia

Last Name: *

Falco

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

[REDACTED]

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Yukon

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

(905) 802-7827
(000) 000-0000

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

- Systemic racism
- School to prison pipeline
- Harms and long-term impacts of the SRO program to students including towards mental illness, school performance and extracurriculars, reduce future opportunities

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

1. Immediately terminate the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, and prohibit the future use of comparable programs structured under a reformist framework.
2. Drastically narrow down the memorandum of understanding between school boards and Ottawa Police Services (OPS) to only allow OPS officers in schools during provincially mandated occurrences.
3. Completely remove all policing structures from schools (e.g. metal detectors and surveillance systems).
4. Deprioritize the use of police as an instrument of last resort, and instead focus on transformative practices that are grounded in healing centred engagement/practices and are relationship centred that do not criminalize students.
5. Begin collecting intersectional race and gender-based data on every police interaction in schools.
6. Reallocate any/all school board funds from the School Resource Officer (SRO) program and school policing structures towards support for students. Also look at all school funding and resources and reallocate through an equity lens to ensure all students are supported and centring those most negatively impacted.
7. Begin investing in long-term plans for student support.
8. Dismantle oppressive systems within the school board, curriculum, and population to fulfill the responsibility to provide equitable access to quality, affirming educational environments and opportunities.
9. Provide opportunities for staff to be trained in restorative and transformative justice practices; Move beyond anti-racist rhetoric and fully fund these opportunities.

Date: *

6/8/2021

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As I shared in the community consultation there are many recommendations that myself, as a representative of students and families that I know to have been harmed by police-in-schools programs, are pushing to be heard by your school board officials.

Recommendations:

- 1) Take an EQUITY stance and centre your students and families that have been harmed by police in schools programs like the School Resource Officer Program and decide to END the program
- 2) FUND staff, programs and curriculum tools to support the HEALING of students that are directly and vicariously impacted by the harm of the SRO program
- 3) Open partnership/vendorship opportunities for local Indigenous and Black Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community organizers (usually volunteer or underfunded groups) that can bring into the schools programs that are successfully engaging students and families in community
- 4) Complete an Equity Audit of all programs to ensure that no other program is being allowed to exist and harm in the ways that the SRO program has
- 5) The OCDSB should apologize publicly co-create with communities impacted towards a multi-year strategy to ensure year-long professional development for all school staff, but especially teachers, on anti-oppression issues, the ways to plan for equitable School Improvement plans and to understand what equity and upholding human rights look like within daily lesson plans

Thank you,

Silvia Argentina Arauz
MA'AT Legal Services
Community Supports and School Services Department
Director



4544 Sheppard Avenue East Suite 236, Toronto, Ontario, M1S 1V2

Office: 416-754-9529, Fax: 416-754-8529, info@maatlegal.ca, www.maatlegal.ca

April 9 2021

Attention: Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Trustees

My name is George Knia Singh and I am the Principal Lawyer for MA'AT Legal Services, herein "MA'AT". MA'AT is a Toronto-based Social Justice Law firm that focuses on Criminal Defence. However, since the public often experiences injustice in various other areas of the law, MA'AT Legal Services provides representation in other areas of the law such as Human Rights, Civil, Education and Police Complaint matters. We advocate on behalf of those that have been discriminated against, receive unfair treatment, and are trying to make a positive change in their lives.

MA'AT's Community Support and School Services Department shares directorship with the Toronto-based community organization, LAEN- The Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network through Director Silvia Argentina Arauz. In 2016, MA'AT accepted the role as lead legal counsel support for the community-driven campaign that resulted in the removal of the SRO-School Resource Officer program from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). We were already involved in the work of addressing the school-to-prison pipeline through legal challenges to racist suspensions, expulsions and other punitive disciplinary practices involving schools, police and BIPOC youth and have found this partnership supports the advocacy work of organizers that seek change through legally legitimate forms of activism.

In 2016-2017, MA'AT Legal Services co-facilitated several Know Your Rights workshops across the greater Toronto area, informing BIPOC students, parents, caregivers, school board educators and executive staff, as well as the community-at-large about their human rights in connection to Education and Policing. I implore your Board of Trustees to interrogate your policies and programs from an equity perspective, which will allow you to see where you are liable for not upholding the legal human rights of your stakeholders. In addition, MA'AT staff and I met with executive staff, school families, community organizers and activists to advocate for Africentric and Indigenous-centred school discipline practices, curriculum development and personnel hiring that are supportive of equity and human rights principles. It continues to be our stance that racialized, marginalized and underserved populations, such as communities of African descent/Black, and Indigenous communities are the most targeted and harmed by historical and present-day prejudicial policing institutions and programs. Testimonies from many of our predominantly Black youth clients at MA'AT were echoed in the data collected from the thousands of students at the TDSB for the TDSB Review of the SRO Program. Today, we continue this work today and work very closely with the TDSB that was the first to end the SRO program in Canada. TDSB Executive Staff often acknowledge the critical role that working closely with community partners served in advancing their understanding of equity within education.

In Ottawa, your school board has very similar situations playing out where many from your community are having their human rights violated through the presence of the police-in-schools program, namely your Ottawa-Carleton District School Board School Resource Officer Program. Locally in Ottawa, organizations like *Asilu Collective* have been working hard to highlight school-to-prison pipeline issues, including the immediate need for police-free schools. You must all understand that these issues are systemic and not solely specific to one location, therefore we are writing this letter in solidarity and support of *Asilu Collective* and all those who continue to advocate for police-free schools in Ottawa and beyond.

Sincerely,

George (Knia) Singh J.D.



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Contact Information

First Name: *

Mar

Last Name: *

Khorkhordina

Address: *

[Redacted Address]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[Redacted Postal Code]

Phone Number: *

[Redacted Phone Number]

Email Address: *

[Redacted Email Address]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted Confirm Email Address]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

End your SRO program

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

End your SRO program

Date: *

6/7/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Kymani

Last Name: *

Montgomery

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

The purpose of this is to discuss SROs in public schools.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

We should not have police in schools.

Date: *

6/7/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Jack

Last Name: *

Bellemare

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

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Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Requesting to speak on SRO program

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

I support the Asilu Collective's call to terminate the SRO program and the recommendations from page 28 of their report here; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ri7w-OZk6tXipZgmhe36WSECKMmNz11O/view>

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Xue

Last Name: *

Xu

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Please accept this as my written statement for this evenings meeting.

I understand that this evening the OCDSB Trustees will be deciding on the continuation of the school boards participation in the SRO program. I would like to express my concern regarding the SRO program. The SRO program contributes to a systemic issue of oppression that marginalized students within your school board and across the country have been facing. You cannot provide equitable education for these students while denying them the right to an education without policing.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

End OCDSB's SRO Program

Revise all relevant contractual commitments and policies to limit police involvement at all OCDSB schools to only what is provincially mandated

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Cleo Alyssa

Last Name: *

de Ruijter

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Vancouver

Province or Territory: *

British Columbia

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

After recently being a part of Asilu Collective, an abolitionist group from Ottawa campaigning for the termination of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program across local public school boards, I have been exposed to real life accounts of the damaging consequences of cops in schools. We have just released a report detailing the negative consequences of policing in schools, consisting of testimonies & experiences by current and former Ottawa students, that makes clear that SROs create a large barrier to learning and safety for our youth, especially racialised youth in schools. Whilst having a small part in the writing of the report, I was exposed to the ways in which policing affects every part of the students education from how they were treated and seen, in and out of the classroom, to how they performed academically. Thus, I urge you to terminate the SRO program so students in Ottawa are able to thrive in schools and acquire the equitable education they deserve. I also urge you to read the referenced report by Asilu Collective and also the recent report by the OCDSB's Office of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor before making a decision. It is crucial for the SRO program to be terminated and the voices of Ottawa students to be listened too. Thank you for your time.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

It is crucial for the SRO program to be terminated. Instead, appropriate funding needs to go to mental health resources and other community based resources to better support students and their safety.

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Liz

Last Name: *

Clarke

Address: *

[Redacted]

Address 2:

City: *

Toronto

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[Redacted]

Phone Number: *

[Redacted]

Email Address: *

[Redacted]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Advisory Committee on Equity

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

SROs in schools and police presence posing a significant threat to Black, Indigenous, people of colour and lgbtq+ students.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Removal of SROs in schools in addition to providing schools in question with adequate material and emotional resources, access to extra-curricular activities and in school and out of school mentorship opportunities for students.

Establish other prevention programs that could prove to keep students even safer than SROs. Our school boards can do better than just sticking a cop in a school under the guise of protection when there are so many other ways to secure and protect our schools I.e prevention programs.

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Cassie

Last Name: *

Slack

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Our students have been loud and clear in their ask that police be removed from schools, and if this school board is serious about its commitments to equity and inclusion, it will take this report and these asks seriously.

The community and our students deserve a space to learn that is free from policing and criminalization.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

I am asking that you end the SRO programs in all OCDSB schools here in the city. I also urge you to follow through on the recommendations laid out by the report put together by the Asilu collective (you can read that report here: <https://asilucollective.webflow.io/report>)

I would like to see transparency and regular public follow ups on how the board will be implementing these recommendations over the coming months.

Thank you for your time,

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

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Manotick

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Ontario

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[Redacted]

Phone Number: *

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Email Address: *

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Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

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Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I am writing in support of calling for the termination of the SRO program and removal of police officers in OCDSB schools.

Having police in school is absolutely unnecessary and harms the children far more than does to protect them. I did not go to a high school with police and when visiting a school with police who frequent it, I was constantly uncomfortable and that was without even seeing police officers or interacting with one; this was purely based on seeing a police car outside the school. Now I cannot imagine this for those who have to deal with this everyday especially Black and Indigenous youth. School should be a comfortable environment for them to learn, for them to make mistakes and for them to learn from their mistakes but not at the hand of the police. Having police within school grounds makes it an unsafe environment. There is clear racialized bias when it comes to policing within schools and outside of schools, harming our most vulnerable groups: Black and Indigenous youth. There are so many ways the money used to fund this program could be used to beneficially help children at these schools that would have a far greater impact than solely negative impacts of the SRO program and police officers. The stressors of high school are already excessive and even more so for racialized youth; they deserve to safety, protection, and freedom. Please terminate the SRO program and remove police officers in OCDSB schools immediately.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Termination of SRO program and removal of police officers in OCDSB schools

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Susan

Last Name: *

Suter

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[Redacted]

Address 2:

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Ancaster

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Postal Code: *

[Redacted]

Phone Number: *

[Redacted]

Email Address: *

[Redacted]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Removal of police from schools.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Remove police from schools and replace them with qualified psychologists, psychiatrists and sociologists because they don't carry weapons of mass destruction.

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

First Name: *

Eric

Last Name: *

Rosenquist

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[REDACTED]

Address 2:

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Vanier

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Ontario

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Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

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Meeting Type: *

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Implementation of SROs are a blatant misuse of resource allocation. Completely inefficient use of funding with regard to the impact they will create. Ignoring the information that the board has been provided with and implementing SROs will only show the boards contempt towards the wellbeing of students. Officers will only increase the amount of punishment students receive and will only breed mistrust of the board and faculty.

Ignoring the delegation on this matter requires either extreme stupidity or actual animosity towards the students you claim to serve. Take your pick.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Remove SROs and don't look to the police for help. You want to help the students, try and get more funding from the government. Officers will not improve material conditions of students, teachers, the community. They won't improve grades, they won't make students happier, they won't make teachers happier, they won't make parents happier.

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

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Julia

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[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Presence of SRO officers in Ottawa schools is dangerous and unacceptable, as are any ties between schools and the police. Multiple reports and countless statements have shown this and to continue with the SRO program is harmful and unacceptable.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Immediately end the school resource officer program and terminate ties with the Ottawa police service in accordance with the reviews done by both the Asilu Collective and yourself.

Stop the gatekeeping of limiting speakers at meetings and instead enable and take seriously community engagement.

Date: *

6/8/2021

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Contact Information

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Vanessa

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Dorimain

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Ottawa

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Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

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Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

Student Resource Officers in schools

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

To remove them

Date: *

6/8/2021

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I am writing today to express my support for current and former students across the OCDSB who have shared their stories and experiences with the SRO program and who are loudly calling (and rightfully so) for the Board to remove cops from schools. I am deeply grateful for the work of the Asilu Collective and hope that OCDSB trustees take very seriously the findings and robust recommendations from this report: <https://asilucollective.webflow.io/report>

I'd like to highlight content from page 27 of the report: "A radical new approach to education in Ottawa is necessary to obtain truly healthy and equitable schools. Fostering an environment of trust, care, support, and belonging is crucial for moving forward without policing in schools. In addition to calls for police-free schools Ottawa-wide, the implementation of non-punitive and non-disciplinary practices that centre restorative and transformative justice for intervention is highly advised."

I hope that tonight you take a meaningful step in actually improving the safety and well-being of students.

Thank you

Samantha McAleese

My name is Ethan Sabourin and I am a resident of Ottawa (in River Ward), though I went to a small religious private school as a child. There, the presence of police was extremely rare, and I never had to have the intimidating and sometimes outright violent interactions with police that many students, especially Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ, low-income, racialized, and other marginalized students, experienced at schools with SROs present. While I have read many stories and testimonies about the harm that police do in schools, the Asilu report showed me how close-to-home these harms truly are.

I strongly encourage the Board to cut off its relationship with the police, starting with ending the SRO program.

Thank you,

Ethan Sabourin

Hello,

I am writing to register my full support for removing police from schools. Police in schools do not make students safe and hampers their learning and their ability to feel safe, secure, and welcome in their own education.

SROs disproportionately target and surveil racialized students, and make gender oppressed, and even those students that do not fall into those categories feel unsafe and unwelcome in their own schools.

I would also like to register my support to funnel any money previously spent on SROs to programming and support in the communities like free meals at school, school supplies and after school activities.

REMOVE SROs FROM SCHOOLS NOW!

Many thanks,
Jennifer

Jennifer Keeling
Concerned Ottawa Resident

In Advance of tonight's meeting, I am writing to urge you to listen to the community members across the City who are advocating for No Cops in Schools and to put an end to the SRO program. I am a parent in Orleans and want to see that funding be used to help in other ways like with mental health services, books, meals and more.

Thank you for your time

Rebecca Stanistic

I am the parent of a student who attends an OCDSB school, and I am advocating for the removal of SRO officers for the safety and wellbeing of students.

To begin, an [article](#) (attached) from the Ontario Human Rights Commission found that racialized students were targeted in their schools. For example, census data from the Toronto District School Board in 2006-2012 found that there were higher suspension rates for students who self-identify as Black, Latin American, Mixed or Middle Eastern than White students and students from other racial backgrounds. In addition, a Toronto Star [article](#) reports that students felt uncomfortable with SROs in their school. No students should feel uncomfortable in a place of education.

In addition, there is evidence that SROs are harmful to the OCDSB. A report done from the Asilu Student Collective, where they collected students's written experiences with SROs from the OCDSB, has many shocking testimonies. Please feel free to read more from the report [here](#).

Lastly, restorative justice programs have proven to be much more effective than SROs in Canadian schools. An [article](#) about Almaguin Highlands Secondary school in South River, Ontario, reported that they have implemented a very successful restorative justice program over the past 2 years. The restorative justice program uses techniques such as meditation, healing circles, and group conferences to allow the students the opportunity to reflect on the incident, and learn from their mistakes to resolve it peacefully. The Vice Principal of the school stated, "Instead of being punitive, we bring offenders back to the community with an agreement to move forward". Since the restorative justice program began at Almaguin high school, there has been a zero percent recidivism rate.

This research shows that SROs are dangerous for racialized students in OCDSB schools. School should be a place for students to learn and be supported, not criminalized. I demand that SROs be removed from OCDSB schools, and replaced with restorative justice programs.

This issue is very important and deserves attention of the OCDSB to remove SROs from their schools.

Sincerely,
Michele Meszaros

JUNE 2021

OTTAWA STUDENTS SPEAK OUT:

Cops Out of Our Schools!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge that this report was completed on the unceded and stolen lands of the Algonquin Anishinaabe. As we move forward with our work, we continue to honour the original stewards of these lands.

Ottawa Students Speak Out: Cops Out of Our Schools
June 2021

Authored by members of Asilu Collective and edited by various high school students across the city of Ottawa

Thank you to Ottawa Student Equity Coalition for providing us with data for this report

Suggested Citation: Asilu Collective. "Ottawa Students Speak Out: Cops Out of Our Schools." June 2021. Retrieved (date) from: (link).

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WHO WE ARE

Our No Cops In School campaign and research report

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Asilu Collective is a Black and brown women-led abolitionist group committed to police-free schools on the unceded and stolen lands of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people. As settlers, we are committed to uplifting the voices and demands of the people whose land we reside on and we see our abolitionist organizing as a means to do so.

Our No Cops In School campaign aims to terminate the School Resource Officer program from all Ottawa public schools and to end any existing relationships between public school boards and Ottawa Police Services. Police and policing-free schools across the city is the first and foremost step towards healthy and barrier-free education for marginalized youth in so-called Ottawa.

The purpose of this research report is to call attention to the ways in which policing in schools impacts marginalized youth across all facets of their lives-- both in the short-term and long-term. This report also puts forward actionable recommendations for Ottawa public school boards that we strongly encourage them to engage with.

For media or other inquiries please contact asilucollective@gmail.com.

SECTION 1.1

Literature Review

Policing has historically been a project of Canadian state violence that disproportionately targets Black and Indigenous peoples. No different is the practice of policing in schools, which, despite claims of security, relationship, and trust-building, is, too, a mode of racial control and discipline for children and youth of colour. Collusion between school administrations and police forces in Canada has a historical basis in Indian Residential Schools, which were established in the 19th century. The RCMP kidnapped Indigenous children from their families to facilitate Canada's genocidal project, and from this stems the continuation of policing culture and practice to regulate the behaviour and life trajectory of Black, I

Indigenous, and racialized students today. A wealth of published knowledge indicates that school policing, not limited to police-in-school programs but also school policing infrastructure (e.g., hall monitors, security cameras), policies (e.g., zero-tolerance codes of conduct), and practice (e.g., punitive measures), produce disastrous long-term effects for exposed students (Madan, 2016).

Moreover, school policing generates negligible results as a strategy for improving school safety or student well-being according to this same literature (Madan, 2016). In fact, as Madan (2016) notes, research shows that schools with School Resource Officers (SROs) are responsible for higher rates of suspensions, expulsions, and transfers than schools without SROs. In addition, rates of arrests for so-called disorderly conduct are more than five times greater in schools with an SRO than without one (Madan, 2016).

Through disciplinary measures disproportionately applied to students of colour, the Canadian school system has been racialized to lead youth of colour and immigrant youth to intensified police contact both in and out of school (Madan, 2016). This disproportionate contact is often referred to as the "school-to-prison pipeline." This system targets marginalized youth within school settings through disciplinary policies and patterns of socialization in order to push them out of the education system and into incarceration (Bernard and



Smith, 2018). High rates of incarceration for Black and Indigenous youth in Ontario detention centres, up to 10x more than their white peers, demonstrates the effectiveness of this pipeline in Canadian schools (Salole and Abdulle, 2015). Education, just like the criminal justice system, becomes a site of racialized control which is only strengthened by the presence of police in schools (Bernard and Smith, 2018).

Madan (2016) argues that racial power is constitutive of the Ontario SRO program itself, "that it is not simply an effect or consequence of the program's existence but the very instrument through which it operates." In their research on Toronto's SRO program, Abigail Tsionne Salole and Zakaria Abdulle conclude that the program undermines a healthy educational environment for youth because police presence implicitly labels students as untrustworthy (Salole and Abdulle, 2015). Canadian studies by Ruck and Wortley (2002) and Kovalenko (2012) exhibit the knowledge that students have about this labelling along with other forms of discrimination. Racialized and immigrant youth are more likely to not only perceive the discrimination that they are subject to in school but also locate it as racially motivated; from teacher mistreatment and school suspensions to the discretionary use of police by school administration and treatment by SROs (Kovalenko, 2012). Another Canadian study shows that Black students (justly) feel the school's use of police is primarily to control and supervise their behaviours (Ruck and Wortley 2002). Socialization through discipline has dire impacts on student

mental health as they begin to understand themselves in the way they are perceived by the administration and police officers (Bernard and Smith, 2018).

In their study of policing in Toronto schools, Salole and Abdulle (2015) find that the adultification of the behaviour of students of colour invokes the use of SROs in trivial matters. Their findings are supported by similar scholarly research which asserts that marginalized youth, particularly youth of colour, are not permitted leniencies afforded to their white peers (Salole and Abdulle, 2015). "Instead of being treated like a 'misguided youth', for example, Ferguson (2001) explains that when student behaviour is decontextualized the noncompliance of even young children can be 'adultified,'" and that "'transgressions are made to take on a sinister, intentional, fully conscious tone that is stripped of any element of childish naiveté' and '[i]n the case of African American kids, what might be interpreted as the careless behavior of children is displaced by images of adult acts of theft that conjure up violence and mayhem'" (Salole and Abdulle, 2015). Criminalized behaviour induces police response both pre-emptively and reactively. Kovalenko (2012) writes that "more privileged youth are governed through gentle strategies and support from school, families and social services. Meanwhile more marginalized youth, like the youth participants in (their) investigation, are governed through more punitive and disciplinary strategies," including the use of police officers.

For over 20 years, Ottawa Police Services (OPS) has provided Ottawa's four publicly-funded school boards with armed and uniformed police officers as part of the SRO program (Ottawa Police Services). Additionally, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB), the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB), the Conseil des Écoles Catholique Centre-Est (CÉCCE), and the Conseil des Écoles Publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO) are all signatories to the Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools Policies in the City of Ottawa; which includes the Protocol for Police Involvement in the Schools of Ottawa (The Regional Safe Schools Committee of Ottawa, 2011). According to the latter agreement, "it will assist in providing greater safety and protection of students, teachers, principals, staff, and volunteers in the school. It will also facilitate appropriate sharing and disclosure of information" (The Regional Safe Schools Committee of Ottawa, 2011). However, at its essence, SROs are a strategy of racial power premised on white supremacist ideas of which bodies require surveillance, discipline, and control and which bodies deserve protection and nurturing (Madan, 2016).

■



SECTION 1.2

Our Research Methodology

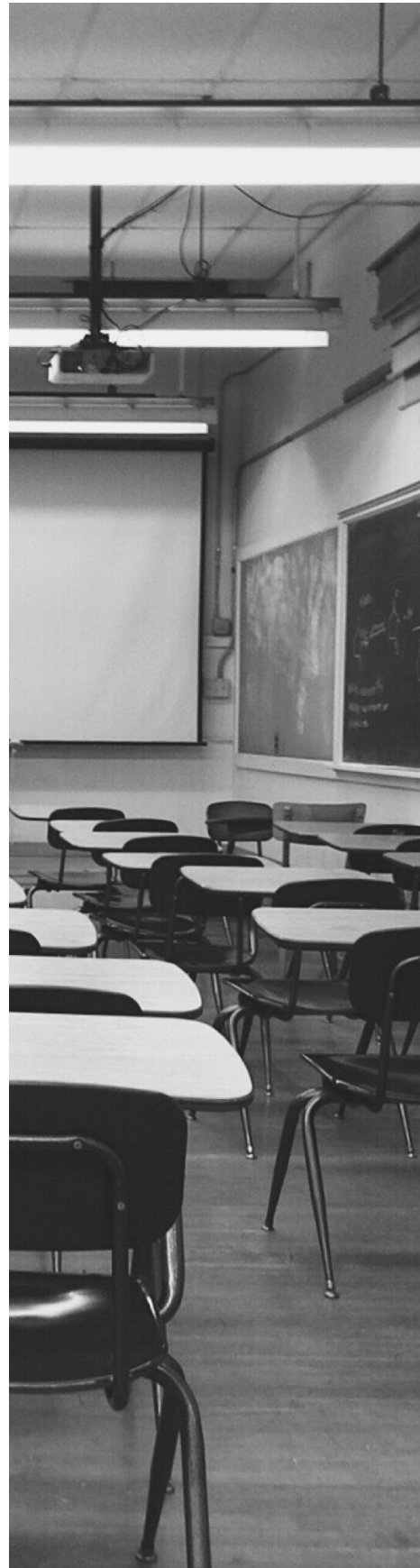
Over the past year, our team has collected qualitative primary data from current and former Ottawa public school students through three online forms. The first was a "Share Your Story" feature on Asilu Collective's petition form, the second was a survey about Ottawa SROs conducted by Asilu Collective, and the third was a survey about racism in Ottawa schools conducted by Ottawa Student Equity Coalition. The majority of question prompts from each online form were purposely open-ended to provide participants with the freedom to speak to whichever experiences they saw fit. When referring to participants' gender identity, we use the terms female and male as adjectives to mean any woman/girl and any man/boy, respectively (trans-inclusive).

The petition form prompted participants to share a personal experience with SROs or Ottawa Police Services (OPS), their perspective on policing in schools and why they think police presence in schools should end, and/or something they have witnessed that supports removing police from schools. Participants indicated if they were a student, educator, parent or guardian, or community member and for the purposes of this student-focused report, we have only included testimonies from those who indicated

"student" or who explicitly spoke to their experiences as a student in their response (former students of Ottawa public school boards are included). We also asked participants to indicate which school board they were or are affiliated with. Participants overwhelmingly belonged to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) (79.3%) with Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB) (10.3%), Conseil des Écoles Publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CÉPEO) (3.4%), and Conseil des Écoles Catholiques du Centre-Est (CÉCCE) (0%) following. We have a total of 29 testimonies from this form.

Our survey for current and former Ottawa students collected school board, graduating year, racial and/or ethnic identity, and gender identity demographics. A total of 66 individuals participated in the survey. The large majority of respondents, 57 (86.3%), are students and alumni of OCDSB. There are 7 respondents who are students and alumni of OCSB (10.6%) and 2 respondents who are alumni of CECCE (3%). The respondents represent current and former students nearly equally with 32 (48.4%) being current students (graduating classes of 2021 - 2024) and 34 (51.5%) being alumni who graduated between 2004 - 2020. Of the 66 respondents, 11 (10.44%) are Black, 2 (2.98%) are Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Métis), 15 (16.41%) are non-Black and non-Indigenous people of colour, and 38 (56.71%) are white. In terms of gender identity, 12 (18.2%) respondents are gender diverse (non-binary, genderfluid and/or trans), 39 (59.1%) are women, 13 (19.6%) are men, and 2 (3%) did not respond to this question.

Ottawa Student Equity Coalition's survey collected demographic data on race/ethnicity, age, gender identity, and school board from current and former Ottawa students. This survey collected qualitative data on the broad topic of racism in Ottawa schools, therefore we chose to hand-select student submissions that included mentions of SROs, police presence or involvement in schools, and stories of criminalized behaviour at the hands of school administrators. These testimonies came from 42 students aged 14 to 32. 40.5% are Black, 0% are Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Métis), 52.3% are non-Black and non-Indigenous people of colour, and 7.1% are white. Women made up 78.6% of participants with men at 14.3%, gender non-conforming folks at 2.3%, and 4.7% preferred not to say. For school boards, 59.5% of participants are current students or alumni of OCDSB, 31% for OCSB, and 4.7% for each CÉCCE and CÉPEO. ■



SECTION 2

Impacts on Youth

This section contains the thematic content analysis of our qualitative findings. There are six primary themes developed from our manual coding, where sub-themes are included as we saw fit. Each theme contains direct quotations from (current or former) student participants along with an analysis and published evidence to support our conclusions. The student quotations do not contain identifiable information.

SECTION 2.1

Racialized Youth

The presence of SROs not only polices the lives of racialized youth outside the classroom, but affect racialized youth's mistreatment within the class setting as overpoliced youth labelled as "trouble-makers" become over-disciplined by educators (Kovalenko, 2012).

Conversely, students seen as disruptive or misbehaved in the classroom are more likely to have interactions with SROs. A former OCDSB student who had SROs in her school multiple times a week outlines this when writing, "Troubled kids. Kids with substance abuse issues, those who had a

reputation for being "disruptive" [are most spoken to by SROs]. Many other study participants used the term "troubled" or similar language to describe who their SRO interacted with the most. As students are repeatedly singled out and disproportionately disciplined, they become isolated in their learning space and thus have a unique barrier to learning due to internalized perceptions of competency. Meaningful student participation by youth in class settings is undercut by the implicit and explicit outcomes of policing and unequal treatment by officers, educators, and school administrators (Salole & Abdulle, 2015). Racialized youth are especially prone to this treatment as educators are often quicker to penalize them and they are more likely to be targeted by SROs. A former OCDSB student writes, "I witnessed the harm having police in schools did first hand. To myself and other students, the resource officer of our school would repeatedly target the same groups of students. Young, impressionable students were labeled and harassed, some searched without parents or guardians present at the time." Another former OCDSB student, an Inuk woman, writes that they "knew [SROs] targeted a certain demographic at my school". Targetted approaches to discipline and harassment by educators and SROs to attribute markers of a "good student" to other, more privileged, youth who are most often white (Musto, 2019). Racialized youth internalize and carry these fabricated ideals years into their education which subsequently affects their class performance, post-secondary education, and career prospects (Musto, 2019).

A Black female former OCDSB student reported that harsher punishments are often given to racialized youth, while non-racialized youth are often let off with "a warning, multiple warnings" because of how educators and SROs alike perceive white innocence. The disproportionate rate at which racialized youth are disciplined not only negatively affects academic performance but leaves them victim to unjust suspensions and increased contact with police (Kovalenko, 2012). A current OCDSB student who is racialized expresses this experience by saying: "I've almost been suspended various times over incidents that I had nothing to do with when white-skinned students who were a part of the problem were let off with warnings. It doesn't help when the entire admin staff is white so no one can relate." Collusion between school administrators and SROs is directly responsible for the transfer of racialized students out of schools and into the criminal justice system. This is especially concerning for racialized immigrant youth who are vulnerable to criminalization under the mechanisms of the school-to-deportation pipeline (Bergen & Abji, 2019).

"Although I have not encountered them, my brother has. And being perceived as a black boy by society, and who just so happened to not be quiet or shy or one to say nothing when he was being treated unfairly, he's had a bad encounter with them. I do not think putting criminal catchers and brutalizes in schools is going to improve relationships or build trust of any kind. I don't know what Chief Sloly was thinking, man." - A Black current OCDSB student

"[Teacher name] has admitted to not liking students of colour because they were always the most misbehaved," - A racialized former OCDSB student



Every time I would see a police officer in schools I would always get anxious (I'm a person of colour and live in a low-income neighbourhood). This feeling has always been with me since I was young and honestly, that's sad. No child should be worried about police officers. I find that a lot of my BIPOC peers always stiffen up and change their personalities somewhat (by that I mean they take down their attitude a bit) in front of cops just so they don't get in trouble (despite not doing anything). - A racialized current OCDSB student

if I did or do, I don't feel like they'd be there for MY 'safety'," writes a Black current OCDSB student revealing two important realities that racialized students face with police presence in their schools: (1) internalization and (2) increased self-awareness, also called hypervigilance. A racialized student is already wary that their social identifiers, including race and ethnicity, create opportunity for police discrimination in schools. A previously homeschooled student who has yet to interact with an SRO already has safety concerns given their everyday lived experiences of being racialized. Their testimony shows hyper-vigilance that could transform into an internalization. By saying "I don't feel like they'd be there for MY 'safety'" the youth reveals that their existence as a student of colour does not fall under the criteria of what a student worthy of safety looks like in Ottawa. Madan (2016) explains that society attaches villainy to Blackness; thus, the presence of a Black student is easily used to defend police presence. The author states, "the spaces and bodies associated with blackness always already signify violence and criminality, falling outside the realm of justice and universality. Therefore, any violence enacted towards these bodies is legitimized by the need to maintain order in schools and keep them 'safe'." This statement also reveals that this knowledge of discrimination through hypervigilance means that students will likely not call on the SRO for help if they need it, fearing that they may instead be punished in the process. This finding of fear is supported by Ruck and Wortley's work on policing in Ontario schools (Ruck and Wortley, 2002).

SECTION 2.1a

Knowledge of Discrimination

"I was homeschooled most of my life, and only attended junior kindergarten and am currently attending high school. In my relatively short in-school experience I have not yet encountered a police presence that I remember. But

“They walked the halls and only spoke/approached groups of students of colour. Not once had I seen them approach a group of white students while at my school.” - A Black former OCSB student

“[SROs primarily interacted with] students of colour” - An Inuk former OCDSB student

A racialized current CÉPEO student writes that “Even though I never caused trouble in school I always felt the need to take a detour every time I would [see] our schools police officers so as not to tempt my faith and I should not have felt as though my life were in danger when I was meant to be studying,” further exemplifying Ottawa student knowledge on discriminatory behaviour enacted by SROs. Furthermore, it showcases the ways in which their behaviour is altered as a result. Numerous other student testimonies also speak to taking detours and leaving the school premises completely in order to avoid the possibility of police contact. A negative internalization of discrimination is likely occurring with SRO presence in Ottawa schools.

A female Inuk former OCDSB student reports “I felt like I was more likely to be arrested or stopped by them than the white students”. The mere presence of SROs is a reminder of what their Indigeneity costs them in their hyper-policed schools. Research shows that internalization and hyper-vigilance could greatly affect student confidence and mental health as students begin to believe they actually are less worthy than their white peers. Conclusions from Salole & Abdulle (2015) support these findings through their examination of implicit labelling of students and how administration and police already expect less from racialized youth. In addition, it is well studied that internalization harms the mental health of racialized people (James et al, 2010; Pyke, 2010). This aspect of emotional strain is further explained in section 2.iii. ■

“Racism, makes school feel uncomfortable. They follow u around and it just freaks us students out their will always be a fear for us students with immigrant parents, or coloured backgrounds. We don't need the extra stress. Their useless anyways and just stand around to intimidate u and show u their the big guys.” - A current OCDSB student

SECTION 2.2

Gender-oppressed Youth

Policing in schools regularly causes serious harm to gender-oppressed students (that is, trans and cis women/girls, nonbinary people, trans men/boys, and/or gender non-conforming people) both in its official, school-sanctioned duties and when individual officers act outside of them. Measures purportedly intended to address sexual violence instead reinforce a culture where victims and survivors are not only shamed and intimidated into silence but even threatened with criminalization themselves. "When i had issues with sexual harassment at school," one female former OCDSB student said, "they never took them seriously and made myself and my friends feel like it was our fault and not a serious issue." A female OCDSB alumnus recalls that an SRO threatened her with child pornography charges when her ex-partner shared her nude photos without her consent. "What I needed," she expresses, "was support not to be made to feel even more powerless. The SRO program does not support students." Other accounts make it clear that this was a widespread practice and not a one-off incident. Another person, a non-binary alumnus, describes being subject to school assemblies about revenge porn that placed the blame on young girls for their own victimization.

"SROs either had no impact or a negative impact depending on the student. The precursor to the kind of impact was not dependent on any character flaws or inherent traits of the student but simply whether they were a girl (slut shaming) or BIPOC (racial profiling and other systemically engrained racist impacts) or both." - A non-binary former OCDSB student

Reasonably fearing a situation like that of the previous respondent, they were unable to safely reach out for help from adults when it happened to them. The same person remarks that "most of [their] friends who were LGBTQI+ did not make it to graduation without being sexually assaulted" and points to SROs as perpetuating rape culture. Much literature and media coverage in recent years has highlighted how reporting sexual violence can itself be painful and retraumatizing for survivors. Testimonials from students illustrate how this process plays out within Ottawa schools. A non-binary transmasculine OCDSB alumnus describes how they and their friend, who "was in full tears," were pressured against their

will into filing a report against a sexual abuser. One of the SROs involved, a woman, appeared sympathetic but still "couldn't understand why [they] wouldn't want to do it." That is, even when showing apparent concern for survivors, SROs refused to acknowledge that such action could and was causing further harm to them. In other instances, when students did attempt to come forward about sexual violence, officers actively undermined and dismissed survivors' experiences, or else accused them of lying. Of a friend's experience with reporting, one respondent says that "Instead of listening and responding with empathy, my school's SRO tried to poke holes in her story." Another SRO forcibly confined a current OCDSB student in a locked room and coerced her into giving a witness statement to a sexual assault she had not been around for herself, telling her she could only leave once she had done so. At the same time, he interrogated her about whether she believed the victim had fabricated their claims.

As well, students repeatedly identify SROs as a source of gender-based violence and harassment themselves. Multiple participants bring up instances of sexual and gendered harassment from SROs themselves against gender-oppressed students such as trapping two young girls in a room and screaming at them for twenty minutes. This can and has had a severe negative impact on the well-being of those targeted, as with one person who says that "being in the vicinity of an officer, that alone is enough to induce one of [their] fucking crippling anxiety attacks." Additionally, two people refer to

incidents where SROs stalked youth. This behaviour is sometimes rationalized as an extension of their duties, though it may extend beyond the school day, as with an SRO who "broke into [a student's] home to prove she was doing drugs." This demonstrates again how their more blatant transgressions are still deeply entwined with and enabled by their official duties to surveil and criminalize students.

The focus in schools on surveilling and policing students also overlooks other forms of sexual violence perpetrated by adults in positions of power, as with teachers who groom and prey on young people, cases of which continue to come to light more recently. A former K-12 OCDSB student says that "[s]ome of these incidents [of child sexual assault] have gone on for years and SROs are not equipped, nor were they ever equipped, in assisting in these situations." Another alumnus describes, looking back on their school experiences as an adult, putting together patterns of inappropriate and alarming behaviour from one such teacher who was later exposed in the media. They "even as a student thought some stuff was vaguely sketchy but god knows where the cop was or what he was doing." SRO-led efforts to tackle sexual violence, focussed on victim-blaming rhetoric that instills shame and fear, fail youth by leaving them unprepared to actually identify predatory behaviour and power dynamics present in school settings, while never placing that same scrutiny on adult perpetrators. In the first respondent's words, "SROs are intimidating and harmful presences in

schools. They should be removed immediately with resources devoted to actually creating a school culture that allows cases of child sexual assault not to be the norm."

SROs' position as a part of the school-to-prison pipeline inherently precludes them from effectively supporting impacted students. While they may "emphasize that they were here for us students just like any teacher or guidance counsellor... the way they patrol the halls carrying visible weapons and protective gear definitely contradicts that message." These responses unambiguously demonstrate that the current, policing-focussed approach to addressing sexual violence in OCDSB schools is not only ineffective but itself a preventable cause of further harm and trauma. ■

"The police officer at my high school... stalked someone I knew at this same school a few years later back to her home and broke into her home to prove she was doing drugs (he'd been harassing her previous to this incident). He was later charged. He only caused more harm in being present in a learning environment. There is no reason for police officers to have an active presence in schools." - A former OCDSB student

"They did assemblies about revenge porn. Yet they focused on shaming and scaring the girls. They said we could be charged for creating and distributing child pornography therefore if it was shared around the school it was our fault for not being smart. It was our fault for taking the nudes in the first place. My friends and I felt annoyed and confused and ashamed. We didn't know if we could take pictures in bikinis. We didn't tell anyone when our pictures were shared without our consent. When my boyfriend shared mine without my consent I was terrified I was going to be arrested so I told no adults and just suffered alone." - A non-binary former OCDSB student

SECTION 2.3

Mental and Emotional Impacts

There are significant adverse mental health effects Ottawa students experience as a direct result of SROs. Students report poor self-esteem and negative self-perceptions created by SRO surveillance. White students are also noticing these stark differences: "As a white woman I feel like [SROs] didn't affect me to the extent it affected others," a current OCDSB student writes. Student testimonies from our study reveal that youth felt (in their own words) anxious, tense, fearful, mistrustful, stressed, victim-blamed, criminalized, patronized, uneasy, scared, and uncomfortable with police presence in schools: "like there's [a] rat in my house," says one Black former OCDSB student. A current OCDSB student writes that SROs "made the [school's] atmosphere tense, my poc friends were especially anxious." Biomedical research shows that prolonged exposure to stressors is known to have short and long-term health effects (Chestnut et al., 2021). For one's mental health, this could lead to developing anxiety, depression, and/or low self-esteem (Chestnut et al., 2021; Kovalenko, 2012). When students are continuously in a state of fear and anxiety, they are not able to focus well in school, which can have long-lasting effects--physically, mentally and for future aspirations.



"Police have no business being in schools if there is no legitimate and immediate threat to the safety of the entire student body and faculty. As a student growing up in the early 2000s in the Ottawa Carleton school board, I never felt supported or worthy, I was made to feel completely worthless and inadequate by my supposed educators. We need more black and brown teachers educating our children . We must do better because god knows I've spent nearly my entire 20s going through therapy for the shit I went through At the hands of systematic racism at schools." - A racialized former OCDSB student

The self-esteem of racialized students is significantly affected by internalizing the disproportionate discipline they are subject to. As a result, they believe they are incapable of progressing to post-secondary education or excelling in future endeavours (Bernard and Smith, 2018). This is consistent with experiences of students in Ottawa schools as, as highlighted above, a former OCDSB graduate revealed that they were "made to feel completely worthless and inadequate by [their] supposed educators." Policing in schools inherently categorizes students and their behaviour as deviant and criminal which can greatly impact their self-perceived notions on identity and actually escalate undesirable behaviour (Kovalenko, 2012). The racist treatment by educators compounded by that of SROs drastically intensifies these experiences. This is highlighted by an Afro-Arab former OCDSB student who writes that SROs "made school feel like a prison, made students feel inferior and punished" which does not foster an appropriate learning environment for students who felt constricted and unsafe to the point of having to leave "the premises when cops were there." Research has found that youth actively care about their education, however, when SROs are present the constant surveillance and over-regulation affects their ability to learn effectively which correlates to seemingly 'bad' behaviour such as leaving school to prioritize their mental health and safety as quoted above (Salole & Abdulle, 2015). Concurrently, labelling youth, especially racialized youth, as criminals through SRO policing and the school-to-prison pipeline correlates to future deviance (Kovalenko, 2012). SROs

evidently escalate great harms to Ottawa student self-esteem and self-perceptions. This is especially worrying considering that SROs and school policing are not interventions that only affect the lives of youth during the time they are in secondary education, but rather they have the ability to negatively affect the long-term trajectory of the affected students' lives.

"(SROs) gave kids a hard time. Folks tended to come from disadvantaged backgrounds at my school. Struggles that would have been better addressed through [support] were often dealt with by officers instead. A lot of kids were criminalized for behaviours that were really just symptoms of mental health/addiction struggles. Overall, though, the SROs didn't do a whole lot. Just kind of walked around and made people feel like they were always being surveilled." - A former OCDSB student

The quoted testimony from a former OCDSB student paints a telling picture of how criminalization in schools exacerbates mental health issues as opposed to fostering a safe environment where schools should support the mental and emotional wellbeing of their students. Surveyed Ottawa students conveyed inadequate support for their mental health, for instance, a recent OCDSB graduate wrote that schools need "mental health access (more social workers + psychologists, ones that work w marginalized groups), art supplies, better guests for assemblies (especially for mental health!!! Bring in a psychologist)." Another student expressed that "schools also need to be investing in mental health intervention that ACTUALLY prioritizes the student & real confidentiality." As the above quote makes evident, the constant fear of surveillance by SROs is partnered with a lack of appropriate mental healthcare for students who lack a safe space to express their mental and emotional anxieties. This is a particular issue when students feel as though SROs affect the very reason they attend school, to learn and gain valuable knowledge, where one student writes "It makes it feel less safe, and less like a learning environment." This directly calls attention to the way resources are being funded in Ottawa schools and the concerning implications of school boards' support toward policing over providing necessary mental and emotional support for youth to facilitate their learning. ■

"School is where every child deserves to feel safe and secure to grow and develop their intellectual and emotional wellness." - A former OCDSB student

"Very uncomfortable especially knowing they were paid more than my actual teachers" - A Black former OCDSB student

"Having SROs in the school pointed out to the rest of us the people who were "in trouble" which alienated students from each other. SROs were always in the position of power and authority - you couldn't say no to a conversation with them. These things don't foster better relationships, they fracture and divide." - A female former OCDSB student



SECTION 2.4

Creating an Unsafe Space: School Atmosphere and Heightened Surveillance

This section explains two themes, school atmosphere and heightened surveillance, both which create an unsafe space for students. Police presence in Ottawa schools create atmospheres of fear and intimidation. Student participants in our study write about feeling unsafe and surveilled in their learning environments, therefore indicating the detrimental effect they have on the creation of a healthy learning environment where all students feel comfortable. Research from other Canadian studies indicates the same negative effect where students in Ontario feel like they cannot perform well if continuously surveilled by police-in-school programs (Salole & Abdulle, 2015). Students exposed to the SRO program also indicate that schools with a majority white demographic would not have the same level of surveillance.

Feelings of unsafety from SROs come in many forms. Some students report hearing about incidents that others have had, while others report being followed, badgered, criminalized, and feeling anxious when approached by an SRO. This makes students feel like they are walking on eggshells at all times

"I don't mess with feds, when they were at my school I felt like there was an intruder in my house. It makes you feel like you need to watch their every move, you never know what they might be plotting." - A Black former OCDSB student

while having to maintain their grades and activities. As aforementioned, prolonged exposure to feelings of racism and hypervigilance is incredibly disastrous; therefore, will greatly hinder academic success and abilities to learn. Being unsafe in a place where youth spend the majority of their days adds additional stressors for youth, which again, could become detrimental to their health. Many student participants also report that their immigrant status adds another layer of criminalization for them which SROs use as a means to target them. Consequent of the school-to-deportation pipeline, students who were newcomers or who have immigrant parents felt especially at risk in the presence of SROs. One current OCDSB student writes, "Racism, make school feel uncomfortable. [SROs] follow you around and it just freaks us students out. There will always be a fear for us students with immigrant parents, or coloured backgrounds. We don't need the extra stress. They're useless anyways and just stand around to intimidate you and show you they're the big guys. Go find a useful role in society for once."

Notably, Ottawa students report that their school environment has become hostile due to alienation from other students. Youth can no longer engage normally with others in fear that they are seen as “people who were ‘in trouble’”. This could create barriers in making and maintaining friendships with peers. This could also increase the chances of the student becoming a target for other students for bullying or harassment. A social environment is a hallmark for a school setting; thus, students should be free to engage with each other in order to develop healthy and diverse social skills. Additionally, because of power dynamics, SROs engage in conversations with students when they (as minors) are incapable of consenting to that dialogue. Students have indicated that they feel helpless and powerless which is compounded by the fact that many feel as if knowing their rights against police authorities is meaningless when police have the upper hand in decision making. Mosher (2008) states that the differences in power dynamics between authority figures and students allow those in power, the SROs and school employees, to be “unconstrained by the law”, even when students attempt to

stand up for themselves using their legal rights. ■

“It made me feel uncomfortable because my school had a majority of non-white people. I knew if this was a white private school there’d be less surveillance by law enforcement. It was a white police officer who just patrolled the halls. It felt like they were waiting for something to happen all the time.” - An Inuk former OCDSB student

-“It doesn’t make me feel anymore secure, it brings me a sense of worry, a sense that something is wrong and almost like we’re being restricted.” - A former OCDSB student

“I remember one time I was coming into school late and a SRO was walking in at the same time and she glanced at me and I got a bit anxious and all I told myself at time was to ‘go to class and don’t look suspicious’ (although there was nothing I had or could’ve done that would’ve got me in trouble), until she just said she liked my hair and to have a good day and I got calm again, but I think the anxiousness is just rooted inside from hearing about and seeing past events.” - A former OCDSB student

SECTION 2.5

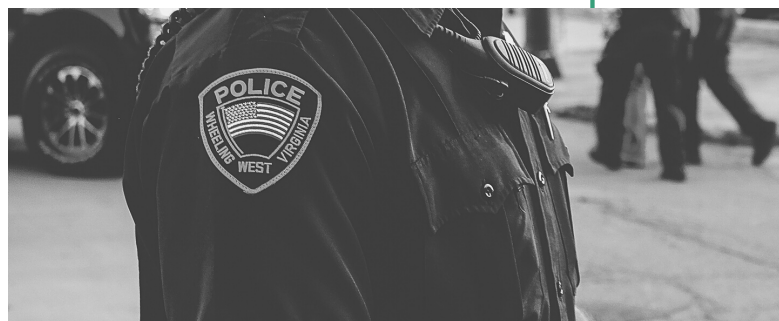
School Performance and Extracurriculars

In the above section, student experiences outlined how SROs negatively impact their learning environment. Ottawa's SRO program was established to provide safety and support to students, yet the nature of Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) historically violent roots and their contemporary function to control, discipline, and criminalize has instead created an uncomfortable and hostile learning environment for racialized, 2SLGBTQ+ and gender-oppressed students. Therefore, maintaining relationships with police forces through police-in-school programs and memorandum of understanding's replicates and intensifies systemic barriers by fostering a culture of punishment and surveillance (a carceral culture). In addition, a white, cisgender male as the default culture is reflected in teacher and administration biases, curriculum content, school policy, and ultimately, student experiences during school activities. Salole & Abdulle (2015), found that "students excluded from school not only miss out on educational enrichment...they are simultaneously excluded from crucial meals and recreational programs." A school is a space for growth, play, discovery, and inspiration, but it is not the reality for the students who are targeted by SRO programs. For Black,

Indigenous, and other students of colour, people who use drugs, disabled, and 2SLGBTQ+ youth, school is a space of caution, fear, distrust and neglect where school performance and involvement in extracurriculars becomes significantly impacted.

According to OPS, Ottawa's SRO program allows police to address "incidents that occur when students are on the way to school or home after the school day may also be dealt with by the SRO," thereby leaving youth with no refuge from the abuses of policing outside of school (Ottawa Police Services). Given how racialized and low-income communities across the city are already over-policed, many students live lives where policing is inescapable.

"I've always avoided them [SROs], because I've never felt safe around heavily padded, armed adults, traipsing around my school for no good reason while I'm trying to get an education."
- A former OCDSB student



"I used to go to woodroffe high school and I didn't have a positive experience with the school's officer being Afro-Indigenous...I don't think police should be in schools because their targeting us and it's causing kids to drop out develop anxiety and depression fear for when they come to school it's bad enough we're nervous walking outside and seeing cop cars but now we fear when we're walking down the hallway."

A former OCDSB student reports that an SRO was stalking a student from their school. Another former OCDSB student details their experience with policing outside the grounds of the school: "I luckily had a better experience than many of my peers, but there was an SRO that was called during a day when students had permission from their parents to leave school for a protest, and while some of us were leaving, the SRO arrived and harassed us, making claims that it was going to make us look bad for standing up for what we believed in." Evidently, it is not just mental and emotional impacts that cause students to not involve themselves in extracurricular

activities after school, but also the physical presence of SROs who attempt to prevent them from doing so. Student testimonies also reveal that being a teenager is a time of great curiosity, exploration, and learning from mistakes. With police involvement and carceral culture on school grounds, Black students, Indigenous students and students of colour, are expected to adhere to a higher maturity level than white students their same age as a result of adultification. Racialized students, especially, quickly become aware that police officers, teachers, and administration watch them more closely, expecting them to make a mistake. This makes it harder to learn when students want to learn, which is supported by a former OCDSB student reporting that, "Young, impressionable students were labeled and harassed, some searched without parents or guardians present at the time". A harmful learning environment will create barriers to future success. This is explained in the next section's theme: future opportunities. ■



SECTION 2.6

Future Opportunities Diminished

Relying on criminalization and heavily carceral punitive responses fails to treat students as children who should be nurtured into achieving their best capabilities. Specifically, strict zero-tolerance policies paired with badge and gun interventions or removal from the classroom disproportionately impact racialized youth and are a result of adultification. Unlike their white peers, Black, Indigenous, and other racialized students are expected to fail and face adult repercussions when they do. This process and outcome reduce students' ability to succeed in school and beyond graduation because, as they report, so much of their energy at school is spent in fear, uncertainty and frustration instead of experiencing healthy and safe learning. Kovalenko (2012) states, "One of the most prominent implications of the zero tolerance disciplinary policies is its negative impact on students' academic performance – students are essentially rendered incapacitated when they are suspended from the classroom setting." In addition, when students lose prolonged classroom instruction time, they are also more likely to be exposed to dangerous situations out of school as the school-to-prison pipeline is designed to cause (Kovalenko, 2012).

The school-to-prison pipeline, which targets marginalized students through disciplinary policies and patterns of socialization in order to push them out of school and into the criminal justice system, operates in plain sight throughout the Ottawa education system (Bernard and Smith, 2018). A racialized former OCDSB student recalls a life-altering incident following the criminalization of their behaviour: "I was charged with assault while this student who was racist towards me sat in class nothing was altered in his life. I was expelled I didn't get to graduate with my friends, and I was sent to a school outside of my district in LowerTown Ottawa how they thought that was beneficial I do not know!!! I spent a yr in and out of court over this, I hated/feared cops ever since that day. I hope for the new generation you will make a change with having "resource officers" in our schools they are of no benefit unless you are white. I was suspended for 5 days, and once I came back from my 5 day suspension they proceed to expell me, and arrest/charge me with assault".

"our school was 80% POC. Mostly boys. All the officers, mostly white men, had no relationship with parents or students. They weren't "fighting" anything except maybe the successful futures of those boys" - A current OCDSB student

Traumatizing events like these impact students and their families for life. Criminal records prevent job opportunities from being secured as well as post-secondary education enrolment in some cases, despite the fact that research shows how enrolment in education is actually a preventative measure in keeping young people away from the criminal justice system (Kovalenko, 2012). According to OPS, between 2017 and 2019 there were 324 criminal investigation reports done by SROs, 63 of which resulted in someone being charged (Ottawa Citizen, 2020). 63 Ottawa students subjected to psychological trauma, court expenses, and time out of school.

“[On relationship between students and SROs] Poor, they did not deter them from [making mistakes] they just opened the door for them to suspended and punished” - A racialized former OCDSB student

As already mentioned, racialized youth are critically watched, excessively policed in school and out of school, and removed from school at disproportionate rates. Furthermore, racialized youth coming into contact with police at a higher rate than white youth increases the likelihood of them being processed by the justice system and sentenced to a prison term (Kovalenko, 2012). All of this creates internal and external barriers to their

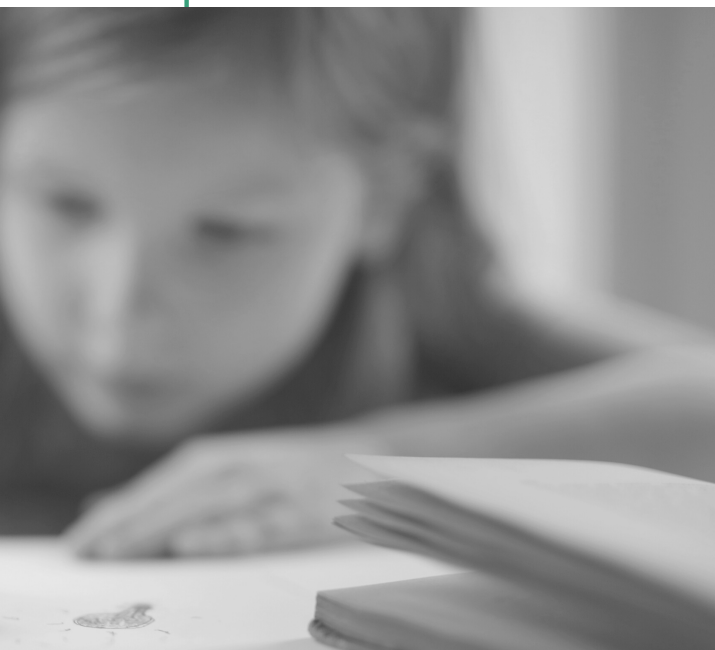
academic success and equitable opportunities to learn. Kovalenko (2012) states that “education improves students’ future opportunities.” A Toronto District School Board study reported that more than a third of graduating African-Canadian students left high school with scarce resources to build a stable adult life (Bernard & Smith, 2015). Students come to school to learn and all they want is a learning environment where they excel and feel valued for who they are; which is something most white, cis het, male, abled, and high socioeconomic students are allowed. White students are given the chance to learn without hyper-surveillance, targeted intimidation, or the deep-seated fear that their mistakes will lead to criminalization. This is not the case for Black and Indigenous students or immigrant and refugee learners. Racialized and marginalized students report more police intervention at

“When I went to school under the OCDSB I think police would be present on a daily basis and would go around with canines to sniff out if high school students had drugs....They would be there to arrest black students if they got into fights with one another but the same was not applied to white students.” - A former OCDSB student

school, surveillance, emotional impact, and more suspensions for their behaviour as a result. What is unique about police-in-school programs is that it operates under the assumption that criminality exists and an officer must wait for it (Madan, 2016). SROs, the installation of security cameras, and hall monitors exist in the absence of any actual evidence of wrongdoing, therefore criminality (or the possibility of it) is ever-present (Madan, 2016).

The mere presence of SROs creates a sense of fear that their teenage "mistakes will lead to really bad consequences" and disrupts their ability to thrive. Students cannot learn when they feel their "life [was] in danger when [they] were meant to be studying." This upholds a system of white supremacy, power, and comfort at the expense of marginalized students' safety and agency. A power dynamic has been instilled in policing and carceral frameworks since the very beginnings of its operation. ■

"I grew up in Herongate, an underfunded, racialized area in Ottawa South, and my high school, Ridgemont HS, had an SRO officer we would see on a daily basis. He was not the first, nor was he the last to criminalize Black youth, aggressively stopping them in hallways for nothing, speaking to them in demeaning tones and language, etc. Let us no longer pretend cops have added anything to the fabric of our educational systems. Instead, they only further institutional frameworks of white supremacy and carcerality, and enough is enough. We demand justice. No cops in our neighbourhoods, no cops in our schools." - A racialized former OCDSB student

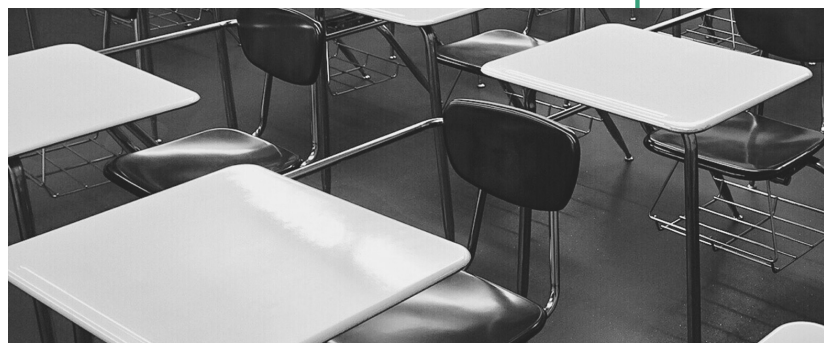


SECTION 3.1

Conclusion

The disproportionate impacts of policing in schools felt by racialized and gender-oppressed youth (alongside their peers) and the consequent mental and emotional impacts, unsafe educational environments, school performance, and limiting of future opportunities is plainly reported by current and former Ottawa students. Students are well aware of the harms caused by school policing infrastructure, culture, and practice and how the criminalization of school discipline relies on sophisticated regimes of security, surveillance, and preemptive policing (Madan, 2016). The presence of an SRO program in Ottawa schools exemplifies the expansive nature of policing that requires the control, discipline, and surveillance of racialized bodies--which in this case, are students. After the Toronto District School Board ended their SRO program in 2017, there was a significant decrease in their use of disciplinary measures against students (Toronto District School Board, 2020). Suspensions dropped by 24% and expulsions by 53% (Toronto District School Board, 2020). It is clear that without the presence of police officers in schools the previously intensified environment of fear and mistrust that influences student performance has since significantly reduced.

In Canada's 21st and 23rd periodic report for the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination as part of the efforts to implement the International Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the committee spoke to their concern about racial disparities in the Canadian education system (United Nations, 2017). Specifically, "unequal access to quality education, especially for African-Canadian and Indigenous children", and how "African-Canadian students are reportedly disciplined more harshly than other students, which forces them out of learning environments and contributes to the 'school-to-prison pipeline'" (United Nations, 2017). The continuation of policing, formal and informal, in Ottawa schools breaks this international commitment, which Canada is a signatory on, as the presence of police in schools is a direct cause of the school-to-prison pipeline. In tandem with this commitment, literature on policing in Canadian schools, and the findings from participants in our study, we conclude that police-free schools are a necessary facet of a just education system and without them, there cannot be healthy, equitable, and barrier-free public education in Ottawa and in Canada. ■



SECTION 3.2

Solutions

A radical new approach to education in Ottawa is necessary to obtain truly healthy and equitable schools. Fostering an environment of trust, care, support, and belonging is crucial for moving forward without policing in schools. In addition to calls for police-free schools Ottawa-wide, the implementation of non-punitive and non-disciplinary practices that centre restorative and transformative justice for intervention is highly advised. These approaches to repairing any harms caused in school have been studied extensively and proven to be largely successful, for example with the successes in the Toronto District School Board (Toronto District School Board, 2020). At Almaguin Highlands Secondary School, restorative justice practices have proved to be successful as well with the school using meditation, healing circles, and most frequently, group conferences (McCullough, M.). Since the beginning of this program, there have been zero re-offenses (McCullough, M.). Students can be victims as much as they are perpetrators; thus, with restorative and transformative justice, this means that systems of oppression that caused the harm in the first place will not be replicated as engagement with students is instead in the form of accountability and healing. A complete

reimagining of the educational system in Ottawa will, too, require zero-tolerance approaches to end as they leave no space for growth. ■



SECTION 3.3

Recommendations

Echoing our police-free schools movement partners, the Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network (LAEN), we are calling for: 1) the removal of police-in-school programs and any/all policing structures structures, 2) deprioritization of the use of police as an instrument of last resort and institutional shift away from punitive disciplinary practices and ensuring accountability measures, and 3) reallocation of funds through an equity lens to support students (LAEN, 2021). Moreover, we also adopt U.S based Alliance for Educational Justice's definition of police-free schools: "dismantling school policing infrastructure, culture, and practice; ending school militarization and surveillance; and building a new liberatory education system" (LAEN, 2021).

Deprioritization of Policing

1. Immediately terminate the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, and prohibit the future use of comparable programs structured under a reformist framework.
2. Drastically narrow down the memorandum of understanding between school boards and Ottawa Police Services (OPS) to only allow OPS officers in schools during provincially mandated occurrences.

3. Completely remove all policing structures from schools (e.g. metal detectors and surveillance systems).
4. Deprioritize the use of police as an instrument of last resort, and instead focus on transformative practices that are grounded in healing centred engagement/practices and are relationship centred that do not criminalize students.
5. Begin collecting intersectional race and gender-based data on every police interaction in schools.

Reallocation of Policing Funds & Student Investment

1. Reallocate any/all school board funds from the School Resource Officer (SRO) program and school policing structures towards support for students. Also look at all school funding and resources and reallocate through an equity lens to ensure all students are supported and centring those most negatively impacted. (View Table 1.0 below)
2. Begin investing in long-term plans for student support.

Restorative and Transformative Futures

1. Dismantle oppressive systems within the school board, curriculum, and population to fulfill the responsibility to provide equitable access to quality, affirming educational environments and opportunities.
2. Provide opportunities for staff to be trained in restorative and transformative justice practices; Move beyond anti-racist rhetoric and fully fund these opportunities.

Use reference Table 1.0 (Student submitted suggestions for the reallocation of policing funds) as a starting point for investment in restorative and transformative futures that centre student support. ■

Table 1.0 Student submitted suggestions for the reallocation of policing funds

Staff additions	<p>Black/African diasporic, Indigenous, Racialized among all intersectional identity markers who are culturally fit, and trauma-informed staff who are grounded in healing centred engagement and have proven records of their practices being anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equitable. Power dynamics within the school and education system are actionably recognized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsellors • Social workers • Psychologists • Community health workers • Peer support • People trained in nonviolent crisis intervention • More racialized teachers with equity, diversity, and inclusion training who use anti-carceral methods of intervention and support
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer support safe spaces, circles, and group support • Mentorship programs • Community-led programs for informal reporting • Outreach programs • Transformative justice and healing centred practices for justice resolutions for interpersonal conflict • Mandatory assemblies and class workshops surrounding interpersonal conflict, power, and privilege with active and moderated participation from peers (equity consultants running workshops)

Table 1.0 Cont'd student submitted suggestions for the reallocation of policing funds

Social services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial safety nets • Life skills programs • Immigrant support programs • Free tutoring • After-school programs • Free food programs (breakfast emphasized the most)
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed lockers • Ridding of lead in pipes • Adequate air circulation and heat • Adequately spaced classrooms (cease the use of portables) • Accessibility for disabled students
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded technology (e.g. computers) • New textbooks with updated content • Funding for student clubs • Upgraded science equipment • Diversifying curriculum content • Expanded and better-invested art and music programs • Expanded and better-invested sports/gym programs and equipment

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To the Board of Trustees,

Hello, I am Uyanda, a student at Lisgar Collegiate Institute. I am writing this letter to express my concerns regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) program.

Many students and the organization, Asilu Collective have called on the OCDSB and the other three Ottawa school boards for the elimination of police in schools. The [SRO report](#) released this week by Asilu Collective contains over 100 testimonies and the OCDSB review both support the claim that policing is violent and causes harm to students. I am here to echo this as I see the harm that police in schools cause students. Policing in schools disproportionately impacts Black and Indigenous people.

Students across the school board call on the Board of Trustees to end the SRO Program and to limit police involvement in schools as to what is mandated by the province of Ontario. Students need their calls heard, they need their demands met. Students need solutions to their problems. We can no longer choose to ignore the systemic issues in policing. We cannot continue to uphold a system that has contributed to oppression. We cannot continue to add more students into the school-to-prison pipeline.

We need to create a safe and comfortable environment for all students across the school board. Students should not have to fear being at school. I recommend that instead of funding the SRO program, the school board uses the funding to better the students. This can be by funding more social services, mental health programs and ensuring staff is representative of the students. If OCDSB wants to prioritize the well-being of students, the SRO program needs to end.

Best Regards
Uyanda Mntambo



Creating a Culture...

of Innovation, Caring and Social Responsibility.



REGISTER TO BECOME A DELEGATE

Fostering a Culture of Caring

(Reference: [Ottawa-Carleton District School Board By-Laws and Standing Rules](#))

Individuals or groups are welcome to appear as a delegation to express their concerns, provide comments or ask questions on any matter within the mandate of the Board or Committee. In accordance with the Board's bylaws, delegations shall be permitted up to four (4) minutes to address the Board where the delegation has provided a written submission no later than 4:00 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the meeting. Delegations registering after the cutoff shall be granted two (2) minutes. All interested delegates must complete and submit the following form.

Once you have submitted your request, a member of the Board Services team will be in touch with you to confirm the delegation and provide the necessary meeting details and instructions.

If you have any questions regarding the delegation process please contact Nicole Guthrie, Manager of Board Services at nicole.guthrie@ocdsb.ca

Also, please note that the Board and Committee of the Whole meetings are video and audio recorded.

Contact Information

First Name: *

Jonathan

Last Name: *

Davis

Address: *

[Redacted Address]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[Redacted Postal Code]

Phone Number: *

[Redacted Phone Number]

Email Address: *

[Redacted Email Address]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[Redacted Email Address]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Advisory Committee on Equity

Meeting Date: *

6/8/2021

Summary of issue/concern: *

I am a Jamaican Canadian single parent with a five year old Indigenous Canadian child who attends an OCDSB school. I want the police removed from our schools. The Ottawa Police are an openly racist institution that flies a racist "Thin Blue Line" flag. I want every delegate to get a chance to speak.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Let every delegate speak! Remove the police from our schools!

Date: *

6/8/2021

Personal Information as defined by the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) is collected under the authority of the Education Act and the Municipal Act, in accordance with the provisions of MFIPPA. Please be aware that your name and the summary of concern and remedies sought are subject to disclosure by way of publication of the agenda on the Board's website.

I'm writing today to express my deep concern about the SRO program in OCDSB system. Schools should be spaces of learning and growth - kids need support and safety, not surveillance and criminalization.

Especially in this moment, it is incredibly important for the OCDSB board to vote to end their relationship with the OPS, to get cops and all forms of surveillance and criminalization out of schools, and to give students the supports and programming they are crying out for - peer support, mental health support, extracurriculars and arts programming.

I am the aunt to an incredible and beautiful neurodivergent gender fluid kid - I am desperate to make schools a place where they can thrive, not one that will be a threat to them. As a white person, I listen to the testimonies and stories of my Black and Brown friends and community members, and hear them say that the way to accomplish safe schools is to get cops out.

Thanks for your time,
-Thea



ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY REPORT

April 29, 2021

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Voting Members: Ayan Karshe (Chair), Nasrin Javanfar, Seema Lamba, Bronwyn Funiciello, Ryan Doucette (Young Leaders Advisory Council), Maria Teresa Garcia (Ottawa Community Immigrant Services), Chandonette Johnson (Jaku Konbit)

Non-Voting Members: Elaine Hayles, Bob Dawson, Said Mohamed, Yazhuo Zhang, Inini McHugh (Indigenous Education Advisory Committee), Rob Campbell (Trustee), Justine Bell (Trustee), Susan Cowin (Special Education Advisory Committee), Breanna Pizzuto (Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools)

Staff and Guests: Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Michael Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Kevin Gardner (Manager, Financial Services) Jessica Young (Vice Principal, Canterbury High School), Melissa Collins (System Principal, Equity), Sue Rice (Equity Instructional Coach), David Sutton (OCDSB Instructor), Jeannine Bradley (OCDSB Instructor) Susan Gardner Susan Gardner (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), Joy Liu (Student Trustee), Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator), and Kathryn Desplanque (Guest).

1. Welcome

Chair Karshe opened the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

She acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on the unceded, unsundered Territory of the Anishinaabeg Algonquin Nation, whose presence reaches back to time immemorial and to this present moment. She stated that as settlers, immigrants, migrants and visitors on their land, may the meeting participants seek to honour the Algonquin people as its rightful stewards and keepers.

She noted the shared goal of the committee to protect and support all children, with a focus on those who are oppressed by colonial systems. She urged participants to enter the space with humility and compassion, and in conversation

to seek to center Black children, Indigenous children, children of colour, children with special needs, LGBTQA2I children and children living below the poverty line.

She expressed hope that while participants seek to change schools for the better, that they also create a space for those people who have also experienced the consequences of white supremacy and systemic racism, in the past and in the present.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Nasrin Javanfar,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Community Discussion - Open Space

3.1 Newcomers to Canada Navigating the Public School System (M. Garcia and N. Javanfar)

Ms. Javanfar, a former multicultural liaison officer (MLO) in Toronto, Ontario, presented a slideshow to initiate discussions among school staff and policy makers to provide support for students and their families from the Middle East. The content in the presentation was linked to the findings in Report 21-014, Analysis of Disproportionality and Disparity in Grade 10 Credit Accumulation, where only 77.5% of students identifying as Middle Eastern accumulate 16 credits by the end of grade 10. She highlighted the structure of the education system in the Middle Eastern countries: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel and Palestine Territories, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Iran. The children from these countries work within a highly competitive and teacher-centred school environment, without group assignments or long-term projects. The focus in the Middle Eastern school system is mainly focused on cognitive and language development. When teaching these children in Canada, staff is challenged due to a lack of knowledge about the student's culture, parent's expectations and lack of information about the student's educational background or age grouping. She offered the following suggestions to help address the barriers to success for Middle Eastern children:

- Use community media to connect with parents;
- Provide ongoing cultural training for school staff;
- Enlist Middle Eastern high school students to mentor elementary students; and

- Connect with successful community members in different trades and professions to provide support for high school students.

Ms. Javanfar emphasized the importance of connecting with communities to ensure that they are aware of the variety of activities and initiatives being offered by the District and promoted on the website.

Ms. Garcia mentioned that in the ACE meeting of 27 May 2021, she will provide the committee with a presentation of the work being undertaken at the District to support newcomers to schools who are navigating the public school system.

In response to comments during the presentation and in discussion, the following points were noted:

- It is important to listen more and assume less when introducing students, who come from elsewhere in the world, to study in Canada;
- The MLO program provides settlement and interpretation services to students, parents, and school staff at OCDSB schools;
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) offers MLOs who visit all schools in Ottawa. They perform translation services and provide cultural interpretation between staff and parents;
- The MLO program is funded by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and in part by the District;
- For a future ACE meeting, identify the ways in which the District is directly making community connections to help Middle Eastern students find success;
- In the recent Student Senate budget discussion, the issue of a limited ratio of translators to students was raised;
- Develop a translated package for newcomer families, illustrating and describing the support available in the District, along with the community resources;
- Sourcing culturally sensitive mental health resources continues to be a challenge for students attempting to access these supports; and
- Build summer transition supports for newcomer families. Public school may be a lone point of contact for these families with Canadian society.

4. Reports

4.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Smith reported that her portfolio consists of Continuing Education. She shared that, stemming directly from the identity-based data collection, a new grade nine academic English course will be open to all learners who identify as Black, African and Caribbean descent over the summer months, regardless of their past performance in English courses. The course will be re-written to highlight Black excellence, connecting to community, mentoring and student identity. Approximately 5000 students across the District enroll in summer programs. As a starting point, these courses will be offered in the summer; however, the goal is to influence the practice across the District within the regular school year. A team of writers to assist with the course plan includes representatives from the Ottawa Black Educators Network, Black graduation coaches, and English Department Heads. Engagement has been sought from community partners and through those partnerships, experiential learning opportunities have been created for the students entering the course. The neighbourhood outreach team, the Youth Futures program and the Boys and Girls Club have agreed to assist with circulating information about the program. She highlighted that Dr. Clyde Ledbetter from Jaku Konbit has been approached to provide the District with valuable feedback to be integrated into the program. In addition, Dr. Carl James, who holds the Jean Augustine Chair in Community, Education and Diaspora at York University has been consulted on the creation of the program.

Ms. Hayles contributed that in the Black community there is a stigma, by association, with the concept of school over the summer holiday. Superintendent Smith clarified that the program is a "reach ahead" summer credit program for students transitioning from grade 8 into grade 9. She disclosed that part of the reason for the specific programming was motivated from student feedback who expressed concern about successful outcomes for themselves in high school.

In response to a query on student recruitment from Ms. Lamba, Superintendent Smith submitted that materials will be distributed across school sites and videos are being made for the District website. Initial outreach will be towards those students identified by Black graduation coaches as those who would benefit from further enrichment in an academic English course before entering high school.

Ms. Johnson-Arowolo expressed concern of a potential struggle to have enough time to read and digest the material assigned over a short period, particularly for boys, as shown in studies on the reading gender gap. Superintendent Smith shared that depending on the COVID-19 safety precaution recommendations, a plan is in place to allow for in-class instruction on a daily basis. Time allocated to digest the material is currently more than the students have in the quadmester system. The ratios in class will be kept to 1 teacher to 15 students. She explained that

after examining the English curriculum, many of the expectations can be met in innovative ways, such as a short film or a podcast celebrating identity.

Ms. Desplanque pursued the question of identity for the teachers of a Black excellence class. Superintendent Smith underscored that the hiring of Black educators is a priority. Ms. Bradley agreed that hiring Black teacher role models is a practice to be greatly prioritized. Alongside the Ottawa Black Educator Network, Ms. Bradley noted the Somali Teachers Network and Jaku Konbit as organizations to connect with in a search for teacher candidates suitable to teach the program.

a. Valuing Voices: Identity Matters Survey Reporting

Superintendent Smith stated that a third Valuing Voices: Identity Matters Survey report, linking student outcomes to identity collected through the Valuing Voices Survey will be presented to Committee of the Whole (COW) on 8 June 2021 and will focus more broadly on student achievement and streaming at both the elementary and secondary level. In the fall of 2021, a fourth report examining identity and sense of belonging in school will be available.

In response to a query about the timing of material going to COW in advance of the advisory committees, Superintendent Smith stated that the reports will be shared with ACE, however the District reports are handled differently from the consultation processes.

4.2 ACE Report, 25 February 2021

Moved by Elaine Hayles,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity Report of 25 February 2021 be received.

Carried

As part of business arising from the report of 25 February 2021, Ms. Hayles noted that a concern was raised that students accessing special education supports could be augmented in the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023. The Advisory Committee on Equity Report of 25 February 2021 states on folio 4: "The Roadmap includes support and programs for students with exceptional needs. Detailed information can be found in the OCSDB's annual Special Education Plan, published on the website."

Chair Karshe announced that the Special Education Advisory Committee invited the ACE Chairs to attend a meeting on 7 April 2021. Connections between the chairs of various advisory groups are occurring. She noted

that should ACE decide to discuss the goals of the Roadmap, a process can be formalized.

4.3 Committee of the Whole Report

Ms. Lamba reported that the Equitable Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion Policy was discussed in the COW meetings of 6 April 2021 and 20 April 2021. The policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on 27 April 2021. Chair Karshe expressed her gratitude towards Ms. Lamba for leading the consultation on policy revisions with the committee.

At the April 6th meeting, there was a discussion on Universal Screening Tool. COW discussed what factors should be considered to inform the exploration of universal screener and how a tool would ensure equity for racialized and minoritized students. ACE members expressed interest in hosting a presentation on the Universal Screening Tool to be supported by the Learning Support Services Team. There was a request to obtain data on the identities of students in each of the Specialized Program Classes (SPCs).

Two Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPBSA) resolutions were discussed recommending increased COVID-19 gap funding and funding for anti-racism data research. ACE members expressed their support of these recommendations.

Chair Karshe noted that the COW meetings are accessible to the public via the YouTube live stream on the District's events calendar website. For a full meeting report refer to the website under Board of Trustees, Agendas and Minutes.

5. Presentations

5.1 The OCDSB Budget Process Overview and Equity Funding (M. Carson)

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Carson presented details on the 2020-2021 revised estimates and the 2021-2022 budget process, highlighting a comparative summary of revenues and expenses, net results and accumulated surplus, information on education funding in Ontario, a COVID-related funding update and OCDSB budget assumptions.

CFO Carson explained that the District is required, by law, to present a balanced budget. The Ministry allows for school boards to budget for a deficit approximately equal to 1% of the overall budget. For the 2020-2021 school year approximately \$45 million in funding was received to offset COVID-19 related expenditures. Various uncertainties in an unusual year, resulted in low student enrolment, especially in kindergarten, with 1600 less students than anticipated. The loss of students impacted staffing. The province provided an additional \$50 million to be attributed to supports and emerging issues. He highlighted that with the additional \$6 million in

funding was used for the purchase of additional Chromebooks, other technology equipment and internet hotspots. The expenditures on these pieces of equipment will strengthen the technology fleet for future years.

CFO Carson noted that the Financial Services team awaits the announcements of the provincial Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) for the 2021-2022 school year. Until the final grant information is received, it continues to be a challenge to contemplate any flexibility in the budget for the coming year. The funding for additional custodial support in the daytime, technology optimization, ventilation enhancements, and additional teaching positions will not continue. Staff will present a budget that makes the assumption for the best scenario for a safe return to school for the 2021-2022 school year with the prospect that the province will show a commitment to the plan.

In response to the committee request to parse out equity spending at the District, Financial Services staff produced a chart for GSNs based on the allocations from the 2019-2020 school year. He identified the grants with the largest equity components:

- Special Education: \$100 million;
- English as a Second Language: \$60 million;
- Indigenous Education: \$16 million; and
- Continuing Education: \$11 million.

Priorities and Partnership Fund (PPF) allocations support students with mental health needs, student success opportunities, and engaging parents and communities. The PPF supported the hiring of a Human Rights and Equity Advisor.

In the future, the Financial Services team aims to be able to generate reporting against District objectives. For example, there is a specific amount of money allocated per month that is made available to support students who would not otherwise qualify for transportation. Currently these funds are not reported as part of an equity expenditure. Tracking expenditures on equity support will take some time and added staff resources, however forging linkages to specific initiatives is being considered.

In terms of the subsidization for programs and operations using an equity lens, CFO Carson clarified that salaries are the District's largest expenditure. Staff salaries account for 60% of the overall budget. There is a conscious effort to avoid relying simply on numbers, but rather to look at financial matters from a holistic perspective. CFO Carson advised that conversations with staff and the school community help prioritize the needs within schools.

During the discussion and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- Additional funds have been allocated to support graduation and instructional coaching initiatives in schools;
- There are some restrictions on funding envelopes from the Ministry, that have specific, "sweatered" funds which must go directly to the intended program, for example, Indigenous Education or Special Education;
- Departments within the school board receive funding based on their objectives, working towards the common goal of improving student success;
- The superintendents of instruction have been directed to review the way their departmental budgets align with the goals of the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023;
- A request was made to produce a report on how the initiatives of the Roadmap will be funded. CFO Carson stated that this information would be part of the broader budget discussions at COW, Budget.
- CFO explained that the District is working under the assumption that there is a requirement to allocate resources to the position of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor, along with identifying funds to support an administrative assistant position to support the Advisor;
- CFO noted that as the budget is set with certain limitations, new funding must be considered by decreasing an established funding focus in other areas of the organization;
- Should the OPSBA 2021 resolution to recommend that the Ministry of Education undertake a commitment to fund an additional grant for two full-time equivalent research officers fail, the District will shift internal resources to continue anti-racism data research;
- The OPSBA 2021 resolution to promote further COVID-19 gap funding was prepared in response to the province's encouragement that school boards use more than 1% of their own financial reserves to address potential COVID-19 expenditures for the 2021-2022 school year;
- A proposition for maintaining the level of funding for mental health supports, as were allocated as a response to COVID-19. The concern was that there will be a greater need for mental health supports as the pandemic-stressors have not subsided; and
- A suggestion to provide additional funding for the Authentic Student Learning Experience Tool (ASLE) as the project is making an impact

on Indigenous students by focusing on student voice and learning recovery plans that take into account the students interests.

Chair Karshe noted that there is a potential to engage on the budget topic through a sub-committee. She encouraged the committee members to register their interest by sending her an email.

6. Standing Items

6.1 Update from Steering Committee Representatives on Police Involvement in Schools

The item was deferred until 27 May 2021.

6.2 Safe Schools Policy and Code of Conduct Policy Phase II Consultation (M.J. Farrish)

The Code of Conduct Policy, Safe Schools Policy (Managing Student Behaviour) and Safe Schools Policy (Emergency Preparedness and Response) were sent to ACE for independent review on 21 April 2021.

Superintendent Farrish and Vice Principal Young presented a slideshow reviewing the safe schools and code of conduct policy consultations. During Phase I of the consultation process, several types of focus groups were formed: students, student senate, parents and guardians, multicultural liaison officers, school administrators and federation partners. Shared themes, which appeared often, were mental health and well-being of students and staff, greater need to monitor bullying in schools, addressing racial slurs, homophobia and sexism, dress code, defining the role of police in schools. Major revisions to the policies were shared. These revisions were made through discussion with the District Human Rights and Equity Advisor to provide an equity lens for inclusion, along with the integration of these policies with the Human Rights Policy currently being written.

Ms. Hayles expressed the concern that these policies affect the lives of the BIPOC student body; however Staff assigned to the policy team is composed of those who identify as predominantly White or of European Descent. She queried the extent of the involvement of Coordinator of Equity, Jacqueline Lawrence. Superintendent Farrish noted that part of the consultation outreach engaged Staff leads to identify affinity groups of students. Ms. Lawrence's student group was included in the fall/winter 2019 consultation process and the student group has been included again in phase 2 process by sharing the revised policies with them for input and feedback. Superintendent Farrish clarified that Staff do not approve the policies; the Board of Trustees approve policies.

During the discussion and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- The Code of Conduct Policy applies uniformly to all District schools;
- The Code of Conduct Policy includes language pertaining to dress code;
- A standalone Modified Days Policy is underdevelopment;
- The way that a student may report cases of infractions under these policies will be outlined in an official set of procedures, to be revised at a later date;
- Superintendent Farrish confirmed that the Human Rights Policy in development will be the governing policy; thereby being the overarching policy to guide all other policies pertaining to the rights of people.
- The Ministry requires certain specific policy documents kept by school boards;
- Under the guidance of the Human Rights and Equity Coordinator, language is to be included in the policies that highlight accountability for the administration of these policies at the school level; and
- Mechanisms to pursue the parameters of the policies are to be included. For example, a parent or guardian may wish to appeal a suspension. Information on the appeal process will be included in the procedures.

Many of the members left the meeting and quorum was lost at 9:01 p.m.

Ms. Lamba queried how these policies will address the issue of White principals implementing policies within targeted communities, as the data from OCDSB suspension reporting demonstrates higher rates of suspension for marginalized students. She requested a comparison between where the language has specifically changed between the original policy and the newly proposed policies. She noted that the highlights of changes came forward in the presentation but her preference would be to see the words, as words express meaning. Additionally she requested to learn the reasons why the changes occurred and to see how the policy makers put their minds to the relevant issues and attempts to address these issues through changes in policies. Vice Principal Young stated that ways that these issues will be addressed in the rollout of the policies will include professional learning and development in the fall.

Superintendent Farrish stated that due to the timelines, they would not be able to commit to line-by-line tracked changes to the policy. She added that significant decisions were made to examine over 40 policies and procedures pertaining to safe schools with the intent to streamline

practice. She urged the committee to read the policies and provide feedback on any potential missing elements.

Trustee Campbell noted that seeing the substantive changes to the policies is important. In response to Trustee Campbell's inquiry on whether the policy consultation can be extended to the fall, Superintendent Farrish noted that the consultation plan and timelines for the rewriting of these policies had been approved by the Board of Trustees earlier in the year. She added that shifting timelines delays the implementation of the policy; however the important part of these consultations is collecting a variety of opinions and ensuring that the policy is available for feedback and input from all stakeholder groups.

Trustee Scott noted that the timetable for the recommendation of the Safe School Policies to come to the COW agenda is in June; however, if more time is required the dates may be extended.

7. New Business and Event Announcements

7.1 Proposed Advisory Committee on Equity Meeting Schedule 2021-2022

The item was deferred until 27 May 2021.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Ayan Karshe

Chair, Advisory Committee on Equity



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

**Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 7:00 pm
Zoom Meeting**

- Members:** Christine Boothby (Trustee), Rob Campbell (Trustee), Chris Ellis (Trustee), Sonia Nadon-Campbell (Community Representative), Susan Cowin (Community Representative), Amy Wellings (Community Representative), Cathy Miedema (Association for Bright Children), Mark Wylie (Down Syndrome Association), Lisa Paterick (VIEWS for the Visually Impaired), Ian Morris (Ontario Associations for Families of Children with Communication Disorders), Dr. Maggie Mamen (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton)
- Association Representatives (Non Voting):** Jennifer Titley (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation), Connie Allen (Professional Student Services Personnel, Alternate), Jean Trant (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, School Support Personnel), Catherine Houlden (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Teachers), Andrew Winchester (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Alternate), Nancy Dlouhy (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee)
- Staff and Guests:** Lynn Scott (Trustee), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Petra Duschner (Manager of Mental Health and Critical Services), Christine Kessler (System Principal, Learning Support Services), Amy Hannah (System Principal, Learning Support Services), Stacey Kay (Manager, Learning Support Services), Nicole Guthrie (Manager, Board Services), Steve Spidell (Principal of Colonel By Secondary School), Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator), Miriam Abdalla (Delegate)

1. Call to Order

Chair Nadon-Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. She acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Territory and thanked the Algonquin people for hosting the meeting on their land. Chair Nadon-Campbell highlighted that 5 May is Red Dress Day: National Day of Awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Mark Wylie,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Delegations

3.1 Miriam Abdalla re Students with Disabilities and the Octomester System

Ms. Abdalla, enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program, expressed concern for the octomester system and noted that compressed learning periods discriminate against students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). She disclosed that those who struggle with ADHD have much more difficulty staying organized and focused. The octomester system leads to hours of daily homework for those students who have ADHD and the workload leaves little time for mental recovery.

Dr. Mamen reinforced the issues brought forth by Ms. Abdalla, for not only students with ADHD, but for any student with learning challenges.

Condensing a course into a short period of time does not allow for the processing of information. She endorsed the concept of the octomester system as inappropriate for students accessing special needs support.

Ms. Miedema queried a description of the direction taken from other school boards to meet the IB requirements and avoid the octomester system. Ms. Abdalla responded that she had been in discussion with some of her friends, also in the IB program, who attend White Oaks Secondary School in Oakville. The school operates under a different system which was viewed as a variation on quadesters.

4. Review of Special Education Advisory Committee Report

4.1 SEAC Report, 07 April 2021

Moved by Cathy Miedema,

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee Report dated 7 April 2021 report be received.

Carried

4.2 Forward Agenda

The SEAC forward agenda was provided for information.

5. Presentations

5.1 Safe Schools Policy and Code of Conduct Policy Phase II Consultation (M.J. Farrish)

The draft versions of P.125.SCO Code of Conduct Policy, P.032.SCO Safe Schools Policy (Managing Student Behaviour) and P.145.SCO Safe Schools Policy (Emergency Preparedness and Response) were presented to ACE for independent review on 21 April 2021.

Superintendent Farrish presented a powerpoint presentation reviewing the safe schools and code of conduct policy consultations. During Phase I of the consultation process, several types of focus groups were formed: students, student senate, parents and guardians, multicultural liaison officers, school administrators and federation partners. Shared themes, which appeared often, were mental health and well-being of students and staff, greater need to monitor bullying in schools, addressing racial slurs, homophobia and sexism, dress code, defining the role of police in schools.

Superintendent Farrish noted that in discussions with school administrators, a focus was placed upon mitigating factors, bias awareness and restorative practices as part of the response when using the continuum of progressive discipline. She advised that school administrators expressed concern about the response to incidents termed as "dysregulation stress behaviours". These situations become recorded as violent incidents as determined by the *Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Act*. In actuality, the students are unable to meet the expectations within the conditions in the school environment. Staff was motivated to determine how the new policies may account for these discrepancies to better support students. Specifically, staff was interested in understanding the components of the different plans to support students and the processes used such as a threat risk assessment.

Major revisions to the policies were shared. These revisions were made through discussion with the District Human Rights and Equity Advisor to provide an equity lens for inclusion, along with the integration of these policies with the Human Rights Policy currently being written. Over 40 policies and procedures relating to safe schools were merged to create the draft policies under review. These policies were written to recognize and promote positive behaviours. The withdrawal of transportation privileges has been incorporated in the new policies. The Exclusions and Modified Day Policy is currently under development, featuring a non-disciplinary approach in response to safety concerns.

Superintendent Farrish mentioned that as the consultation was in Phase 2 of the process, the preferred way of receiving input on the policies is engagement through the designated consultation email address. Trustee Ellis commented that he felt there was not sufficient time on the agenda for a fulsome discussion.

Dr. Mamen shared that three years ago she was asked to present to the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) to address violence and aggression in schools. At that time, the largest increase in violent behaviours was between junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten. She has often heard from parents in her caseload who had been asked to collect their child from the principal's office in an informal suspension scenario. She queried whether there had been any study on safe school behaviours for children in kindergarten. She inquired about the specific approaches that will be needed for kindergarten children who do not fall under the same considerations that are being used in the policy to address behaviours in the secondary school grades. Superintendent Farrish confirmed that a punitive response for the primary grade levels is not consistent with the safe schools policy or the safe schools approach to support students in all grades. The goals are to build relationships and support the development of all students, by assessing individual circumstances and school community expectations, to enable students to express themselves in prosocial ways. She added that school administrators do not have the ability to suspend students in kindergarten up to grade three. She highlighted that in order to change practice, collective responsibilities and commitments must be undertaken within the schools and through professional development. Superintendent Symmonds stated that at all stages of student growth, the District is making headway to take proactive approaches to capitalize on the expertise of multi-disciplinary teams and building capacity at the school level. Learning Support Services (LSS) practises a relationship-based approach to supporting student achievement and well-being. For the 2021-2022 school year, LSS will focus on a broader implementation of the principles described in the book, "The Third Path". In the book, co-author Dr. David Tranter lists eight hierarchical conditions that support student well-being and academic achievement: Safety, Regulation, Belonging, Positivity, Engagement, Identity, Mastery and Meaning. Ongoing collaboration with Dr. Tranter is planned as LSS begins to implementing some of the recommendations contained in the book.

Dr. Mamen suggested that the District remain aware that for safety concerns, the policies and the threshold of expectation cannot be regarded as "one size fits all". She expressed the view that it was important to work with children when they first begin school to imbue a sense of respect and a sense of their own boundaries. Superintendent Symmonds agreed that a focus is required on supporting the development of skills sets within the youngest learners, beginning with ensuring programming is at the appropriate level to reach developmental milestones.

Ms. Allen expressed interest in the development of the Exemptions and Modified Day Policy and supported the concept of graduated entries to

school where children have the opportunity to have a successful hour at school and then build on to the hour gradually. She noted that in her caseload, there are children whose development levels place them at a one year old level; however, they have the right to be at school full-time. Superintendent Farrish replied that though the timeline for this new policy has not been established, it will be a separate policy, outside of a policy that pertains to managing student behaviour, and will create a program that is consistent with developmental stages and milestone goals for the students.

Superintendent Farrish affirmed that although the consultation process will come to a close at the end of the school year for these specific policies, she expressed interest in maintaining the connection with SEAC and Safe Schools to discuss practices within schools.

6. Discussion - Breakout Room

6.1 Accommodations for Specialized Program Classes

Superintendent Symmonds and Manger Kay presented a slideshow on secondary specialized program classes (SPCs). The key messages were that under the geographic model, between the school years 2013-2014 and 2020-2021, 19 additional secondary specialized program classes were added. Using the current model, an additional 10 classes will be required for secondary Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) students by the 2023-2024 school year. This presents the Districts with some complexities as they consider pupil accommodation planning and the equitable distribution of special education supports across secondary schools.

SEAC members were divided into three groups with each group considering the following questions:

- What are the challenges?
- What should we be thinking about?
- What are the next steps we should be considering?

Facilitators reported on the break-out room discussions as follows:

- A school that has an ASD program is a better for school diversity;
- Space must be considered when introducing an ASD class or reducing the number of students in a classroom;
- Education assistants require more professional development to support students with special education needs on a daily basis;
- Consider created community living classrooms to prepare students for the expectations of assisted living or group homes;

- School administrators need to be purposeful when considering placements and transitions for each student;
- The District requires more SPCs at the elementary school level;
- The geographic model was designed to keep students close to their communities but the city boundaries have shifted and travel times have changed;
- The effects of tiered intervention has resulted in smaller cohorts moving forward;
- Increased communication with families will help inform classroom decisions based-on accurate information;
- Consider whether SPCs align with inclusion in schools. Inclusion is important but to have students with special education needs in the back of the classroom working independently of others may not be inclusive;
- Examine practices from other school boards with the least segregated environments;
- There are concerns for the needs of students who could be classified as having "moderate needs" in the classroom setting;
- For de-streaming in grade 9 math, increased special education supports will be required; and
- Talk to students and families in the SPCs to understand their experience.

Superintendent Symmonds requested that committee members contact him, or Manager Kay with further suggestions.

7. Discussion

7.1 2021-2022 Budget Update

Superintendent Symmonds reported that the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and the Priorities and Partnership Funds (PPFs) were received by the District on 4 May 2021. Financial Services staff are reviewing the funding and evaluating the areas where the PPFs were transferred into GSN for the 2021-2022 school year, such as the funding for After School Skills Development.

Superintendent Symmonds followed-up on the suggestions from the committee which emerged from the 3 March 2021 meeting breakout room discussion. He noted many items raised will be the focus of LSS discussions for next year. The exercise was designed to identify key

priority areas of focus to improve the way service is delivered for families accessing special needs support. His responses were as follows:

- The committee raised that more resources are required and capacity building is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Superintendent Symmonds noted that LSS is working with Program and Learning (PAL) around Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) on capacity building in this way;
- The committee asked for further consideration for early assessment and identification for students who may be at risk for learning difficulties. Superintendent Symmonds shared that evidence-based reading intervention work will be done in parallel to the recommendation review emerging from the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) *Right to Read Inquiry*. These assessment considerations are also linked with LSS's exploration of the Universal Screening Tool. The purpose of the *Learning Support for Students with Special Education Needs* resource is to provide a comprehensive overview of quality programming to meet the needs of students with special education needs within both the regular and SPCs in K to 12 settings. The resource has been a work in progress for the last several months and will be instrumental as it relates to IEPs. In an online setting, the resource presents the opportunity to discuss the purpose and quality of an IEP;
- The committee requested additional provisions for professional development for teaching staff and to build in a schedule where teachers can be available to access training. Superintendent Symmonds responded that although the online learning opportunities have opened new ways to deliver professional learning, there often remains a challenge to find enough replacement teachers. At times when release time is provided, sometimes educators are not able to attend a professional learning session because they cannot be replaced at their school. LSS continues to try to invest in the professional development for all staff;
- The committee raised that differentiated staffing is required, based on classroom needs. Superintendent Symmonds reported that as the District continues to understand identity-based data, to understand that individuals are behind the data and to lead education through an equity lens, a heightened cross-collaboration between departments is occurring. He highlighted that Superintendent Duah is developing a Student Achievement Through Equity (SATE) support model which aligns support from several departments (e.g., PAL, LSS, Indigenous, Equity & Human Rights). The project will involve members of the multidisciplinary team taking a differentiated approach to

learning, as well as examining the specific learning needs of students in schools with low RAISE indexes;

- The committee suggested that when analyzing school resources and funding allocation, adding support to defray the impact of factors, such as poverty and racialization, on the ability for students with special education needs to engage in the curriculum, should be considered . Superintendent Symmonds described the de-streaming work, being undertaken across the District, to encourage students into the academic pathway for grade 9 math, which may impact their trajectory for graduation. He noted that more information will be delivered to SEAC about the streaming of students because pathways for children can be set at a very young age and it is important that the choice is an informed decision for families; and
- The committee specified the importance of investing in support for credit recovery. Superintendent Symmonds noted that LSS will be working with Continuing Education to provide increased special education supports to those in summer learning programs.

8. Department Update

8.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Symmonds reported that special education programs are being conducted predominantly virtually with the provincial stay-at-home order. In an effort to cooperate with the community effort to combat COVID-19 and following the orders from the Ministry, the District is offering in-person learning to approximately 300 students with intensive and complex special education needs. He noted, in April 2021, Premier Doug Ford announced that education workers serving students with special education needs will be eligible for vaccines. The District submitted 1900 names of special education staff to Ottawa Public Health (OPH). The vaccination will be available to all education workers supporting students in-person, effective 6 May 2021. There has been no update on when all students can return to in-person learning.

Superintendent Symmonds reported that COVID-19 and other factors have delayed some elements of the Right to Read Inquiry. A final inquiry report, which will include detailed findings and recommendations for government and education stakeholders is now planned for release in fall 2021. Once released, the recommendations will be included on a SEAC meeting agenda.

Dr. Duschner shared that Mental Health Week is celebrated from 3 May to 9 May. Mental Health Week is a Canadian tradition, with communities, schools and workplaces rallying to celebrate, protect and promote mental health. She noted that the key messages around student mental health

include student learning about mental health, particularly around social emotional learning, and to encourage help seeking behaviour. LSS has taken a three-pronged approach to share information with staff, students and parents and caregivers. Resources were developed by School Mental Health Ontario. The tip sheets include topics such as promoting mental health, how to help students with their wellness, how to identify some of the signs and symptoms of eroded mental health, reminders of how to support students accessing care for their mental health, both within the community and in the school district. Exercises, activities and lesson plans were distributed to promote mental health learning and to explain strategies for stress management. A website called Jack.org, designed for young people by young people, has been a popular resource with the students. LSS has offered a series of live online sessions for parents to talk to District mental health professionals. A specific email address has been created for parents who are not able to join a session and prefer to send questions in writing.

Superintendent Symmonds announced that significant changes are occurring in the management team at LSS. System Principal Kessler and Dr. Duschner have decided to retire from the OCDSB at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. He stated that the contributions that they have made over several years have been incredible and both of them have helped him in his professional learning. He and Chair Nadon-Campbell wished them the best as they assumed their next opportunities.

Superintendent Symmonds communicated that Kate Stoudt will join LSS as a System Principal. System Principal Stoudt has expertise in children's mental health and managing transitions for students with significant needs.

a. Storefront Update

Christine Kessler stated that the Storefront School was established in November 1987 and was located in the St. Laurent Shopping Centre. The school moved in 1998 to the ING building beside the shopping centre, where it continues to operate. Morguard Investment Limited has been graciously supplying the facilities for the past 25 years. This two-year transition program focuses on increasing independence and employability skills for students with developmental disabilities. LSS recently expanded the age criteria for the 2020-2021 school year to include students aged 18, whereas the previous age of entry was 19. Part of the reason for admitting students at age 18 was that staff indicated that some students seemed to become increasingly disengaged at 18. Two students, aged 18, joined the program this school year.

Christine Kessler reported that the program provides supported work experience with one full time teacher and one full time educational assistant. Six students are graduating from the program and three students have obtained employment as of July 2021. At the present time 12 students attend the program. Six new students are entering the program in the 2021-2022 school year. LSS continues to work together with parents, staff and the community to consider the possibilities for the program. This year, half of the students attended the Storefront School in-person and the other half attended virtually; however, most of the components of the program were able to be offered virtually.

Jennifer Perry, Nancy Ford and Tanya Ashton were all named as staff that support the program and contribute to its success.

Trustee Ellis queried whether only students in the General Learning Program (GLP) program are eligible to apply for the Storefront School. Christine Kessler responded that with the assistance of Dr. Duschner, the language in the application form and the criteria for eligibility was rendered more inclusive of students, both in the GLP, as well as other students with developmental disabilities who may find themselves limited to participate in a supported workplace experience.

b. Summer Learning Programs Update

Superintendent Symmonds reported that currently, LSS is in the planning phases to provide the summer learning program for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) profiles. The program will only be available in-person and therefore further provincial lockdown orders might affect the ability to offer this program.

Planning does continue regarding special education support for students in the Continuing Education summer programs to ensure students with special education needs have equitable access to their programs. LSS will continue to work on delivering mental health supports over the summer. Evidence-based reading intervention work is scheduled to be done over the summer with partners in PAL.

Superintendent Symmonds highlighted the concern of the pressure that the last 14 months has had on staff and that employees require a period of rest. Should staff be interested in assisting with summer programming, they will be asked to consider their own mental health as a priority before committing to the extra work.

9. Committee Reports

9.1 Board

There was no report from the Board.

9.2 Committee of the Whole

Ms. Wellings noted that at the Special Committee of the Whole meeting of 20 April 2021, that Policy P.146.HR Equitable Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion was recommended to the Board.

9.3 Advisory Committee on Equity

Ms. Cowin noted that in the Advisory Committee on Equity meeting of 29 April 2021, a member suggested that students with disabilities were not well represented in the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap. They hoped to see that changed in future revisions.

9.4 Indigenous Education Advisory Council

Ms. Campbell noted that in the Indigenous Education Advisory Council meeting of 22 April 2021, the council explored the possibility of land-based education for credit attainment. Ms. Campbell expressed the view that his type of programming would serve special education students well.

9.5 Advisory Committee on Extended Day and Child Care Programs

There was no report from the Advisory Committee on Extended Day and Child Care Programs.

10. New Business

Ms. Miedema inquired that as the province has announced that all school boards must provide a virtual option for the 2021-2022 school year, will there be any change to the District's previous announcement that students would only be able to access specialized program classes in-person? She asked for an update on the numbers of students in SPCs that have opted for virtual learning for next year. If a comparison could be made to enrolment numbers from the 2020-2021 school year, it would be useful knowledge. She requested an update on any additional supports or considerations being allocated towards students in a regular virtual class, who would normally be placed in a specialized program class. Superintendent Symmonds committed to providing an update for the 2 June 2021 meeting however he was not certain whether he would be able to access comparison enrolment numbers between the current school year and the school year to come.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

Sonia Nadon-Campbell, Chair,
Special Education Advisory
Committee



PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

- Members:** Abdulnaser Atef, Annette Dillon, Diana Mills, Jacquie Samuels, Jaime Morse, Jennifer Hood, Malaka Hendela (OCASC Member), Martyn Reid (OCASC Member), Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm, Kahmaria Pingue, Heather Kotelniski (ONFE)
- Non-Voting Members:** Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Wendy Hough (Trustee), Ian Morris (SEAC), Alain Brule (Principal, Cedarview Middle School), Sarah Pope (Principal, Castlefrank Elementary School)
- Staff and Guests:** Lynn Scott (Trustee), Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Nadia Towaij (Superintendent of Programming and Learning K-12), Kevin Gardner (Manager of Financial Services), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications & Information Services), Kristin Riddell (Curriculum Services-Secondary Team), Brent Smith (Curriculum Services-Elementary), Emily Wagner (Curriculum Services-Elementary Team), Jennifer Offord (Curriculum Services-Elementary), Stephanie Bishop (Curriculum Services-Elementary Team), Engy Abdel Masieh (Policy Analyst), Nicole Guthrie (Manager of Board Services), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board/Committee Coordinator), Darren Gatley (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Reid called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Annette Dillon,

THAT the agenda be approved

Carried

3. Action Items

3.a Parent Involvement Committee Work Plan

Chair Reid presented the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Work Plan to members.

During the discussion and in response to questions regarding the proposed PIC work plan, the following points were noted:

- In response to a query from Ms. Hendela, Chair Reid noted that the PIC Work Plan should not duplicate the Board's Work Plan as this would not allow PIC to bring forward items regarding parental issues, perspectives, and concerns;
- The PIC Work Plan allows flexibility in adding policy consultations and other items on agendas from Board directives;
- Chair Reid noted that some school councils and principals aided in reaching out to parents for feedback on the PIC Work Plan;
- In response to questions about how PIC advises on policy reviews, Executive Officer Giroux noted that the first draft of the PIC Work Plan included relevant Board policies for review, but that there was some concern that the committee work plan should not be dominated with Board reviews. She explained that the Board develops a Board Work Plan that informs policies and key initiatives, which can indicate which discussions or policies that may be presented to PIC or added to the agenda. She added that the Chair has proposed that the PIC Work plan be a two-year plan and, therefore, staff would not be able to predetermine all incoming items from the Board, although the plan could be regularly compared to the long range agenda. She further explained that once a consultation plan that involves PIC is approved by the Board, that there would be a request to PIC for it to be included in meetings for discussion or action which would be determined at the PIC agenda planning meetings;

Ms. Hood provided a presentation on a communication strategy for the PIC Communications Sub-Committee. The presentation outlined the structure and approach of the sub-committee, including developing a guiding document, the action plan, communications calendar, and onboarding of new members.

- Speaking in favour of the sub-committee, Ms. Mills noted that the sub-committee would allow PIC to effectively communicate the committee's role and responsibility to the community while also reaching out to give voice to parents, families, and non-traditional parent groups;
- Executive Officer Giroux noted that the sub-committee direction aligns with District practice and noted that the District communications team could collaborate by working with the communication sub-committee;

- Ms. Dillon noted the importance of the sub-committee working with Communications staff to ensure consistent messaging to the community;
- Ms. Hood expressed confidence in creating communications plans; however, she would welcome governance support to implement action;

Moved by Martyn Reid, seconded by Diana Mills,

THAT the PIC Communications Sub-Committee be established and that volunteers for the sub-committee be sought by email.

Carried

- Chair Reid noted that after the return to school in September 2021, PIC could have an opportunity to reach out to families to solicit feedback in order to communicate parental concerns to the District. He added that exit interviews could also be conducted with families having completed their first year in junior kindergarten, first or last year of secondary school, and other key transition experiences to further communicate parental feedback. He queried if there was a central mechanism to collect this data so that new families entering the District could have a better understanding of the education system;
- Chair Reid suggested that staff provide more information on the resources available to the Parent Involvement Committee;
- Executive Officer Giroux noted that this topic could be raised at PIC agenda planning to identify a timeline for discussion; and

Moved by Martyn Reid, seconded by Malaka Hendela,

THAT the Parent involvement Committee Work Plan be approved and continually reviewed.

Carried

- In response to a query from Ms. Hendela, Chair Reid noted that the work plan encompasses oversight of parental engagement spending.

4. Discussion Items

4.a Presentation: Destreaming the Grade 9 Math Curriculum - What Does this Mean? What do Parents Need to Know? (N. Towaij)

Superintendent Towaij provided a presentation on destreaming the grade 9 math curriculum which outlined destreaming research and District data.

During the presentation, the following highlights were noted:

- The Ministry has committed to destreaming grade 9 math beginning in September 2021, which is the first of five compulsory grade 9 courses to be destreamed;
- Ontario is the only province that streams students at 13 years old; however, international data supports that streaming students should not occur before the age of 15;
- Other provinces begin streaming in the senior secondary grades at grade 11;
- The entire OCDSB community must be engaged to understand the impacts of streaming and to inform destreaming practices going forward;
- Destreaming will be applied from kindergarten to grade 12 for early intervention to ensure students have greater chances for success;
- Destreaming will involve all departments within the District. The destreaming team has over 40 individuals, including educators, administrators, psychology and social worker, Black and Indigenous graduation coaches, and school representatives;
- The five-year graduation rate for students in the locally developed grade 9 English pathway is 48%. Students in the applied English pathway have a 69% graduation rate and students in the academic English pathway have a 94% graduation rate;
- The five-year graduation rate for students in the locally developed grade 9 Science pathway is 50%. Students in the applied science pathway have a 71% graduation rate and students in the academic science pathway have a 95% graduation rate;
- The five-year graduation rate for students in the locally developed grade 9 mathematics pathway is 48%. Students in the applied math pathway have a 64% graduation rate and students in the academic English pathway have a 94% graduation rate;
- In a cohort of 5,000 students, 1% would equate to 50 students. Those in the locally developed and applied pathways are disproportionately represented which include Black and Indigenous students, English language learners (ELL), from low income households, and those with special education needs. Both District and provincial data support this;
- The premise of the neutrality of the design would be that students interested in university would take academic courses, students interested in college would take applied courses, and students interested in going directly to the workplace would take locally

developed classes. Although the pathways were neutral in design, implementation demonstrates that it is not the case;

- The District has 14 secondary schools that are looking to destream a second course from grade 9 math and six schools are working to destream all compulsory courses;
- Until 2016, students were streamed as early as senior kindergarten regarding Early French Immersion. Streaming occurs when students receive individual education plans (IEP), are placed in specialized classrooms, when selected to attend Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School, Ottawa Technical Secondary School, Clifford Bowey Elementary School and Crystal Bay Centre for Education, and other alternate programs;
- Staff who are implementing destreaming in grade 9 math will have collaborative partnerships with grades 6 to 10 educators. The destreaming team will work with writing teams to build resources and supports, scoping sequences, diagnostics, and long range plans to ensure that educators are properly supported in implementing the destreaming process;
- 72 school boards across Ontario are creating a process for each district to engage with each family with a child in grade 8 who has selected either locally developed or applied level courses to ensure these families are aware of which pathways and opportunities will close or remain open. The District is working to provide transparency to families by providing graduation rates and post-secondary statistics;
- Superintendent Towaij noted that the District will be sharing with families in June 2021, the kindergarten to grade 12 Achievement Report from the Research, Evaluation and Analytics Division (READ), tied to the identity-based data to clearly demonstrate which groups of students and identities are disproportionately represented in specific pathways and achievement outcomes;
- Provincial-level data revealed that 59% of students in the applied pathway attended post-secondary education while 88% of students in the academic pathway attended post-secondary education;
- The District has partnered with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the lead board in destreaming with over six years of implementation. TDSB data has indicated that destreaming has had a positive impact on students with increased student achievement and outcomes; and
- Superintendent Towaij noted that through a lens of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy (CRRP), 100% of Indigenous students have

earned their Contemporary Aboriginal Voices (NBE) course in 2021 after its implementation six years ago.

A Jamboard was used to solicit feedback from PIC members.

During the discussion and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- Ms. Morse expressed concern that those who self-identify as Indigenous and do not belong to a community are advising on policy. Superintendent Towaij noted that staff are engaging with the Indigenous Education team to ensure that Indigenous representatives are part of the destreaming team;
- Chair Reid noted that students could be engaged in order to discover more effective ways to engage their families;
- Ms. Okuribido-Malcolm suggested that the District could provide a mechanism for parents to submit questions or concerns in a low stress environment. She noted that this would allow families to present questions at their leisure when queries arise throughout the school year;
- Superintendent Towaij noted that when creating a destreamed environment, it is also important to provide further support for students. She noted that there will be significant enhancements to summer programming which will be offered from kindergarten to grade 12. Both early numeracy and literacy programming intervention will be provided as part of the heightened support offered to students when destreaming;
- Ms. Dillon hoped that destreaming would raise the expectations for learning of every student;
- In response to a query from Ms. Dillion, Superintendent Towaij noted that funding in math appears different than other subjects as math courses utilize digital resources rather than textbooks that are updated to align with changes to the curriculum and to be more culturally relevant. She noted that significant destreaming work has been applied to the elementary level as elementary grades do not have math specialists and the grade 9 destreamed curriculum has been designed for easier transition from the grade 8 curriculum. She anticipates positive outcomes in the revised curriculum;
- Ms. Hendela noted that intentions need to be funded and tangible. She noted that math tools and resources need to be equally distributed to all classes to ensure equitable outcomes. She expressed the view that math tools are often provided upon teacher requests and that school councils are asked to fund these resources. She added that District

staff need to be properly resourced to be able to respond to all family inquiries; and

- Superintendent Towaij noted that staff provided clear direction, for the 2020-2021 school year, that those teaching math in grades 6-9 were to be specialized, rather than having a homeroom educator teach a subject they are not familiar with. She noted that the District partnered with University of Ottawa to co-create a math additional qualification program in which over 250 educators have participated. This is part of the District's commitment to ensure that educators have the knowledge and confidence to prepare students for success in mathematics.

4.b Report 21-044, 2019-2020 School Council Financial Reporting (M. Carson)

Your Committee had before it Report 21-044, to provide a summary of the financial information received from school councils for the 2019-2020 year.

Kevin Gardner, Manager of Financial Services noted that the request for information originated from the Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) the report is also relevant to PIC.

Manager Gardner noted that the report outlines the financial summary and identifies each school's banking status. He advised that many schools manage their funds through their own bank account and make their own expenditure decisions. He added that the District provides a guide to school councils to manage funds appropriately to ensure accountability, transparency, completeness of reporting, information on records retention, how to raise funds with a fundraising plan, and establishing fundraising purpose. He added that due to the pandemic, unspent amounts are carried forward to benefit school councils.

Manager Gardner noted that information is collected at a summary level to meet the mandated Ministry reporting requirements for the consolidated financial statements. He pointed out that staff do not receive all detailed information on school council spending as this information is retained by the council. He added that it is a requirement that school councils share summary information with the finance department and detailed information with the school community. He noted that some school councils raise more funds than others which can raise concerns with equity; however, some programs provide additional funding to schools that are identified as a school in need or with low enrolment.

During the discussion and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- School councils are required to regularly report financial statements at council meetings and these should be posted on their school council

website for the community. School council financial reporting varies and not always compliant with reporting requirements;

- Ms. Hendela expressed the view that the report presented was not what was requested and was a “ledger exercise”. She queried how the report reflects funds held by schools and wanted to view granular data. She added that the report does not reveal engagement or transparency as the details of expenditures are not shown. Manager Gardner noted that in order to provide granular information, a centralized reporting system would need to be developed to generate information on fundraising activities of school councils, as many school councils currently have different approaches;
- School resources are to be provided at the District level and not at the school level. School council funds should be used to augment student learning experiences;
- Ms. Hendela expressed the view that some school councils are requested by principals to provide resources such as all Chromebooks, sport funding, or furniture for classrooms. She noted that records of school council audits should be in the District’s possession. She noted that she would like PIC to engage previous balance sheets for transparency;
- Staff noted that although some members may be interested in more information from a reporting perspective, some schools self-manage their finances and the practice of the District is to not be directly involved in the day-to-day transactions. Staff will take the concern back for further discussion;
- Principals receive financial reports each month; however, the reports arrive in various formats that cannot be readily adapted to a comprehensive summarization;
- The “school cash” system is a structured financial reporting system that can be used for detailed reporting, but still needs further development; and
- Executive Officer Giroux noted that school councils could be encouraged to post financial statements on their websites more frequently in future. She noted that although not all schools bank through the District, those that do could be provided with a standard format for consistency. She added that staff can review which practices can be immediately corrected and to consider long term strategies.

5. Review of PIC Report, 31 March 2021

Moved by Diana Mills, seconded by Annette Dillon,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee report, dated 31 March 2021, be approved.

Carried

6. Information Items

6.a Chair's Report

Provided for information.

6.b Director's Report

Provided for information.

6.c OCASC Report

Provided for information.

6.d PIC Correspondence

Chair Reid confirmed that parent member Noura Ahmed resigned from her position.

After much deliberation regarding the approach to fill the parent member vacancy, PIC members agreed that staff will approach the candidates from the PIC membership waiting list to confirm their interest and eligibility. Members also agreed that a special PIC meeting may occur to conduct a vote in the event that both candidates on the waiting list are eligible and interested.

6.e 2021-2022 Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Schedule

Provided for information.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Martyn Reid, Chair, Parent
Involvement Committee



AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT (PUBLIC)

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Members: Mark Fisher (Trustee), Jennifer Jennekens (Trustee), Grace Lee (External Member), Shannon Hoeft (External Member)

Staff and Guests: Lynn Scott (Trustee), Keith Penny (Trustee), Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Mike Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Kevin Gardner (Manager, Financial Services), Sandra Lloyd (Manager, Risk and Supply Chain Management), Genevieve Segu (Regional Internal Audit Team Manager), Gordon Champagne (Senior Regional Internal Auditor), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Trustee Fisher called the public session to order 6:01 p.m and acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Territories and thanked the Algonquin Nations for hosting the meeting on their land.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Shannon Hoeft,
THAT the agenda be approved.
Carried

3. Delegations

There were no delegations.

4. Superintendent's Report

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Carson advised that the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) have been announced by the province. As a result of the delayed release of information, it is not possible to present the staff-recommended budget at the Committee of the Whole (COW) Budget meeting on 26 May 2021 but staff will provide analysis on the GSN at that meeting.

There were no major revisions to the special education grants. There will be continued funding for the first part of the school year for COVID-19 relief, a total of

\$15.0 million in funding was announced for the OCDSB, with only half of the amount committed for the first half of the school year. The remaining funds will be allocated, subject to Ministry decision, based on public health at that time.

Staff continue to work with Ottawa Public Health (OPH) on the vaccination program for education workers. Discussions with OPH and the City of Ottawa have occurred to look at closed schools as vaccination sites.

5. COVID-19 Update

CFO Carson advised that schools continue to remain closed, with the exception of the 200-300 students with the most exceptional special education needs, who are attending in person. The students are attending at various locations across the District and are being transported by the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA).

CFO Carson noted that the Minister has stated his preference for students to return to in-person learning before the close of the 2020-2021 school year. He advised that the Premier announced that summer camps will proceed and staff are working with third-party operators to understand what that entails for the District, considering public health protocols and the availability of space. Staff are awaiting guidance from the province on this matter.

CFO Carson advised that planning has commenced for the 2021-2022 school year. The summer construction schedule is busy and will continue into the fall to address building envelope issues and HVAC upgrades, including the work that is a part of the federal and provincial funding that was provided.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that there is funding provided in the GSN for the re-engagement of students and learning as schools reopen for the 2021-2022 year. She noted there is additional funding for mental health supports, in collaboration with partners in health, for students as they return to school.

In response to a query from Trustee Fisher about replacing the current vaccine strategy for students with COVID-19 vaccinations, CFO Carson advised that OPH has not announced such a strategy and is not providing any details until vaccine supplies are confirmed.

6. Matters for Action

6.1 Review of Audit Committee Report

a. 17 February 2021

Moved by Trustee Jennekens,

THAT the Audit Committee report of 17 February 2021 be received.

Carried.

b. Business Arising

No business arising from the minutes.

7. Matters for Discussion

7.1 Report 21-045, 2020-2021 Updated Financial Forecast (March) (M. Carson)

Your Committee had before it Report 21-045, explaining the changes in the 2020-2021 Updated Financial Forecast, as compared to the 2020-2021 Budget.

CFO Carson presented the report noting that the financial forecast for this year is impacted by many factors. Monthly reporting on Priorities and Partnerships Fund (PPF) grants has included additional accountability requirements for federal funding that flowed to school boards through the province. CFO Carson advised that funding provided in August 2020 was to support the hiring of additional staff to respond to COVID-19 and it has been challenging to reconcile these staffing additions into the fall of 2020.

CFO Carson noted that although analysis continues on the revenues, staff are comfortable with the amounts outlined in the forecast.

Manager Gardner outlined the report and provided the following information:

- The projected deficit is \$18.7 million, \$1.0 million more than the approved budget;
- The net accumulated surplus is \$21.0 million, of which over \$9.0 million is committed to support capital projects (used largely for portable classroom funding);
- Lower enrolment resulted in a decrease in the GSN amounts allocated to the District;
- The Indigenous Education allocation increased by \$1.0 million;
- Minor tangible capital assets (MTCA) funding allowed for \$3.9 million to be redirected to the operations budget;
- The Ministry provided stabilization funding of \$14.4 million to compensate for the decrease in enrolment;
- New funding of \$16.7 million was received for COVID-related needs (ventilation, staffing, remote learning, safety supplies, etc.);
- COVID-related funding grants for a total of over \$36.0 million were received for operating purposes;
- Approximately \$3.8 million will be directed to support capital expenditures such as the purchase of Chromebooks;

- Increased spending of \$11.0 million on instructional supports (teachers and office staff) to respond to COVID-19 and an increased provision of \$4.7 million for occasional teachers is projected;
- A decrease in the cost of supplies and services of \$5.0 million is expected;
- Savings are expected in transportation costs as a result of lower contract costs and fewer transit passes of \$7.1 million;
- Additional expenditures included, increased custodial spending (\$2.4 million), increased spending on safety supplies, equipment and ventilation (\$5.2 million), and increased spending on portable relocations (\$2.3 million) and reduced costs for various supplies and services (\$463,000);
- Loss of revenue was noted in Community Use of Schools (CUS) permits (\$1.0 million), a reduced share of the former benefit plan due to central agreements (\$825,000), reduced international student fees (\$925,000) and administrative fees (\$457,000), an increase in legal costs for provision of legal claims (\$2.2 million); and
- Loss of revenue was reported in the Extended Day and Childcare Programs of \$5.8 million.

During the discussion and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- In 2020, if school boards used more than 2% of the available accumulated surplus to balance a budget and in response to COVID-19, Ministry permission was required. This year, should the District require exceeding the use of 2% of the accumulated surplus to balance the budget, the Minister will be required to grant the request and a deficit reduction plan will be implemented;
- The revised estimates are a part of the filing the District is required to complete in December. The revised estimates are included in this report to illustrate the changes from the revised estimates (presented January) to the financial forecast (as of March), which reflects changes to date. This summary information is reported to be included in the Government of Ontario's consolidated financial statements;
- Childcare agencies in the province were eligible for the Canadian Emergency Relief Benefits (CERB), school boards were not eligible for this funding. School boards requested the same consideration for access to supports from the province and some funding was provided;
- Staff made the decision to retain childcare staff during the closure period as they were confident they would receive funding support from the province and retaining existing staff would minimize disruption;

- Staff continue to lobby the province for the additional funding to support childcare;
- If a large amount of the District's accumulated surplus is required to balance the budget and it results in a small deficit, a deficit reduction program would be implemented to return the District to a positive financial position. This would hinder decision-making and reduce the Board's flexibility in responding to local needs;
- Operating the Extended Day Program through the summer months will not have a significant impact on the program deficit. There would be no cost for regular staff during the summer as they are 10 and 10.5 month employees;
- Staff have ensured that if childcare programs are authorised to operate in the summer, they will have priority at school sites. Staff are working with the City of Ottawa, in advance of the announcement of guidelines and protocols, to look to ways to operate in a cost effective manner;
- There is no staffing compensation associated with the capital funding, only for equipment that qualifies as tangible capital assets; and
- Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, staff allocated the necessary funds to meet most of the needs of the District. Additional funding was also allocated to meet unique staffing requirements. Staff have been nimble in responding to issues as they arose during the year and were able to leverage the spending policies to take full advantage in support of students and staff in the District.

7.2 Regional Internal Audit Team (RIAT) Update (G. Segu)

Ms. Segu, the Regional Internal Audit Team (RIAT) Manager, outlined her update on the Audit Plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

During the presentation the following information was provided:

- The pandemic has delayed the preparation of a report on the Cybersecurity Review that commenced in October 2020. Ms. Segu advised she will present a report at the September 2021 meeting of the Audit Committee;
- The COVID-19 Response Review and the Educational Assistant Deployment Review were delayed at management's request as staff were focused on issues related to the pandemic. The review will be postponed until the 2021-2022 school year;

During the discussion and in response to questions the following was noted:

- CFO Carson advised that he was unable to find a time to conduct the COVID-19 Response Review and to engage the appropriate staff

members. He suggested that in addition to the pandemic response review, it would be beneficial to review the broader continuity of business practices;

- Trustee Fisher noted the importance of a report that would outline lessons learned through the pandemic. A review of the performance during the pandemic would be beneficial and inform future response to emergencies;
- CFO Carson advised that he and the RIAT Manager would look to the fall of 2021 to conduct a review of the pandemic response; and
- Trustee Scott commented on the importance of undertaking the review with the current senior team.

8. Audit Committee Meeting Schedule 2021-2022

Chair Fisher presented the meeting schedule for the 2021-2022 school year.

CFO Carson noted that a meeting in September is required by legislation. The November meeting occurs to receive the financial statements. He noted that the meeting in October is dependent on the work to be presented but may be cancelled if it is not required.

9. New Business

Chair Fisher queried the external members to determine if they had any additional requirements and if they were being adequately supported. Ms. Hoeft noted that she found that the information provided is fulsome and helpful. Dr. Lee noted that this is an unusual year and suggested that in a regular year the reporting could be more efficient.

10. Adjournment

The public meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Mark Fisher, Chair, Audit Committee



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**May 20, 2021
6:00 pm
Zoom Meeting**

Members:	Albert Dumont, Inini McHugh, Jo VanHooser, Nina Stanton, Lili Miller
Indigenous Education Staff:	Jody Alexander (Vice-Principal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education), Kris Meawasige (Indigenous Student Support and Re-engagement Coordinator), Chantel Verner (Instructional Coach)
Other Staff and Guests:	Wendy Hough (Non-Voting Trustee Delegate for IEAC), Trustee Bell (Trustee), Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Jessica Young (Vice Principal, Canterbury High School), Wayne Kilabuk, Sonia-Nadon Campbell (Special Education Advisory Committee Representative on the Indigenous Education Advisory Council), Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Opening (Elder Albert Dumont)

Elder Dumont opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

He delivered a tribute to Superintendent Baker, noting that he felt she was an extraordinary human being, showing his appreciation towards her, and acknowledging her presence at her last Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) meeting.

Vice Principal Alexander and the members of IEAC expressed their gratitude towards Superintendent Baker.

2. Student Voice

Elder Dumont emphasized the importance of the District's consideration of the wellness of young people as they may return to school in the fall of 2021 with complex mental health or addiction issues stemming from the fears of the pandemic and isolation factors.

A student was welcomed into the space.

3. Community Discussion

The following points were raised in community discussion:

- McHugh shared the success of the Inuuqatigiit Educational Hubs. The program was developed to support Inuit children and youth from grades 1 to 12 within the educational system by providing academic and cultural support in smaller cohorts of 6 to 8 children. The program has impacted the students in a positive way and the provincial government has expressed interest in creating more programs based upon the hub model. Mr. McHugh showed his gratitude towards Superintendent Baker and Trustee Hough for their contributions to assisting with the grant writing process and for forging the connections with the learning support teachers, guidance counsellors, principals and the Indigenous Education Team, who assist with the hub programming;
- VanHooser announced that she is taking a leave of absence from the Children's Aid Society (CAS). She and her son will return to their Annishabee roots in Lac Seul First Nations. The Council wished her well and asked her to continue joining the IEAC circle in a virtual capacity. She indicated that she would be pleased to continue participating on the IEAC remotely;
- Superintendent Baker congratulated Elder Dumont on his April 2021 appointment as Ottawa's poet laureate, a two-term position.
- McHugh shared that he has been promoted to the Inuuqatigiit, Manager of Education, overseeing four different programs. He noted that Inuuqatigiit is recruiting for new jobs specifying Indigenous staff; and

Vice Principal Alexander reported that the District has hired two additional Indigenous graduation coaches. The Indigenous Education Team has grown to ten people, making the team second largest in the province, next to the Toronto District School Board.

4. Presentations

4.1 Safe Schools Policy and Code of Conduct Policy Phase II Consultation (M.J. Farrish)

The draft versions of P.125.SCO Code of Conduct Policy, P.032.SCO Safe Schools Policy (Managing Student Behaviour) and P.145.SCO Safe Schools Policy (Emergency Preparedness and Response) were presented to IEAC for independent review on 21 April 2021.

Superintendent Farrish proposed that IEAC share their views on any policy updates required from the Indigenous perspective. She welcomed input to be shared either during the presentation or afterwards in writing. She noted an extension from the original timeframe to Fall 2021 for final approval on the presented policies.

Vice Principal Young reported that during Phase I of the consultation process, several types of focus groups were formed: students, student senate, parents and guardians, multicultural liaison officers, school administrators and federation partners. Shared themes, which appeared often, were mental health and well-being of students and staff, greater need to monitor bullying in schools, addressing racial slurs, homophobia and sexism, dress code, defining the role of police in schools.

Vice Principal Young shared that Policy P.125.SCO School District Code of Conduct was revised and now includes new language on a dress code. Primarily the only clothing choice restrictions are on any article of clothing with messages that promote or symbolize hate, discrimination, illegal activity, profanity, violence, drugs and alcohol, or objects affixed to clothing that threaten health or safety. The revision will require adoption on the part of staff, students, and parents, as change is embraced. Explanatory posters and other communications strategies will be implemented in the fall.

Vice Principal Young introduced the new criterion of Policy P.032.SCO Safe Schools (Managing Student Behaviour). The different school sites can adopt board policy as school policy, rather than develop their own separate policies. The District will continue to work on progressive discipline approaches that are focused on prevention and developing environments that promote and foster positive behaviours. The new approach minimizes the disruptions to students' learning when considering interventions. Vice Principal Young emphasized that the central direction to school administrators is that greater attention is to be focused on bias awareness, particularly with respect to the discriminatory application of progressive discipline that affects certain groups protected under the Human Rights Code.

In response to questions during the presentation and in discussion the following points were noted:

- A standalone Modified Days Policy is underdevelopment;
- Elder Dumont expressed the importance of providing healing opportunities for those students who are deemed in contravention of the policies. His direction was that Indigenous students should have access to a Lodge with the support and advocacy of a member of the Indigenous Education Team, a councillor or an elder when discussing a policy breach. Superintendent Farrish responded that restorative and healing practices have been incorporated into the policy revision;
- McHugh noted the benefits of the Tragic Event Response Teams (TERT) and enlisting psychological first aid resources;

- The dress code incorporates the positive expression of cultural traditions;
- The use of the phrase 'progressive discipline' was rejected by many council members. The words "progressive discipline" contains negative, punitive, fearful connotations for Indigenous families. Requests were made to soften the language to better reflect the intention of creating a whole school positive climate;
- A recommendation to explain the policies to students as part of their preliminary school orientation at the beginning of every school year; and

Indigenous Student Support and Re-engagement Coordinator Meawasige suggested the policy describe a mechanism to remind students of their options to have a cultural support person present should a policy breach occur. Vice Principal Young noted that this language is in the current revised policy and she will verify that it is clearly stated. She said that it will be incumbent on administrators to uphold the delivery of this support at the school level. Mr. Meawasige agreed to consult with Vice Principal Young on the specific language to be included in the policy.

5. Reports

5.1 Indigenous Education Team Update

Vice Principal Alexander provided an update on the on-going work of the Indigenous Education Team for the 2020-2021 school year:

- Mental health check-ins with students and families;
- Advocating for students;
- Working in collaboration with teachers to ensure Indigenous students are obtaining credits and graduating;
- Professional development for library technicians, teacher librarians, training for the Grade 11 NBE course, and Itinerant Educational Assistants;
- Book clubs;
- Supporting the New Teacher Induction Program with presentations;
- Celebrating graduating students with recognition and care packages;
- A virtual Indigenous Youth Symposium;
- Supporting students at Innuqatigiits education hubs;
- Summer Learning Program planning;

- Original Voices Youth Council (OVYC) support;
- Creating newsletters and a Google Currents resource page;
- Offering mental health support circles;
- Working with superintendents to disrupt anti-Indigenous racism and decolonize education;
- Learning sessions on land acknowledgements and treaties;
- Access to elders for students; and
- Regular 'Speakers Series' programming featuring various community partners and Indigenous knowledge groups.

Vice Principal Alexander reported that the District's Board action plan for Indigenous education guides the support of Indigenous students and educators. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, many of the events held in the past were not possible for the 2020-2021 school year. Many activities that the team delivers are not associated with a funding expenditure. Several events which took place were "grassroots" and student-led.

Mr. McHugh recalled that he and Graduation Coach Morrison delivered Christmas baskets to Indigenous families in need during the month of December 2020.

Mr. Meawasige noted his enthusiasm about building on the summer learning program, piloted in the summer of 2020. More news on the program will be publicized in the upcoming Indigenous Education newsletter.

A student shared that he enjoyed the fun of the summer learning program. He contributed that the OVYC supports him to feel more at one with his Indigenous culture.

Superintendent Baker spoke highly of all the achievements that the Indigenous Education Team had been involved with this year.

5.2 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Baker addressed some questions that arose from the meeting of 22 April 2021. She has confirmed with Superintendent Smith that the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) courses are available and accessible to the students who are enrolled in the Urban Aboriginal Alternate High School. There are some limitations, as the courses are staffed with two teachers. Where the teaching staff does not hold the appropriate qualifications, they liaise with staff from other schools and community connections to offer a broader course range.

Superintendent Baker noted that in response to the question of land-based learning and opportunities for the outdoor education centres to support those initiatives, the Indigenous Education Team and Continuing Education plan to visit to MacSkimming Outdoor Education Centre at the end of May 2021 to walk the land and discuss how the land might lend itself to increased learning opportunities.

Trustee Scott shared that the matter of having an Indigenous Trustee position in all school boards will be raised at the Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) annual general meeting in June. The Limestone District School Board has proposed that OPSBA seek to have the Ministry of Education revise the regulation or provide an alternative mechanism to allow all school boards to include an additional funded designated Indigenous trustee. If this resolution is adopted at the OPSBA annual general meeting, it will become part of the provincial association's advocacy to the province. She noted that if OPSBA's advocacy is successful, all boards would thereby benefit from an Indigenous presence at trustee meetings.

Superintendent Baker announced a change to the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) in relation to the Indigenous funding streams. The Indigenous Education grant is expected to provide close to \$1.9 million in additional revenue. The District's grant consists of a base amount to support the Board's action plan on Indigenous education, a per pupil amount reflective of the enrolment of Indigenous students and an Indigenous studies amount, which provides funding based on student enrolment in qualifying secondary panel courses. The increase in funding relates primarily to Indigenous studies where 3,503 pupil credits are anticipated as compared to the 1,900 pupil credits assumed in last year's budget. The increase is attributable to enrolment in compulsory English credit courses (NBE) which qualify for the supplemental funding.

5.3 IEAC Report, 22 April 2021

The IEAC report of 22 April 2021 was received.

5.4 Committee of the Whole Report (L. Miller)

Ms. Miller reported that at the 20 April 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting, amendments were made to the District's Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion Policy. She noted that the District is working to broaden the diversity among all staff groups.

Ms. Miller reported that at the 11 May 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting, a notice of motion was put forward to introduce a French immersion program at Cambridge Street Community Public School in September 2022. The motion was defeated. Ms. Miller expressed her concern with this decision. She maintained that if education is a human

right, should the education be offered in both official languages, made equally available in each school. Superintendent Baker confirmed that more discussions around this topic are forthcoming.

6. Standing Items

6.1 Algonquin Meeting Protocols

Superintendent Baker confirmed that after conferring with Ms. Manatch and Elder Dumont, the Algonquin meeting protocols will continue to be developed throughout the summer months and revisions will be shared at the launch of the 2021-2022 school year.

Elder Dumont spoke about Suquamish Chief Seattle who once said, "We know the sap which courses through the trees as we know the blood that courses through our veins. We are part of the earth and it is part of us." He explained that Chief Seattle was referring to the people of his homeland and territory. Elder Dumont stated that he can say the same about Algonquin territory; the sap coursing through the trees carries the memory of his ancestors. He noted that the Algonquin People have been on Turtle Island for 10,000 years, according to scientific research; however his people believe they have been on the land for a much longer time. He reminded those attending the meeting that the land met upon is unceded, unsurrendered. He urged people to remember that the Algonquin People were never conquered and they do not appreciate being treated as though they were. All Indigenous people have protocols specific to their own nations, which serve as a guideline on expected conduct. Elder Dumont asked those at the meeting to be respectful of the parameters set forth in the Algonquin protocols. The protocols are designed to bring wellness and health to all entities on the territory. He stated that he will embrace those that arrive on the territory with a good heart, a respect for the original inhabitants and the ways of the territory's protocols.

7. Information and Invitation

Ms. Miller acknowledged that National Indigenous History Month will be celebrated in June and hoped that people will celebrate in ways that best suited them and through pow pows.

8. Closing (Elder Albert Dumont)

Elder Dumont offered a closing at 8:01 p.m.



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

8 June 2021

REPORT NO. 21-049

Presentation of the Policy and Practice Review of Police Involvement in Schools

Key Contact: Mary Jane Farrish, Superintendent of Instruction, 613 721 1820 ext. 8821

PURPOSE:

1. To present the report from the Human Rights and Equity Advisory (HREA), attached as Appendix A (hereinafter referred to as the HREA's Report) examining practices at the OCDSB when involving police and the resultant impacts on stakeholders. Staff will reflect on the observations in the HREA's report to inform our response through revisions to OCDSB policies and practices.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. Both the HREA's report and Report 21-049, in response, align with the OCDSB 2019-2023 Strategic Plan (strategic plan) goals within the cultures of Innovation, Caring and Social Responsibility:
 - a. Champion high learning expectations for all students
 - b. Remove barriers to equity of access, opportunity and outcomes;
 - c. Prioritize the dignity and well-being of students in inclusive and caring classrooms; and
 - d. Build authentic engagement with and among our communities.

The District multi-year Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap (IEHRR) calls for centering principles of human rights and equity in policies, practices and decision-making and identifying and removing disparity in outcomes. A human rights and equity lens is reflected in the HREA's review.

A strategic link to the OCDSB Mental Health Strategy 2019-2022 exists in the approach to supporting mental health in a shared model of collaboration with community and home to reduce barriers to accessing culturally responsive services.

CONTEXT

3. Responding to community concerns about police involvement in schools, the Board of Trustees passed a motion on 22 September 2020 directing a review of Policy P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools, including the role or roles of the School Resource Officer (SRO).

4. Board Motion

On 22 September 2020, the Board passed the following motion directing a review of police involvement in schools:

- A. *THAT the Board Review Policy P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools, including (i) the role or roles of the School Resource Officer (SRO) in OCDSB schools, and (ii) all OCDSB commitments identified as legally discretionary within the multilateral protocol governing relations between Ottawa Police Services (OPS) and Ottawa-area school districts.*
- B. *THAT staff bring forward a report with a plan for Board approval no later than the end of October 2020, which includes: (i) a plan for the overall review of police involvement in OCDSB schools, with milestones; (ii) internal and external consultation plans, per Policy P.110.GOV; and (iii) options for the involvement of external academic or other experts, the creation of an advisory panel, and/or the creation of an ad hoc or steering committee.*

5. Review Process

The consultation plan for the policy review, approved in October 2020, outlined the scope of the broader review of OCDSB practices and included the generation of a report to share findings from the review. The HREA was tasked with conducting this review and completing a report within her 'arm's length role', with the authority to provide recommendations on practice and policy to the District for consideration.

The HREA is a provincially funded position in Ontario school boards with the mandate to promote and uphold principles of human rights and equity across the district. As such, part of the work of the HREA includes providing guidance and advice to senior staff on policies related to human rights with the goal of fostering a culture free of harassment and discrimination.

In accordance with the consultation plan, the HREA established a steering team of student representatives, parents and community representatives, as well as advisory committee representatives. This team remained involved throughout the review process and provided input for pieces of the consultation process as well as the final HREA's report (Appendix A).

6. Review Structure

The review of OCDSB practices of involving police in schools, began in November of 2020 with the formal consultation activities spanning four months. The modes of consultation, conducted to inform the HREA's report included both public and private discussions as well as written feedback submissions and anonymous surveys. The participant engagement for the HREA's report includes voices from

both secondary school students, parents/guardians/caregivers and staff as well as input from the current and past SROs assigned to both schools. All participants were offered the opportunity to provide individual feedback, and some made written submissions to the HREA directly and/or arranged for individual conversations.

Facilitation of the sessions was completed by internal facilitators and note takers as well as external facilitators and note takers from Dennery Resources for sessions designed for participants who identify as Black or racialized. Dennery Resources also facilitated consultation sessions for stakeholders from Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools, the two schools that are served by priority SROs.

Other sources of information for the HREA's report include inquiry with other school districts, relevant reports and literature reviews from other districts, studies and research in the field of police involvement in schools.

7. Structure of the HREA's Report

The HREA's report has been organized to provide background information to reflect the intended outcomes of the OCDSB practices when engaging with Ottawa Police Service (OPS) as well as a presentation of the impacts as shared by participants in the multiple consultation activities. Participation data for each consultation activity is included in the appendices found within the HREA's report. The HREA's report includes sections on perceptions, perspectives and impacts as well as a section on connecting these perspectives to OCDSB policy and practice and to the available external research and reports. In addition, the HREA's report includes a scan of other Ontario school districts' reviews and the scholarship and studies available. The HREA's report concludes with recommendations for staff to consider. The HREA's report includes considerations and recommendations pertaining to the summary observations in each section.

8. Legislative Requirements

Both the provincial model for local protocols and the Ottawa protocol directs the legislated partnership between the OPS and the 4 publicly funded school boards in Ottawa. Shaping the on-going partnership with OPS to achieve productive intersections in service for youth and families through our shared legislative obligations is the goal and objective of our response to the review observations as outlined in the HREA's report.

The relationship the District has with OPS reflects a shared focus on, and commitment to, youth safety and healthy development in our schools as subsets of communities. Maintaining a positive relationship with all community partners is the cornerstone of effective community involvement and engagement. The District shares stakeholders with OPS and we are committed to shaping our partnership activities to improve service for students who experience disproportionately negative outcomes through our practices. These practices include the District's involvement of police in progressive discipline and in activities intended to build positive, engaging and safe school cultures and climates.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

9. Responding to the HREA's Report

Staff have received the HREA's report, which can be viewed as an audit of OCDSB stakeholder experiences and perspectives pertaining to police involvement in the school community. We will use the observations presented in the HREA's report to consider and examine our practices in the partnership and relationship that we have with OPS. As the employer, OPS governs police programs such as the SRO program and they will similarly consider the HREA's report so that our work forward will be informed through this common source.

The HREA's report issues guidance and recommended considerations for decisions and direction with respect to future OCDSB practices when involving OPS. This guidance will be reflected upon to draft the revised policy document for presentation to the board of trustees in fall 2021.

The findings from the HREA's report are assessed within the context of the OCDSB commitments within the IEHRR and the strategic plan. As the IEHRR states:

Explicit and deliberate actions are urgently required to address inequities in our systems, structures, policies and practices that continue to impact student and staff success and well-being and to build trust with students, families, staff, and communities that we have been under-serving.

Championing high learning expectations for students requires appropriate and relevant supports that serve to prioritize the dignity and well-being of students. Achievement is also inextricably connected to the conditions that we set for learning in our schools; conditions that are free from barriers to equity of experiences and outcomes. As an educational institution, our purpose in service to students is to provide them with the opportunity to realize their potential and develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable, caring citizens.

Our schools must therefore be places where students feel empowered and elevated in reaching their potential, set by high expectations of them matched with conditions that support their achievement. Students are not only welcomed, but expected and supported to excel, in our school climates and cultures, in the bodies and identities that they live as well as the knowledge, skills and talents that they bring.

10. Stakeholder impacts

The perspectives that are recorded in the HREA's report reveal outcomes of harm experienced for stakeholder groups whom we have centred as priority voices in this review. Many participants from minoritized groups voiced that the events happening in their communities and schools involving police cannot be separated from the impact of world events involving police violence. Participants pointed to the violence experienced by Indigenous and Black people in the US, in Canada and in Ottawa when discussing OCDSB policy on police involvement in schools.

The observations presented in the HREA's report question the hypothesis that relationship building with police through resource officers in schools achieves positive outcomes for students and the intended objectives of the program as it currently operates. The presence of police officers in schools is also built upon the assumption that having a police officer in school makes school a safer place. Feedback from participants in the consultation did not confirm this assumption. The larger number of Indigenous, Black and racialized voices heard in the consultation process described the creation of an environment that was unsafe, rather than safe when police were involved at school.

Many participants in the consultation discussions expressed concerns about inbuilt systematic racism and bias in the education system combined with systemic racism in the policing system resulting in over-exposure and involvement of Indigenous, Black and racialized students with the police at school.

OCDSB's annual suspension data demonstrate disproportionality and disparity for equity seeking groups including students with special education identifications, students who are Indigenous and students who are racialized. This is also the case for students living in lower socio-economic conditions, keeping in mind the possible intersectionality of all lived identities. The OCDSB policy and practice for police involvement in schools includes engagement with police in supporting progressive discipline

Although individual relationships with SROs were cited as positive in some cases and appreciated by some stakeholder groups there were also examples provided that suggested the benefit and value of the partnership was dependent on the individuals in the roles (administrator and SRO). The integrity of any individual, or their intentions (both District staff and OPS staff) is not in dispute or meant to be judged in the examination of the review observations or in the HREA's report. The examples of the positive relationships, interactions and outcomes, in some instances, do not mitigate or neutralize the harm expressed by many stakeholders from minoritized identities who spoke about a level of distrust and fear felt about the institution of policing. It appears from these stakeholder groups' reports that distrust and fear is not being addressed or repaired in the types of activities that are intended through police involvement in schools, and in fact the presence of police in their schools intensifies their negative feelings and experiences.

11. Priority SRO support

Consultation activities were held specifically for students, parents/guardians/caregivers and staff at both secondary schools that are currently supported by priority SROs.

Input shared through the consultation activities includes reports of harm being experienced by students, staff and families who are minoritized, in response to the presence and involvement of police officers in school settings and processes. Some stakeholders from these schools expressed a feeling of being surveilled and targeted in their neighbourhoods and school communities and having police officers present in their schools was not seen as supportive but rather negatively impacted their sense of safety. Some stakeholders felt that having police presence in school limited their full participation in school life due to a sense of being

watched. Students and families from both schools indicated that the high visibility of police officers and police vehicles at the school reinforced and perpetuated incorrect, negative stereotypes about the students, school and community as dangerous and criminal.

Staff at both schools indicated that the schools were well resourced through the Urban and Priority High School (UPHS) ministry funding and that the involvement of the priority SROs was not critical nor a high yield resource in achieving improved outcomes for their students. Staff at both schools appreciate the framework for resource allocation that is attached to utilization of the UPHS funds and indicated that they could invest the money diverted from the memorandum of understanding (MOU) using their UPHS framework for allocation.

CONCLUSION:

12. At the 26 May 2021 Committee of the Whole Budget meeting, staff informed the Board of Trustees that the 2021/2022 staff recommended budget will not include a continuation of the investment in the MOU with OPS in any amount. Budget preparation continues and decisions about the diversion of those funds will be forthcoming.

In response to the stakeholder perspectives presented in the HREA's report, current practices, and operations within our partnership with OPS will be suspended while we recalibrate our relationship through the policy revision process which will unfold in the fall. Findings and recommended considerations from the HREA's report will inform the policy revisions, and actions to implement changes to OCDSB practices. The voices heard and prioritized in this review indicate that a reshaping of the District's partnership with OPS, in service of student and school safety is necessary.

The policy revisions will consider the range and profundity of the impacts and perspectives from the voices collected through consultation activities and documented in the HREA's report. The draft revised policy will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval in the fall of 2021.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

13. The current investment of OCDSB funds to support the MOU with OPS combined with the contribution made by OPS is approximately \$200,000. This amount will be available for the investment in the 2021-2022 staff recommended budget to be directed to schools for use with similar parameters to UPHS funding or other student success centered initiatives.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

14. The HREA's report will be shared directly with the steering team who guided this review as well as with the student groups who were consulted, all school-based

staff, community groups who were consulted, board Advisory Committee chairs as well as the Ottawa Assembly of School Councils (OCASC), school council chairs at Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools' as well as through the OCDSB digital school council newsletters. The HREA's report will be shared through social media communications and on the District website. OPS will also receive a copy of the HREA's report and this resultant Committee of the Whole report, 21-049.

The District consultation webpage will be updated to reflect the timelines and activities to be completed, including the policy revision.

Direct communication with OPS, through the respective staff members, will continue as we facilitate the reshaping of the approach within our partnership, to maintain a productive and a positive relationship in our collaborative actions to support students and families as required.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

15. How is the strategic plan's monitoring progress reflected in response to the HREA's report as per the following questions:
 - How is decision-making guided by the strategic priorities?
 - How does this create conditions to promote a change in culture?
 - How does the data/ evidence inform our work?
 - How is the response to the HREA's report consistent with the goals from the IEHRR in the areas of Engagement and Connectedness, Importance of Identity, and Governance and Leadership?
 - How can we build on the consultation process and outcomes that informed the HREA report to inform the policy development and commensurate procedures that the board will undertake as the next steps?

Mary Jane Farrish
Superintendent of Instruction

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

Appendix A-Policy and Practice Review of Police Involvement in Schools



Appendix A to Report 21-049

POLICY AND PRACTICE REVIEW OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Office of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor

June 2021

Carolyn Tanner
Human Rights and Equity Advisor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ALGONQUIN TERRITORY AND THE ALGONQUIN PEOPLE

This review took place on the unceded and unsundered territory of the Algonquin People. This territory has been home to the Algonquin People since time immemorial. It is on this territory that OCDSB students, families and staff are living and learning. We are grateful to be present on Algonquin land.

The voices of the Algonquin People must be centred on their territory, together with the multitude of voices of other First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and families who are living and learning here and call this land home. Through this review, the OCDSB asked Indigenous students, families, staff and communities to come forward and share their truth; their truth about the education system and their truth about the police. These truths are tied to legacies of trauma inflicted by colonialism, the residential school system and the failure to prioritize and protect missing and murdered women, girls and two-spirit people. Recognizing and honouring this truth is important to find the good path forward toward reconciliation.

“Anywhere and everywhere, in all domains where human beings interact to bring about something of peace and solitude, there needs to be real trust alive and well in the hearts of the people, if good is the expected outcome.” Algonquin Elder

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

2SLGBTQ+	Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and Questioning
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous and People of Colour
BMS	Behaviour Management Systems
EA	Educational Assistant
ELD	English Language Developers
GHS	Gloucester High School
HWDSB	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
IEAC	Indigenous Education Advisory Council
KII	Key Informant Interview
MFIPPA	<i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act</i>
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OCDSB	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
OCISO	Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization
OPS	Ottawa Police Service
PD	Professional Development
PDSB	Peel District School Board
PHIPPA	<i>Personal Health Information Protection Act</i>
POC	People of Colour
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RHS	Ridgemont High School
SOI	Superintendent of Instruction
SRO	School Resource Officer
TDSB	Toronto District School Board
TERT	Tragic Event Response Team
UGDSB	Upper Grand District School Board
UPHS	Urban and Priority High Schools
VTRA	Violence/Threat Risk Assessment
YCJA	<i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i>

“We hope that the voices and opinions of those families and communities that experience the most systemic exclusions and are made the most vulnerable by the racism, homophobia, classism, misogyny, and ableism of our society are prioritized over those who have the privilege of being made safe by police. It is the latter who are always the loudest, and so we hope you listen closely to those with the least capacity or resources to take up space.” 2SLGBTQ+ Family

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY¹

Scope of the review. In September 2020 the Board of Trustees passed a [motion](#) mandating a review of the [Police Involvement in Schools](#) Policy. The [consultation plan](#) for the policy review was approved in October 2020. This included a review of the School Resource Officer (SRO) role in schools as well as a human rights-based review of all activities that involve police in schools that are identified as legally discretionary.

In total 28 small group discussions were held, with 424 participants. 32 key informant interviews were conducted and 25 written submissions received and reviewed. Over 3100 people participated in the survey for students, parents and community members.

Experiences. Across the consultations, courageous and candid experiences were heard from students, parents, community members and employees regarding their interaction with police in schools and their observations about how the OCDSB is using police in schools. The impact of these experiences ranged from positive encounters to lasting physical and psychological harms that were distinctly linked to Indigeneity, race, class, gender, and ability. In all of the consultations it was made clear that those most negatively impacted by OCDSB’s practices of involving police in school need to be prioritized in proposed solutions and in outcomes. Each consultation highlighted vivid examples where this policy has worsened the relationships of various stakeholders – students, parents, and members of the wider community – with the police. It was evident that the communities that engaged in this process are mindful of the social and political context of the Ottawa region and the wider world. Many participants vocalized and shared through online discussion that the events happening in the region cannot be separated from world events when speaking about police involvement in schools. In particular, participants pointed to the violence perpetrated by police against Indigenous and Black people in the US, in Canada and in Ottawa when discussing OCDSB policy.

Participants shared with vivid honesty stories of being negatively impacted by their encounters with police. Thus, it is important to consider the ongoing and historical role that systemic racism plays within the context of education and policing. Community members took risks to share their experiences, and in some instances, they had to re-live painful moments as part of this consultation process. The review team is thankful for all the individuals who courageously shared their lived experiences.

“As a mom of a special needs child, I know that some people believe that the mainstreaming of children with Autism makes necessary the presence of police in schools, due to the inevitable meltdowns these children experience. Police are, however, not experts or even properly trained in the de-escalation of special needs children. I can only imagine the good that would be done if the funding was instead spent on EAs or behaviour specialists.” Parent

¹ The executive summary was written by Dennerly Resources Inc with slight modifications.

Safety. Safety emerged as a consistent theme throughout the range of dialogues held. At the inception of the SRO program, increased police involvement within schools and educational spaces was assumed to lead to improved safety. This assumption, and the understanding of safety it rests upon, have since been challenged. Other considerations, such as psychological, physical, and emotional safety, particularly for Indigenous, Black, and marginalized² communities were raised in criticisms of the assumed connection between police presence and overall safety. Throughout the consultation process, 2SLGBTQ+ people and people who experience barriers related to their abilities also voiced this broader understanding of safety.

No singular definition of safety was established during the consultations. But it was clear that one's experience of safety in relation to police involvement in schools is deeply rooted in Indigeneity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and ability.

Safety for whom? Safety for whom? was a recurring question that community members implored us to consider. Consultation participants were diverse in terms of socio-economic standing, ancestry, racial and ethnic background, and sexual orientation and gender identity. The majority of community members spoke to their intersectional identities and the correlation between these identities and their experiences of police involvement in schools. The diversity of participants resulted in a range of perspectives being shared regarding the impacts that police presence can have in the school and learning environment.

"I want to have my rights as a parent to be respected. Having a police officer in school reinforces the idea that white students need to be protected from racialized students." Parent

"There are two schools on the same street but although they were so close they were different in nature because of the demographic. One is predominantly white and the other is predominantly of colour. I always see 3, 4 or 5 cop cars parked outside of the school that is predominantly of colour. What kind of image does that create? Especially when other students see it. It feeds the stigma that people are always getting in trouble... It's supposed to be an educational environment." Black Student

Geographic location has an influence on the level of exposure communities have to SROs. The influence of geographic location was exemplified by the experiences of students and families living in the Ridgemont and Gloucester school areas. At the primary and high schools serving these regions there is a 1:4.5 SRO to school ratio. At other schools in the Ottawa region, the ratio is 1:17.

Compared to their suburban counterparts, communities impacted by poverty and those in urban city centres have increased exposure to police officers in schools. Many participants expressed concerns regarding the allocation of resources, and the intersections of Indigeneity, race, class, and ability were reflected in many of the experiences they shared.

"I have been a teacher for 20 years - 18 years with the OCDSB at the elementary level in a middle-class neighbourhood. The SRO would come in and talk about safe ways to cross the street, etc. The longest-serving SRO was Black (eight

² "Marginalized" is used throughout this report to refer to identities that are racialized, 2SLGBTQ+ and include people with disabilities.

years). I did not see much of the SRO who was being deployed elsewhere. Seems they are being sent to places with behaviour problems. Schools should do a better job dealing with behaviour, particularly in low-income areas. Students with autism have a medical problem. Suburbia sees school as a hub for community. Hub for where services come together.” Parent

Psychological safety. Students shared experiences of having police cars constantly parked outside of Gloucester, Ridgemont and Woodroffe High Schools. Students spoke about the psychological impacts of feeling “watched” and the negative effects this has on their ability to feel a deeper sense of belonging in the school community. Participants also suggested that constant armed police presence affected their academic performance and reduced their sense of psychological safety, in particular for Indigenous, Black and racialized students.

“When students see who cops are when George Floyd was killed by police, we can’t expect students to feel safe when they walk into school and see police officers there - especially from the perspective of people who think that police should make it a safer environment, because police are supposed to represent safety, but the reality is that for racialized students police represent violence and harm and punishment, so we can’t expect racialized students to feel safe in the classroom because they are going to be vigilant about the fact that there are police in the building or in the class beside them or in the hallway, and this will impact them in negative ways when they are only supposed to be feeling positive things in an educational environment.” Student

Over policing. Over policing emerged as a theme within the consultations, especially amongst racialized populations. In both the student and community dialogues we repeatedly heard participants speak of the hyper-surveillance that occurs both within schools and in the wider community and the role this plays within the school environment. Participants reacted strongly to the constant presence of armed police officers in schools. We heard from current and former students that the administrative staff would routinely threaten students with police intervention for minor infractions or benign behaviours. Some of these situations occurred as students were simply waiting indoors out of the cold before leaving the school during the winter months. Students (former and current) described the double standard that Black students experienced as compared to their white counterparts. Students spoke to us candidly about the limitations placed on them when racialized communities are treated as threats and how there are minimal opportunities to escape these narratives. Many students felt as though there is no escape from police presence and interventions because they are heavily policed at school and within their communities. They asked, where are the spaces where kids can just be kids, with space to learn and grow without the looming threat of violence?

“Why are we so afraid of 14-17 year olds? They aren’t that scary.” Student

Participants shared how teachers and administrators routinely “adultified” and pathologized Black girls attending high schools. These girls are not treated as students on a learning journey but rather as adults requiring disproportionate surveillance. These biases were linked to higher suspension rates and the educational streaming that Indigenous, Black and racialized students experience. Participants in both the student dialogues and community forums argued that there is a direct correlation between these trends and pushing children out of school and into a trajectory that risks leading to prison (the “school-to-prison” pipeline).

“Police cars are almost always sitting outside of the school.” Student

“Firstly, I would like to start with how it makes me feel targeted, like, because I am a person of colour, I am supposed to mess up. Also, as I walk in the hallway and see officers it makes me feel uncomfortable, especially now with all that is happening in our city with Ottawa Police. I personally, do not trust the police, due to the distrust that currently exists within our community.” Racialized Student

Process. Many families described biases and double standards they faced when engaging with the school system. Some families spoke about not being informed when the school contacted police about their children. Many families, especially newcomers to Canada, felt as though there were no alternative ways to advocate for their children, given their status as immigrants or refugees. Parents shared their experiences of seeing their children bullied at school as a result of racism, but they were never followed up with or given a sense that the perpetrators were held accountable. At the same time, parents related that when racialized students reacted to racist abuse, they were suspended or even expelled.

Transparency. Many participants expressed that there is a lack of transparency regarding the process of police involvement in schools. Although notices about the consultations were posted on the OCDSB website, many families who attended the consultations felt that they were not given sufficient background about the process. For instance, participants had many questions regarding definitions of terms such as “gangs” and discretionary interventions. Many participants spoke to the implicit and explicit biases that are present when teachers, administrators, and police engage with racialized communities and with people living with disabilities. Many families are not engaged in interventions and feel like they are consulted as an afterthought. Many families feel they are not fully informed as to the process when police are called and how discretion is applied. For instance, parents reported that they were not contacted when their child was in police custody within the school. Each of these shortcomings act to create distrust towards the OCDSB and the police.

“I have two kids in OCDSB. My son was involved in a couple of incidents at school involving allegations of bullying. The SRO was never involved in any of this. The principal threatened my son with the police coming to the house. The principal told me that the police will be notified and to expect a visit from the police at my home. There was no sharing of prevention strategies. It was a threat from the principal.” Parent

“It is very much according to administrative discretion and what they deem appropriate. This is a huge problem because teachers are overwhelmingly calling SROs on Black and other racialized students and are complicit in this issue of disproportionate impact. Same goes for disabled students.” Community Member

Recommendations heard. There was an unwavering recommendation running through students and community discussion sessions to immediately stop and discontinue OCDSB participation in the School Resource Officer program. Across every consultation session a large proportion of students, parents, community members and some staff members of all identities were clear that this program needs to be discontinued. Many questioned the reasons given by the OCDSB for not suspending the program while this review was underway.

Participants noted that criticisms have been raised both internationally and domestically about the impacts of police in schools. In 2014, for instance, the United Nations Human Rights Committee expressed concern about trends in American schools towards the criminalization of students in response to disciplinary problems. Similarly, some participants highlighted other Canadian jurisdictions' decisions to terminate SRO programs. An SRO program in Canada's largest school board, in Toronto, ended late in 2017, and programs in Peel and Hamilton ended in 2020 with the program in Kitchener-Waterloo being put on hold pending a review. Upper Grand ended their program in 2021. These programs were heavily criticized for their impacts on racialized students.

There were many recommendations that called for the OCDSB to look at non-punitive approaches towards addressing conflict in schools. This does not mean there shouldn't be measures in place to ensure accountability. However, models that are centred on healing and restorative practices should be explored when considering methods to ensure collective accountability. Participants recommended that the school board must consider critical race theory when attempting to rebuild a transparent accountability structure that works for everyone. The students who participated in the consultation process shared their concerns about feeling like their voices will not be heard, and even questioned whether the board will listen to their voices if they were given a chance to express themselves. They were resolute in their assertion that their criminalization continues when increased police presence means they are surveilled in the corridors of their schools.

"We have to stop prioritizing the good experiences over the violence experienced by others." Participant

"Law enforcement needs reform. We already know there are serious shortfalls in dealing with issues like mental illness and drug abuse. So why are we inviting them into our schools to regulate our children's behaviour? Don't our children deserve the best? How is it somehow their responsibility to help reform law enforcement?" Participant

Conclusion. During the consultation process we heard from many community members who were deeply impacted by police intervention in OCDSB schools. Their experiences clearly indicate that people who have been pushed to the margins in society (e.g., Indigenous, Black, 2SLGBTQ+ and people with disabilities) continue to be severely impacted by police presence in educational settings. For some participants, the consultations changed their understanding of the program. There were community members who entered the consultations believing that the SRO program needed simply to be adjusted, but once they heard the voices of current and former students and family members who were negatively impacted by the presence of police in schools, they too supported termination of the SRO program. There was wide support from people of all identities in the group discussions for the removal of police presence from schools.

Participants related experiences that were unequivocally rooted in systemic racism, specifically anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism. These experiences involved psychological harm, physical and verbal violence, and surveillance, which ultimately had catastrophic impacts on the physiological and physical wellbeing of Indigenous and Black students and their families. The systemic violence that is experienced in community settings is transferred into school spaces when police engage with Indigenous, Black, 2SLGBTQ+ and students living with disabilities. The experiences of trauma are not removed or isolated because the environment has changed from community to school. Having armed police officers in schools has the potential to impact

the well-being and development of all youth, but racialized youth are particularly susceptible to negative impacts given the long-term and widespread problem of systemic racism.

The right to education is a fundamental right of every child. Realizing that right for every child, is the core business of the OCDSB. This means that OCDSB bears the duty to take proactive steps to remove barriers to ensure that every child has the equal opportunity to access their education without discrimination. It is clear from the information that came forward during the review, that the current practice of involving police in schools is creating barriers for some Indigenous, Black and marginalized students that prevent them from fully enjoying their right to education without discrimination. It is evident that the way OCDSB is currently using police to regulate behaviour of children in school is disproportionately impacting on children with disabilities and who are Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+. It is also evident that the inclusion of the police in the school community is creating barriers to the educational success of some Indigenous, Black and marginalized students who do not feel safe in the schools as a result. Administrators and educators enjoy a special relationship with their students that the law recognizes as being in *"loco parentis"*. This relationship obligates them to act the way a careful and prudent parent would, in the best interests of the particular child, not simply the majority.

A rights-based approach to education requires the OCDSB to make fundamental changes to remove these barriers. The roadmap for achieving this is set out in the international human rights instruments that should act as a compass for OCDSB practice. The OCDSB should centre Indigenous rights, human rights and children's rights as it navigates changes to respond to concerns highlighted. Every child has the right to participate in decision making that impacts on them, to have their voice heard and be given due weight in accordance with their development. Every child has the right to have their own best interests centred in decision making about them. Children in the district have spoken and shared their perspectives and the OCDSB should centre these voices as it charts a new direction forward.

Changes need to be made to limit police engagement in schools, create monitoring and accountability mechanisms for when police do need to be involved and to re-centre the engagement, welcoming and success of all students in the school setting.

The generosity and hope expressed by the communities and those who came together to share their dreams of what the OCDSB could look like showed opportunity for the way forward. They shared many different tools, resources, and approaches to provide improved support for students and teachers. The energy for positive change is driven and led by the community and these consultations reveal a prime opportunity to build on the energies coursing through Ottawa-area communities.

Recommendation 1: That the OCDSB end its participation in the School Resource Officer Program.

Recommendation 2: That the OCDSB revise and harmonize all relevant contractual commitments, policies and procedures to limit police involvement at schools to necessary involvement, introduce accountability and transparency mechanisms for all police involvement and embed Indigenous rights, human rights and children's rights and survivor-centred practices.

INTRODUCTION

Scope of the review

In September 2020 the Board of Trustees passed a [motion](#) mandating a review of the [Police Involvement in Schools](#) Policy. The [consultation plan](#) for the policy review was approved in October 2020. This included a review of the School Resource Officer (SRO) role in schools as well as a human rights-based review of all activities that involve police in schools that are identified as legally discretionary.

This review was undertaken by the Office of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor at the OCDSB.³ The Human Rights and Equity Advisor is an arm's-length role that is mandated by the Ministry of Education to identify and make recommendations to address systemically-based human rights and equity issues and to increase the OCDSB capacity to ensure compliance with its obligations under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

The review is under the purview of the Superintendent for Safe and Accepting Schools with the technical implementation led by the Human Rights and Equity Advisor. The design and implementation of the review was guided by a steering group composed of students, parents and community groups representing diverse lived experiences. The steering group also included representatives who were put forward by the Indigenous Education Advisory Council, the Advisory Committee on Equity and the Special Education Advisory Committee. The terms of reference were shared with the Indigenous Education team, the equity team at OCDSB as well as with administrators at the two high schools with priority SRO programs and they were asked to recommend students or parents who met the criteria and may be interested in participating. Efforts were made to balance student and adult voices at the table.

The Superintendent of Instruction coordinated the steering group meetings. The steering group was an informal mechanism and not a formal committee. Its role included providing input into resources to be reviewed, groups to be consulted, the development of questions to guide the group discussions and the survey tool, and being consulted on the interpretation of the results, recommendations and development of the revised policy.

The terms of reference for the steering group are attached as **Appendix 1**.

The review report outlines concerns heard, identifies how these concerns impact on human rights and makes suggestions for the way forward.

Mandatory and legally discretionary police notification

The mandate of this review from the Board of Trustees is to look at all actions and commitments that are *legally discretionary*. The Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol (Provincial Protocol)⁴ sets the legal standard for which incidents *must* be reported to the police by the school board. All other incidents and types of police involvement are legally discretionary,

³ See

https://ocdsb.ca/about_us/human_rights_and_equity_advisor#:~:text=Established%20in%20the%20spring%20of.and%20the%20broader%20school%20community. Accessed on June 2, 2021

⁴ The Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol (Provincial Protocol), Ministry of Education, 2015

and are the subject of this review. Under the OCDSB procedures, the principal in consultation with the superintendent has the responsibility for reporting mandatory incidents to the police.⁵

Incidents that require mandatory police notification are set out in the Provincial Protocol and are listed in the table below. Any other involvement of police in schools is *legally discretionary*, even though it may be identified as mandatory in either the Ottawa Protocol or OCDSB policies and procedures. The Ottawa Protocol and the OCDSB police involvement policies and procedures have created a more expansive list of incidents requiring mandatory police notification than the list in the Provincial Protocol. A number of other OCDSB policies and procedures also reference police involvement. A comprehensive table identifying all OCDSB policies and procedures that reference police involvement can be found at **Appendix 2**. This will be analyzed in more detail later in the report.

Table 1: Incidents requiring mandatory police notification under the Provincial Protocol

Incidents Requiring Mandatory Police Notification		
all deaths	criminal harassment	gang-related occurrences
physical assault causing bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner	possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm	non-consensual sharing of intimate images
using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person	relationship-based violence	hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences
robbery	Sexual assault	extortion
trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs	possessing an illegal drug	bomb threats

The Provincial Protocol notes one exception to the requirement to notify police for the incidents listed above. If the incident involves a child under 12 years of age, the principal may use their discretion about whether or not to notify the police. Therefore, involvement of police in responding to incidents involving children under 12 is *always* legally discretionary, even if the incident is on the list requiring mandatory notification.

Human rights-based approach to review

A human rights-based approach was used to guide this review. A human rights-based approach has three fundamental principles: participation and inclusion, non-discrimination, and transparency and accountability. It recognizes that policies and practices can often have unintended adverse impacts on marginalized communities, resulting in them experiencing systemic discrimination. Using a human rights-based approach, opportunities were created to allow for students, staff and community members of all identities to share their perspectives and

⁵ Note: The Provincial Protocol refers to mandatory notification. The OCDSB policies and procedures use the terms critical incidents and violent incidents and these types of incidents require mandatory reporting to the police. For simplicity, this report will refer to incidents that the Provincial Protocol says must be reported to the police as “mandatory”, everything else is legally discretionary.

experiences. Experiences and perspectives shared were disaggregated by race, sexuality and gender, and disability. This helps to highlight the experiences of identities that are often marginalized and most impacted by discipline and police engagement and create space for their lived experiences to be recognized. A human rights-based approach does not use a “majority rules” approach. Rather, by highlighting the experience of marginalized communities who are often most impacted by police involvement, the review ensured that all students’ experiences, safety and well-being were prioritized and acted upon, not just the experiences of the majority.

Information collection

Information for the review was collected through group discussions, one-on-one interviews, surveys and written submissions. Group discussions were held with students, parents/guardians and community members, employees, administrators and SROs at the OPS. Confidential one-on-one interviews were also held with students, parents/guardians and community members, employees, administrators and the Staff Sergeant overseeing the Youth Intervention and Division Unit. An anonymous public survey was launched for students, parents/guardians and community members and was available in English, French, Somali and Arabic languages. Over 3100 people participated in the survey. A summary of the results of the public survey can be accessed [here](#). A separate anonymous internal survey was also completed by administrators at OCDSB. The results are discussed throughout this report.

In an effort to create safer spaces for discussion and to better understand impacts on different people based on their lived experiences, small group discussions were held for Indigenous, Black, Somali-speaking (translation provided by OCISO⁶ multicultural liaison officers), Arabic-speaking (translation provided by OCISO multicultural liaison officers), racialized, 2SLGBTQ+ and disability groups. General discussions forums were also offered that were not identity-based. Within these general forums, participants were invited to self-select into smaller discussion groups that were identity-based and then perspectives discussed in each of the small groups were shared back to the larger group in plenary. Discussions ran for approximately two hours, with some being extended to allow for continued discussion. Seven out of the 28 group sessions were facilitated by Dennery Resources Inc.⁷, an Ottawa based consulting organization. Dennery Resources Inc. brought together a team of racialized, senior facilitators⁸ highly skilled at working with and facilitating spaces for diverse populations, such as Black, Indigenous and racialized communities as they intersect with 2SLGBTQ+, and people with disabilities. The remainder of the sessions were facilitated by the Human Rights and Equity Advisor and members of the Indigenous education team and equity team at the OCDSB. A full list of the group discussions offered is attached as **Appendix 3**.

One-on-one key informant interviews were also held. Some participants were approached by the reviewer and asked to contribute. Others reached out to the reviewer directly or through the dedicated email address requesting an opportunity to share perspectives in a confidential space. One-on-one interviews were directed around the question of “what do you think about police involvement in schools” and lasted for as long as the interviewee had perspectives to contribute. They ranged in length from half an hour to 2 hours in length. A complete list of the one-on-one interviews is attached as **Appendix 4**.

⁶ Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization

⁷ Dominique Dennery leads Dennery Resources Inc. and was the leader of the facilitation team.

⁸ The senior facilitators were Shequita Thompson-Reid and Kola Iluyomade.

Written submissions were also received by the reviewer. A dedicated email address was set up on the OCDSB police involvement in schools webpage to receive submissions. In addition, some people sent submissions directly to the reviewer's email address. A complete list of the written submissions received is attached as **Appendix 5**.

In addition to the information set out above, relevant District minutes were also accessed that pertained to police involvement in schools.⁹

Perspectives of marginalized communities

"When the school board re-evaluates the SRO program and looks into what effect police officers have on our students, I hope that you also look at lived experiences and take the time to listen to the stories of individuals ... To call upon the memories I have is painful, emotional and it is not something that I or many other students are comfortable with." Indigenous Student Trustee

This report seeks to accurately reflect the nuanced perspectives heard from marginalized communities. The discussion below will reflect in summary, how perspectives about a particular role or impact may be different depending on the participants' lived experiences. We recognize that intersections in identity influence how a person experiences the world. We also recognize that identity groups are not a monolith, with just one perspective or position. Experiences and perspectives range across a spectrum. To honour the rich perspectives and voices that identity groups brought forward, a detailed reflection can be found in appendices to this report, as follows:

- **Appendix 6** - Perspectives shared by Indigenous Peoples
- **Appendix 7** - Perspectives shared by the Black community
- **Appendix 8** - Perspectives shared by the Somali community
- **Appendix 9** - Perspectives shared by community of people with Disabilities
- **Appendix 10** - Perspectives shared by 2SLGBTQ+ community
- **Appendix 11** - Perspectives shared by Gloucester and Ridgemont catchment areas

Legal and policy framework

In Ontario, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services directs school boards and police services to establish and follow a protocol to address school-related occurrences and all involvement activities. In Ottawa, the four publicly funded school boards and the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) have jointly developed the *Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools Policies in the City of Ottawa, 2020* (Ottawa Protocol). It is based on the Ontario *Provincial Model for Local Police/School Board Protocol, 2015* (Provincial Protocol).

The Ministry of Education recognizes an essential role for police in making schools and communities safer.¹⁰ It recognizes the role of police to investigate incidents in accordance with the local protocol between the police service and the school board. Incidents that require mandatory police notification are identified in Provincial Protocol.

⁹ OCDSB Board Public Minutes, June 22, 2020; YouTube recording of OCDSB Committee of the Whole Meeting, June 22, 2020 accessed on May 21, 2021 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8j2JYzXpIRk>; OCDSB Indigenous Education Advisory Council, June 25, 2020

¹⁰ *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128* (2019), The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct, Ministry of Education.

The OCDSB policy governing police involvement in schools¹¹ identifies the objectives of police involvement to include:

1. encouraging ongoing, adaptive, and responsive partnerships between police and the school community;
2. assisting in providing for the greater safety and protection of, students, teachers, staff and volunteers in schools;
3. facilitating sharing and disclosure of appropriate information;
4. promoting joint consultation and partnerships between the school board and police services on maintaining a safe school environment;
5. ensuring that the obligations and requirements of both the education and the law enforcement systems are met;
6. ensuring that the rights of students and staff are respected when police are involved in schools and at school-sponsored events; and
7. ensuring compliance with the Provincial Protocol, the Ottawa Protocol, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the *Child and Family Services Act*.

It actively encourages collaboration in developing preventative strategies for progressive discipline to reduce the level of violence and aggression. It also establishes the SRO as the main police contact for the school. The accompanying procedure¹² supplements the policy and sets out the role of the SRO and lists incidents that the OCDSB has identified as mandatory to report to the police.

Role of the SRO

The SRO program in Ottawa falls under the scope of the Ottawa Protocol. In Ottawa, there are 24 full-time SROs who support all 375 schools across the four school boards and private schools. This is a ratio of approximately one SRO for every 17 schools. Two of these SROs provided dedicated support to Gloucester High School (GHS) and Ridgemont High School and the seven elementary schools in their catchment areas.¹³ This is a ratio of approximately one SRO for every 4.5 schools. This dedicated support is provided through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)¹⁴ between the OCDSB and the OPS. Under the MOU, OCDSB contributes approximately \$95,000 per year towards the salary of one of these officers. The remaining 23 SROs in the Ottawa SRO program are paid for by the OPS.

The OPS identifies¹⁵ the principle areas of focus of the SRO program as:

- Prevention/Education

¹¹ P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools

<https://pub-ocdsb.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=7966> accessed on 02/25/2021

¹² PR.533.SCO Police Involvement in Schools

[https://weblink.ocdsb.ca/WebLink/0/edoc/2960186/PR%20533%20SCO%20-%20Police%20Involvement%20In%20Schools%20\(2\).pdf](https://weblink.ocdsb.ca/WebLink/0/edoc/2960186/PR%20533%20SCO%20-%20Police%20Involvement%20In%20Schools%20(2).pdf) accessed on 02/25/2021

¹³ Emily Carr Middle School, Queen Elizabeth Public School, Henry Munro Middle School and York Street Public School are the elementary schools in Gloucester High School's catchment area. Featherston Drive Public School, Roberta Bondar Public School and Sawmill Creek Elementary School are in the Ridgemont High School catchment area.

¹⁴ Urban and Priority High Schools Program, Memorandum of Understanding between the Ottawa Police Services and Ottawa-Carleton District School Board hereinafter "Urban Priorities MOU".

¹⁵ See

<https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/safety-and-crime-prevention/School-Resource-Officer-Program.aspx> accessed on April 26, 2021

- Intervention/Diversion
- Community Partnerships
- Proactive Policing (student engagement)
- Reactive Policing (responding to school-based calls)
- Enforcement and application of the law.

Consistent with the OPS website, the MOU highlights the importance of the visible presence of SROs at school and notes that their function includes both proactive and reactive police investigative services.¹⁶ The SRO may assist in resolving conflict by a verbal caution, counseling, mediation, diversion to an intervention program, or a charge. They are also responsible for providing law and safety-related information and guidance which could include lectures. The SRO may also provide support to parents of students if requested.

The SRO is intended to offer a consistent and purposeful response to issues through prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies.¹⁷ The SRO may be called upon both formally and informally by the school principal when it is felt that police intervention is in the best interests of a student and/or the school.¹⁸

Training for SROs

The SRO Program is coordinated centrally out of the Youth Intervention and Diversion Unit. Information provided by the OPS indicates that SROs must have a minimum of 5 years of experience and express an interest in working with youth. In addition to the training held by a regular patrol officer, it is mandatory for SROs to complete some pre-service training prior to taking up the role and then complete mandatory in-service training when it is available. The pre-service training covers information related to the Ottawa Protocol, extrajudicial measures under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and diversion training. The SROs also engage in Annual summer training which includes refreshers on mandatory pre-service training and engagement with Safe Schools Principals to identify and address school trends and issues.

A detailed list of the mandatory pre-service and during service training can be found at **Appendix 12**. A summary of the hours spent on each training was not provided.

95% of participants in the survey indicated that it was important that police officers have specialized training on how to work effectively with youth. 90% of participants in the survey agreed that it was important for police officers to have specialized training on anti-racism and cultural awareness for the communities that they serve. This sentiment was also reflected in many of the discussions that took place as part of the review process.

“I question the selection process for the SROs and the kind of special training required to work with school-aged children. If one officer in one building is trusted by the school community, the rest of the officers on the police force must be held accountable for their actions outside schools and deemed trustworthy by all people.” Indigenous Employee

The list does not include training on working effectively with children and youth, nor does it include any training on anti-racism or cultural awareness.

¹⁶ Urban Priorities MOU supra note 6 at para.

¹⁷ OCDSB PR.533.SCO Police Involvement in Schools at s. 2.4

¹⁸ OCDSB PR.533.SCO Police Involvement in Schools at s. 2.4

PERSPECTIVES ON POLICE INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES AND ITS IMPACTS

Typical SRO interactions in schools

A presentation by OPS Chief Peter Sloly to the OCDSB Board of Trustees in December 2020 gave some insight into what types of activities SROs spend their time engaging in at Ottawa schools.¹⁹ Further clarification was subsequently provided by the OPS for the purposes of this review. The following table summarizes the annual interactions logged across Ottawa by SROs based on data collected over 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. It includes actions of all 24 SROs in all 375 schools in the four Boards. Given that OCDSB is the largest Board, the OPS is confident that it accurately reflects actions in OCDSB specific schools as well:

Table 2: Average annual SRO interactions

Type	Number	Includes
Interactions	7062	Everything except for calls to service that are made to 911
Report	841	Number of police reports generated
Criminal investigations	324	Number of criminal investigations resulting from the police reports.
Criminal charges	63	Number of criminal charges resulting from criminal investigations

This data does not capture calls to service that were made to the OPS dispatch (911) rather than going through the SRO. The OPS estimates that approximated 4 to 5% of the SROs calls to service arise from 911 calls. The rest are either self-initiated by the SRO or initiated by the administrator, parent or student. The OPS noted that it categorizes all work done by the SRO, with the exception of responding to 911 calls, as *proactive* work in its system. This is because the OPS sees a strong connection between the work that it does and the safety and security of the school and provision of services to youth.²⁰

In focus group discussions with SROs they described their work to include talking to students, supporting victims, giving advice to administrators, helping assess threats posed by students, responding to incidents, investigating crimes, mentoring students and linking students and families to community services, engaging in extracurricular activities and using youth diversion to support youth in conflict with the law.

Typical police involvement by OCDSB

It is impossible to get an accurate reflection of police involvement across OCDSB schools from internal data because it is not OCDSB's practice to require administrators to collect data and report on when they contact the police to intervene in a situation. There is no accountability of administrators to their Superintendents for their use of police and, unlike for suspension and

¹⁹ Taken from OPS presentation to the OCDSB Board of Trustees on December 14, 2020 accessed on May 3, 2021 <https://pub-ocdsb.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=9027>

²⁰ Information provided by OPS in email dated May 24, 2021.

expulsions, there is no public reporting requirement. This is a significant concern from an accountability perspective and raises considerable human rights concerns. Without accurate data collection it is more difficult to identify whether students with identities protected under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* are experiencing discrimination in administrators' application of their discretion to involve the police.

The program and police involvement has not been critically examined and evaluated for its impact on Indigenous, racialized and minoritized students. Instead it is assumed to be a success, based on little evidence other than perceptions of the predominantly white adults (at OCDSB and OPS) who put it in place and benefit from its operation. Benefits to students have been assumed for decades without any data, analysis or feedback or critical evaluation to back up the assertions. This is not aligned with a human rights-based approach, which requires accountability and also requires the OCDSB to centre the best interests of the child in decision making.

To get a snapshot of how police are currently being used by administrators in OCDSB schools, administrators were asked to provide information about the last two times that they called the police to respond to an incident at their school. We received information about 190 involvements. Approximately 16% involved incidents where it was mandatory to notify the police under the Provincial Protocol; 74% resulted in contact between the police and students and their families; 25% involved someone who was Indigenous or racialized; 23% involved people with disabilities; and 32% involved children under the age of criminal responsibility. A detailed summary of the types of incidents reported by administrators can be found at **Appendix 13**.

Incidents that require mandatory notification of police

The use of police to respond, when needed, to serious incidents and emergencies similar to those listed as mandatory incidents requiring police notification, was largely accepted by participants of all identities in the review. There were outliers who preferred a total abolition of police involvement in schools, but that position is not aligned with existing obligations under the Provincial Protocol nor from the reality that serious incidents do occur from time to time and police involvement is required in order to maintain safety.

"I worked as a teacher for thirteen years. In those years I have seen a student stab another student, child pornography charges and assaults occur within the school building. There are times when the laws of living in a community are broken." Indigenous Employee

Data collected from administrators points to a practice of the SRO consistently responding to incidents that require mandatory notification unless they require an immediate presence. When situations require an immediate and timely presence, it appears from the data that Patrol officers are more likely to respond.

An important distinction is that the Provincial Protocol requires mandatory *notification* of the police; it does not require mandatory attendance at the school premises to respond to the notification. When the OCDSB is considering ways to reduce harm by limiting police engagement, this should be an area of consideration.

Dysregulated behaviour and elopement

Looking at the snapshot provided by the administrator survey it is clear that the most common reasons that administrators call for police response is in relation to dysregulated behaviour and to respond to situations where children have left the premises without permission (elopement). A table summarizing the identities of the children involved in these incidents reveals some interesting information:

Table 3: Administrator recollection of recent calls to police for dysregulated behaviour and elopement

	Number	Under 12	Male	Racialized	Disability	SRO Response
Dysregulated	25	14	19	6	11	11
Elopement	25	16	20	5	12	14

The majority of the incidents involved responses to the behaviour of children under 12. Additionally, boys were significantly over-represented. Another interesting observation is that almost half of the responses involved children with disabilities. The SRO was only able to respond to approximately half of the calls, with a patrol officer responding to the remainder. This information is interesting because it raises questions about why males are so over-represented. It also signals that the most common types of police involvement are responses to the behaviour of children with disabilities which brings to question whether the OCDSB is adequately meeting its obligation to accommodate children with disabilities in the educational setting.

Through interviews with SROs they identified that administrators and the OCDSB need to have better training and de-escalation techniques relating to dysregulated students, as some SRO's expressed that school staff deferred that responsibility to police whom they called to help deal with these situations. The ability of OCDSB employees to attempt to deal with the situation themselves was emphasized with police involvement being reserved for higher risk situations only.

The need for an alternative to police involvement when responding to dysregulated behaviour of children, including children with disabilities, was reflected in many conversations among staff. Many participants commented that there is an under-resourcing of educational assistants (EAs) such that schools need to "beg" for them each year. Participants also commented on the lack of sufficient specialized training and experience for EAs assigned to support children with dysregulated behaviour, the reported "hands-off" practice that staff members say leads to increased police involvement because they can't act to de-escalate; and the risk adverse nature of some principals who worry about personal liability as factors that lead to over-involvement of police in responding to dysregulated behaviour.

"Using the police brings the whole criminalization lens onto their behaviour when we use them to respond to dysregulated behaviour in the classroom. Other organizations have staff who go hands-on – but sometimes it doesn't even need to go there if you deal with it well." Former Employee

"I've only seen an SRO engage once during the last 4 years. A girl with Autism had struck or pushed me. It was not ideal but not the worst case scenario. She

stormed out the front door and as soon as she touched the sidewalk she was off school property and apparently the police needed to be called. The police came and handcuffed her and had her on the ground. The girl with Autism had no idea what was going on and it turned even worse because of police intervention.”
Employee

“My son has ADHD and when he was 10 the police were called and they didn’t know what to do with him and were quite physical. It ended up causing much more distress than help and it set up the rest of the school year to make it unsuccessful.” Parent

Students, parents and guardians and community members also expressed concerns about the OCDSB practice of using police to respond to dysregulated behaviour. When asked about their level of agreement with involving police to respond to out of control behaviour at school, significant reservations were expressed. The tables below set out the level of disagreement with using a police response and highlight the percentage of respondents who preferred a non-police response, across identity groups. People who identified as Black, with Disabilities or 2SLGBTQ+ had the highest reservations and also registered the highest support for requesting a non-police response.

Table 4: Percentage of respondents who *do not agree*²¹ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	All Respondents	Indigenous	Black	Middle Eastern	Muslim	Disabilities	2SLGBTQ+
Respond to out of control behaviour	56%	54%	69%	51%	50%	65%	78%

Table 5: Percentage of respondents who prefer out of control behaviour to be handled by non-police

Type of Activity	All Respondents	Indigenous	Black	Middle Eastern	Muslim	Disabilities	2SLGBTQ+
Respond to out of control behaviour	18%	19%	24%	15%	14%	30%	39%

“A victim of bullying, my son had learning differences, impulse control, and mental health issues resulting in physical outbursts. The SRO was brought in to explain that if he were an adult, his behavior would be considered assault and he would be arrested. Fear tactics like this only make matters worse when stress behavior is treated as misbehavior. Very poor use of SRO.” Parent of Student with Disabilities

²¹ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

Another participant spoke of the fear and worry that he felt as a young person, worried that his disability would cause him to behave in a way that led to the embarrassment of a police response.

"The second experience that I've had was that I was a student with severe mental health issues in high school. I had interactions with the police related to that but they were not at school. This is a fear when you have mental health issues: the police are going to be called on you at school because you are distressed and it will be a whole incident. If you aren't a white person, an adverse behaviour can be construed as you being aggressive towards the police and may end up with a police reaction. Someone just put the boy with Autism's handcuffed news story in the chat. It is distressing that police are being used as a crisis response for mental health and disability-related issues rather than a counsellor."

Former Student with a Disability

In other discussions staff members, including educators and staff responsible for supporting student well-being expressed considerable concern over the institutionalized use of police to respond to dysregulated behaviour expressed by children with disabilities. Concerns were raised about it criminalizing stress behaviour and having longer term negative impacts on the children and leading to greater exposure to the police.

"The police are written into safety plans. Police may have unnecessary involvement. Are we failing students by having things escalate?" Employee with a Disability

Safety plan includes police - how can the behaviour of a 6 year old require a police officer to de-escalate the situation? Part of the problem stems from lack of resources and support for students to de-escalate. What is the triggering point and have we set up that student for success? We're not allowed to touch or restrain them so we need to call the police officer - so what is our plan? Our place is to teach, to educate, to support, to build community. Having someone with a uniform and gun entering the room is not the best idea." Black Employee

"There do not seem to be a lot of steps happening before calling in the police. De-escalation training would be helpful. These programs are not well thought out or well executed. I know they are trying not to make it a dumping ground. The child has the right to go to school but the child's needs may be beyond what is offered." Employee with a Disability

"BMS is cheaper to implement. All this comes down to money. We have loaded class sizes, and specialized classes are located out of the way. Our safety plans say call the police because we can't touch the kids. We are still trying to run a regular school without resources." Employee with a Disability

"I write safety plans for primary and we never call the police unless we lose sight of the child off property. We follow at a safe distance. We had an EA follow a child for 4 blocks on foot and my principal followed in the car. The child was Black and had Autism and I guarantee it would not have gone well if we had called the police." Employee

One benefit valued by an administrator was the care an SRO put into developing helpful information to guide police response for a non-verbal student with disabilities who was known to run away from school from time to time. Taking the time to attach information to the student's name in the police system, with their parents' engagement and consent, would ensure that patrol officers who responded to the student were able to effectively support the student.

Perspectives shared by people with disabilities are discussed in more detail in **Appendix 8**. What is clear from what we are hearing is that a different kind of response is needed to better serve the children with dysregulated behaviours while maintaining a safe working and learning environment. It is also clear from speaking with employees and families that intersections in identity mean that Indigenous, Black and racialized children are significantly impacted by this practice. One administrator noted that the police were mainly called to the school to respond to the dysregulated behaviour of students in a specialized class. When asked for more information about the identity of the children in the class, we were told that seven out of the eight children in the class were Indigenous. This example highlights the need for the OCDSB to re-evaluate how it is choosing to manage dysregulated behaviour, to put into place ways for trusting relationships to be built with non-police who can help de-escalate and to create culturally relevant partnerships that can be activated to both prevent escalation and support students to de-escalate in a way that feels safe.

"It is important to have an Indigenous responder for Indigenous children in a classroom where there is an Indigenous student who needs support. There is a connection or something that happens that makes you feel like you belong when you have an Indigenous person respond. There are things that Indigenous people know that could help these kids that other people don't know ... just the smell of the smudge makes you feel better. What if that could help a child calm down and not have to call the police? You just don't know if you haven't tried."
Indigenous Former Employee

It is evident from the conversations that people within all levels of the OCDSB are starting to engage in these reflections and question whether a police response is the right response.

"There is a perspective perhaps that the mainstreaming of children with Autism leads to the necessary presence of police due to the inevitable meltdowns. Police are however not experts or even properly trained in de-escalation of special needs children. I can only imagine the good that would be done if the funding was instead spent on EAs or behaviour specialists." Parent

"A few years ago I worked at a school with a junior BIP class, the students ranged in age from 8-12. Although the students were often dysregulated they were still young children. One particular day a student had a very bad day, was dysregulated and was being quite destructive - none of his trusted teachers or admin were able to calm him. The police were called, unfortunately our regular SRO was not available. This particular student was 12, a bigger student and of colour. The police officer took the child out of the school, quite forcefully with hands behind his back, pushing him through the halls and the door. Now as a school we were able to keep the majority of the students away from windows, but of course they knew what was happening. Staff also knew what was happening. The stigma that this had on the child was a big one - teachers and students were wary of him and stayed away. Teachers also commented on the use of force the police officer used, some thought it was ok to give him a shove as the student

was not listening, most were disgusted that this happened. I know that the student was acting in an unsafe way, but I have often reflected on whether the police were the right people to deal with this child. It also raises the question about who we should be using if our SRO is not available - relationships are so very important when dealing with students.” Administrator

Suggestions heard emphasized the importance for the child to have a good relationship with a person within the District, who is trained on how to de-escalate explosive behaviour and that it is important to have culturally relevant responses and relationships. It was acknowledged that this did not necessarily have to be a police officer.

Suggestions for the way forward. Information learned during the review indicates that current OCDSB practices mean that children with disabilities are likely to have disproportionate involvement with the police in school. It is important to adjust policy and practice so that police response is seen and used as a last resort for children with disabilities. (1) It is strongly suggested that OCDSB put in place, and action, a plan to address the disproportionate level of police involvement with children with disabilities. This might include (a) introducing additional training on de-escalating explosive behaviour that goes beyond BMS and that is required for all staff in schools; (b) reconsider and clarify for staff hands on or hand off policies; (c) the development of formal community partnerships with non-police service providers, including culturally relevant service providers, who can provide a response alternative to police; (d) reconsidering the inclusion of a police response in safety plans and seeking other alternatives instead.

“Prevention doesn’t need to be through policing... How can we support staff to look at it as stress behaviour rather than wilful behaviour? We need more intense training of all staff, in all schools. We need more EAs with special training and this might help because they can put the time into waiting and helping a child to de-escalate. They need to have a trauma informed response not just BMS. BMS can’t be the only strategy ... People say that the child is “manipulating” or the parents “don’t come into meetings”. It’s because schools are scary places for them! We need a compassion-informed approach that is attachment-based and has an anti-oppression lens. “She’s just looking for attention” or is “manipulative” or “doesn’t care” - this is built into people’s way of thinking and needs to be challenged. Every year principals advocate for more EAs and it’s boggling that we need to fight for that.” Employee

“There are times when safety issues arise in schools. I’m in favour of the work that was led by the Tragic Event Response Teams (TERT) which support students impacted by significant life events. TERT is a multidisciplinary group of people trained to provide psychological first aid to students in the event of a tragic incident. A TERT response should be initiated first before a School Resource Officer (SRO) is called to respond to a threat to the personal safety of students. The school administrators can call upon their community partners as well to help with a significant event, impacting multiple youth.” Indigenous Community Member

“I have never seen students who have issues at school who don’t also have them at home and Crossroads has stepped in to help but the waitlist is so long and the parent need is so huge that there isn’t enough support. We are running into inevitable police involvement because Crossroads can’t link in.” Employee

Wellness checks

A practice that was identified within the District involved the use of SROs to do wellness checks on students at their home. Typically, a wellness check would be initiated by the administration if the student had been absent for a period of time and the school could not contact the family. Reservations were expressed about this practice and the detrimental longer term impact on the child's education was noted.

"This year we have called SROs to go for attendance checks because we cannot reach the families or the parents. Subsequent to one particular visit, the racialized family was completely fearful and stopped talking to the teacher. It destroyed that relationship between the family and the teacher because the family felt that the teacher had reported them and the SRO had been involved. They've completely disengaged from learning in that session." Employee

"My concerns are around things we know re how police respond to racialized communities and mental health issues. I have heard of wellness checks where somebody ends up getting killed." Employee

"A wellness check needed to be done for two students in my school. The white family got the white principal and white social worker, the Black family got the SRO." Racialized Employee

"SROs seem to have a lot of discretionary power and certain schools use them for some things and others do not and it seems to be up to the SRO. There is inconsistency of what the role of the SRO is. Sometimes they will go out for wellness checks (checking on attendance of students at home) and sometimes not." Employee

Suggestions for the way forward. The OCDSB should give consideration to identifying and using alternatives to the SRO when conducting wellness checks on families. Wellness checks, when they are necessary, should be done by non-police. OCDSB should consider identifying a culturally relevant community support parent to support these wellness checks together with staff, if needed.

Refusing to leave the school premises, fighting and bullying

Police are used in two main ways to respond to incidents like trespass, fighting and bullying. Police (usually SROs but often patrol officers when the SRO is not available) are called by administrators to respond to and stop these behaviours when they are happening. The second way they are used is when the administrators call SROs to support the progressive discipline response after the incident has deescalated. The observations made above in the section on progressive discipline, apply to the use of police as part of the progressive discipline process for these types of behaviours as well.

None of these behaviours require mandatory notification of the police under the Provincial Protocol so every involvement is at the discretion of the administrator. The snapshot provided by administrators indicated that out of 190 incidents that involved police, 12 involved someone refusing to leave the premises; 17 involved fighting and 8 involved bullying. Engaging in

anti-bullying education and talking to students involved in bullying is one of the activities that SROs specifically mentioned they supported in discussions for this review.

When asked about whether they supported police involvement to respond to these types of occurrences, the majority of respondents expressed concerns about using police. This is set out in more detail in the table below.

Table 6: Percentage of respondents who *do not agree*²² with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	All	Indigenous	Black	Middle Eastern	Muslim	Disabilities	2SLGBTQ+
Fighting	67%	68%	78%	63%	60%	70%	87%
Refusing to leave the premises	53%	56%	67%	56%	59%	61%	75%
Bullying	69%	70%	80%	59%	63%	75%	84%

The reservations that survey respondents expressed about police involvement in these types of issues were highlighted by several examples shared by people who participated in group discussions, one-on-one interviews, and in written submissions.

One parent wrote to describe the trauma her child, who was a victim of online bullying, experienced as a result of the power imbalance when he was questioned by the administrator, the SRO and three adults from another school.

“Upon his return from school after the meeting the next day, my son was very upset. He described to me how when he entered the room he was surrounded by not only the VP and the SRO, but also three other adults ... Being completely outnumbered immediately placed my child in a subordinate position without anyone in the room as an advocate. It was wrong and unfair of the administration to do so. If I would have known that was what was in store for him I would never have agreed to the meeting. The staff were not transparent with their plan ... it only served to make my son feel like he was most definitely in trouble. ... The means they chose to deliver their message was traumatizing. These actions, behaviour, judgement and planning on the part of the administration, with the participation of the SRO, is unacceptable and must not happen again to any child.” Parent

A 2SLGBTQ+ family whose children experienced homophobic bullying wrote to express their children’s profound mistrust and fear of police. They noted the administrator’s competence in addressing the issue and reaffirmed that they would never want police involved in providing a response to bullying in the school.

²² Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

“There is a well-documented history of queer and gender non-conforming people experiencing greater harassment and targeting by police. In our communities, we know this and have experienced it... For us, safety does not come from policing, which is an institution that is designed to protect only the privileged... Our children do not trust or feel safe around police... We would never have wanted anyone in school to resort to police when either of our children were being bullied, nor when our youngest was experiencing homophobic bullying. Our children feel the same way.” 2SLGBTQ+ Family

Another parent of a Black youth recounted their son’s experience being “*interrogated*” by the SRO at school about a fight off-property that he witnessed. The fight involved children from another school. Despite only being a witness and never setting foot on the other school’s property, the child was issued a no trespass order by the SRO and told it would stay on his file until he turned 18. The parents spoke of their fear about their son suddenly being “*known to police*” and the impact it might have on the trajectory of his life.

Several people referenced the substantial and lasting harm that was caused to several young children, some of whom were Indigenous, when the administrator used their discretion to involve two SROs when the students would not leave the premises. The young students were responding loudly and angrily but without violence. The involvement of the SROs triggered the students and their behaviour escalated, but remained non-violent. The episode ended with several patrol cars arriving, and the children being forcibly restrained face down on the floor, handcuffed and dragged across the floor during a struggle. It resulted in several of the students facing criminal charges for resisting being restrained by the police and it significantly and permanently impacted on the children’s family status, relationships, housing security and education.

Children do not wear their trauma on their face. Unless an administrator has a relationship with them it is not always possible to know who will be triggered and who will not by police involvement. Choosing to exercise discretion to ask for a police response for matters that are, at their core misbehaviour or stress behaviour, always brings with it the risk of escalation and the risk of causing greater harm by bringing a security force response to behaviour that is not, in its essence, criminal. While both SROs and patrol officers are trained in de-escalation, they are still trained security forces and the use of force is a very real and plausible tool in their kit. Every single time that an administrator exercises their discretion to call police to respond to an incident, this should be done knowing that they are exposing children to the risk of use of force. This should always be weighed in the decision making.

Suggestions for the way forward. The OCDSB should consider revising its practice and limiting police engagement with students and their families to situations where it is absolutely required because either a serious crime has been committed or there is a significant and imminent risk to safety. The OCDSB should take steps to identify non-police response alternatives which may include staff or community partners.

Progressive discipline

A large number of people raised concerns that SROs were being used as part of the progressive discipline process to scare children. This observation is troubling from a human rights perspective as it conflicts with the right of the child to be subject to discipline that respects the inherent dignity of each child. It is also troubling because it demonstrates at best a lack of awareness of the potential trauma that exposure to police has for many Indigenous, Black and

marginalized children or at worst a lack of concern about the potential trauma this type of practice may inflict on an Indigenous, Black or marginalized child.

"My experience with SROs, I can't think of one that was positive ...I remember this one specific case where I was helping a newcomer student ... There was a disagreement with a group of girls and the SRO just happened to be visiting the schools. I saw the girl crying and asked her why she was crying. She said that the principal told her that the SRO was here for her for the fight that happened earlier ... the principal said that the SRO just happened to be there, so they were using the SRO to scare her a little bit. I hear a lot from people I work with and students who say they have had very bad experiences." Racialized Employee

"There is no benefit by scaring kids at school, neither is that the place to create more trust. It only furthers the distrust." Racialized Student

"School administrators use SROs to bully students and intimidate/threaten them." Parent

"What I have seen in my experience as a youth worker is that SROs are often used as a means to discipline/intimidate children when teachers cannot 'deal with' trouble students. This is very much up to the administrator and the issue of biases is really important here. SROs are not trained or equipped to handle youth with disabilities." Parent

"There is no separation between what happens in the community and in school. I have seen kids as young as 6 and 7 interacting with police and teachers using police as a scare tactic is perpetuating fear and trauma. We are doing this to people who are vulnerable and marginalized." Somali Former Student and Parent

"It's very important to think about the impact that police have and principals are using them as a form of discipline in elementary school. To scare kids...It's still not ok, even if the police officer is racialized. The purpose was to scare the child and it's not ok." Black Employee

The concerns about police being used to scare children in the progressive discipline process, were also linked to overall concerns that administrators were using their discretion to disproportionately involve police in responding to the behaviour of Indigenous, Black and marginalized children. This concern is aligned with findings in the recently released OCDSB data on suspension and expulsion which confirms that Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern, gender diverse and students with disabilities have higher rate of suspensions than their proportion of the population would expect.²³

"I was helping out with an 8 year old, racialized boy who had a trauma history. The Mom didn't speak English and they called the SRO to talk to him. This is still happening!" Employee

"My son has been involved in a couple of incidents at school involving allegations of bullying. The principal threatened my son with the police coming to the house."

²³ OCDSB, 2018-2019 Student Suspension Report, 2020. Accessed on May 27, 2021. <https://pub-ocdsb.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8618>

The principal told me that the police will be notified and to expect a visit from the police at home. There was no sharing of prevention strategies. The SRO placed a call to the police. It was a total threat. SRO backed off when I pointed to our ethnicity. My son has Indigenous friends who have had it worse. The whole experience with school and SRO was threatening. There was no mediation.” Muslim Parent

“A key concern that I find is that police are called to discipline “problem students” more than they are to respond to serious criminal concerns in the schools. Unfortunately labelling “problem students” comes with many biases from administration or teachers. Also, the use of police to discipline students when the school feels they can’t, often traumatizes students and therefore is not in the student’s best interest.” Somali Community Member

“Someone at the school can call the police for anything - especially when we already know that the police will target BIPOC - how can we feel as parents knowing that it is a choice for the school to call or not the police. We know we live in a society where racism exists and we know being a teacher or an educator doesn’t protect against racism. It’s going to be based on stereotypes, racial bias, perceptions and research already shows us that there is profiling racial in school and BIPOC kids are going to be the ones who are targeted.” Arabic-Speaking Parent

Other concerns were raised about the disproportionate use of the SRO in the progressive discipline process to respond to behaviour of Black, Indigenous and marginalized children, where similar behaviour by white children did not generate a police response. Several examples of the disproportionate involvement of the SRO to respond to the behaviour of Indigenous, Black and marginalized children were shared.

In one situation an Employee described a school needing to do a wellness check on two different students because they weren’t attending. One student was white and the other student was Black. The principal sent a staff member to do the wellness check at the home of the white child, but sent the SRO to do the wellness check on the Black child, completely not taking into account the detrimental impact that the arrival of a police officer at the home of a Black family might have.

Another example:

“In primary I saw the SRO used to play the role of disciplinarian for a child who did something wrong. There were two incidents, involving two different children. Both used classroom tools to try to hurt other students. One was white and one was Black. The only child the principal chose to have the officer speak to was the young Somali boy... The principal had no right to subject a 6 year old child to a police officer. The only child who saw the officer was the Black child.” Black Employee

Others were concerned about bias driving the discretion teachers and administrators exercise to escalate a matter to an SRO. Several stories that were shared by people highlighted the reality of this fear.

One Black youth shared his experience of racial bias against young, male Black students driving the responses of some educators. A fight erupted after a sports game at school between students from two schools. This youth and his racialized friends were in the area for the game, but not participating in the fight. Despite this he was wrongfully threatened, calls were made to his family by the school and he was given a warning by the administration to avoid situations like that in the future.

"There were people there who not only assumed I was involved in the fight but said that they were going to tell the police officer that I was in the fight - it was a teacher who did this! They are weaponizing the police."

Black men fear that at any time someone can call the police as a weapon. The "karen's" are calling the cops because they see or assume something suspicious - walking while Black or jogging while Black - It's a genuine fear because we see it all the time. Just doing nothing and getting the cops called on you - sometimes nothing happens but sometimes you get arrested, sometimes you get traumatized. It's not something that should be taken lightly...

I replay it over and over in my mind. I did nothing wrong." Black Former Student

Discussions with employees and administrators, as well as the survey results, indicate a growing number of staff are becoming aware of the trauma that can be associated with police involvement, particularly for Indigenous, Black and marginalized communities. A growing number of administrators also indicated that they are taking steps to check their bias, change their responses and limit police engagement with students.

"I also wanted to add some additional thoughts about today's session that I did not feel comfortable raising during the consultation itself. I was very concerned that everyone in today's meeting is a white administrator in our secondary schools and, as a result, our own bias and "appreciation" for police work in schools may not be reflective of the reality of the students we serve in our schools. As much as I appreciate my colleagues and the work we do, I'm not sure how many folks are engaged in questioning their blind trust in the police and how they carry out matters in our schools. I admit that I am new to these realizations myself; for many years, I implicitly trusted the SRO's who entered the schools I worked in and did not really question the impact of their role or their presence on students. These experiences ... combined with my own work in equity and inclusion, have brought me to this point where I am actively questioning the need for the police in our schools. While I'm not saying we should not have the police at all, I do wonder how we can possibly have them in schools without causing further harm to our vulnerable students. There is so much to be repaired and I'm hoping that some of my Principal colleagues are reaching out to you with the same questions and concerns as me!" Administrator

"The mere act of having a police officer outside of your school or walking through the door can be uncomfortable for some students in the building. We need to tread carefully and be aware of that when we engage with police. This isn't a new thing - it's just that our awareness has improved." Administrator

As a couple of employees put it:

“They need to be out of the classroom. If your classroom management issues need to be resolved by a police officer you shouldn’t be a teacher or an administrator”. Black Employee

“The SRO is there to make the principal’s job easier. It’s great to be able to rely on them to bring information and share. But, the impact it has on kids and the trauma it causes isn’t worth it. They have lost their purpose.” Administrator

Suggestions for the way forward. The OCDSB has done some work through training to help staff members develop the skills that they need to identify and address unconscious bias. However there is much more that needs to be done. The OCDSB needs to prioritize and centre professional development opportunities for its staff members to give them the skills they need to identify and remove unconscious bias from the discipline process. Coinciding with professional development must be the establishment of accountability mechanisms referenced later in this report to create transparency and hold both the District and staff members accountable for discriminatory practices.

The OCDSB should also give strong consideration to ending the practice of involving police in the progressive discipline process. This includes stopping the practice of bringing police in to speak to children about the consequences of their actions. Principals or other community partners who can provide the same information without the criminal lens should be considered instead.

Relationship building with students

There is a common narrative among members of OPS, management level staff at the OCDSB, and some parent and community members that the primary role of the SRO is to focus on relationship building with students. However this perception is not reflected in the policies, MOU or Protocol governing the relationship, which talk about both a preventative role for the SRO as well as a response role to incidents. It is also not clearly reflected in practice or impact. It became clear through conversations with SROs, employees, students, families and community members that perceptions of what relationship building with students involved, how effective it was, and what impact it had on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students varied widely across stakeholders.

The proactive role of the SRO inside the school engaging in relationship-building with students is not clearly evident. It seems to be determined, in a large part, by the personality of the individual SRO, combined with the workload of the SROs, the perspective of the administrators and the school.

Some students, even those in schools with priority SROs, noted only rare examples of visible police presence inside their schools. These include police officers being seen in the hallway or chatting with students in the lobby or the lunch area. At Ridgemont it was reported that prior to the pandemic the SROs walked around the school in pairs or groups of up to five, particularly around lunch time. In all these situations, the students are self-selecting whether they want to engage with the SROs.

“I don’t want police in my school. Fights happen in all schools. Even without their uniforms or guns. Take them out so everyone can feel safe ... Other schools have teachers talking to students. Administrators should build

relationships with students so they will talk to them. Police are making students feel more scared.” Indigenous Student

“I have not seen police talking with students at Ridgemont. I feel like they are watching us.” Black Student

“Sometimes police will sit outside or inside the school or in hallways. They will stare you down for no reason and try to be intimidating. I have never been racially profiled by a police officer in school but I know people who have been and it’s Black students mostly. I have never really seen anything bad happen with police officers at the school but I know that there are things that could happen. It’s not necessary to have them standing in hallways or in the office when you want to call home. It makes you feel uncomfortable.” Indigenous Student

In another example, an employee noted that SROs pop into specialized program classrooms to speak with students with disabilities because the students reportedly enjoy interacting with first-responders. SROs reported, as did some employees, that a few SROs have engaged in extracurricular or sporting events from time to time at schools. The SROs reported that these extracurricular activities led to friendly relationships with some students, including racialized students. This was also the observation of some staff members but many more staff members commented on the ineffectiveness of the relationship building efforts and the unintended negative impacts on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students.

“In my former school, the SRO assigned to the school attended social events in plain clothes and built authentic relationships with many students. I believe that when someone who wields authority is sensitive to a particular school’s community, a partnership is beneficial. The cultural training that SROs receive must be re-examined.” Indigenous Employee

“The intention is there for them to be proactive and build the relationships but that’s not the impact. At this point, police shouldn’t be in school because school should be as safe as school can be and police don’t do that. SROs are performative. They show up and play ball and they’re out and that’s not enough. I have had police come in and play ball and I thought it was ok and then I had a primary student come up to me and say it made her feel uncomfortable. It caused me to reflect and I realized it was not ok.” Black Employee

Building trust with students in conflict with the law was identified as an area of positive impact by SROs, by some employees and a parent. Students supported under the OPS diversion program typically include students who have engaged in a fight, theft or assault. The diversion program is delivered by the Ottawa Boys and Girls Club and some students in the program attend OCDSB. The OCDSB has its own Diversion Counsellor who provides additional support to youth who are in the OPS diversion program due to an incident that may have occurred at school or in the community.

One parent credited the SRO for helping her son access the diversion program, which had a positive impact on his life:

“Unfortunately one of our kids is in the diversion program and a SRO was instrumental in getting our son into the program. If we had police come into the schools who did not have a relationship with us, the result likely would have been

very different. At least this police officer was advocating on behalf of my child. It has been life changing for him.” Parent

The Diversion Counsellor works closely with the SROs. Approximately 20 to 25 youth may work with the Diversion Counselor during a given school year. Other youth access diversion through the community without being connected to the school based Diversion Counsellor. Both the Diversion Counsellor and the SROs reported several students seeking SROs out for advice about a criminal process or to ask for help to get out of a situation like a fight that had been planned. This reportedly occurred after the students met the SRO through group meetings. Some of the students in this program are racialized.

Although all police officers have the authority to use diversion for youth in conflict with the law, in discussions the OPS indicated that SROs are the officers with the most training on how to apply diversion.

Overall the information shared in the consultations indicates that significant two-way relationship building is not going on between SROs and many students. A very small number of concrete examples were brought forward by students or families, who are best placed to evaluate the actual impact, whether positive or negative, on themselves. However the vast remainder of references to positive relationships by students or their families were limited to generalizations about the police officer being “nice” or “kind” or “friendly” or “smiling”. There is no real indication that this is resulting in concrete, positive educational outcomes for children, which is the core business of OCDSB. There is however significant information to suggest that their presence in school is causing harm to a significant proportion of the OCDSB student population, and in particular Indigenous, Black and marginalized community members, as described throughout this report.

Several schools noted that they had discontinued the practice of walking the hallways with SROs because of concerns about the message that it was sending to students who do not enjoy a good relationship with police and the triggering impact it can have on some students.

“If the role of the SRO and the primary role was to be proactive I haven’t witnessed that in my entire time teaching or being a student at the OCDSB. I worked at two schools that had SROs assigned and I would see the SROs say hello to people on the way into the office but moving beyond that I haven’t witnessed any proactive relationship building.” Black Employee

“For 7 years I’ve seen SROs come into the front door and go to the office and that’s it... I know I’ve had some SROs who are good people but haven’t seen a lot of two way relationship building - just us requesting them to do things - i.e. come and talk to our class.” Employee

“I don’t think bringing guys with guns into schools is going to build any sort of trust between students [and the police].” Black Student

“Racialized students, students with siblings or parents who have been through the justice system, ELD students and others with PTSD ... Uniforms and guns trigger. These are the “powder keg of triggering kids”. We don’t know the impact on kids - we only know the impact because kids feel safe to tell us.” Administrator

“The SRO program does not build relationships with students but the partnership only protects the policing institution. When the District protects the SRO program, they are actively discouraging students from attending classes and trusting the school board and the administration.” Indigenous Student

Numerous participants in discussions questioned the premise that relationship-building between police and Indigenous, Black, racialized and minoritized students was appropriate, that relationship building between students and the police was appropriate in a school setting, or whether the current approach, which has been going on for decades, has had any positive impacts. These are fundamental assumptions underlying the SRO program that have been taken for granted at OCDSB, accepted as true and never interrogated.

“They call them SROs but there is almost no connection between the officers and the students. I was well known in the school but I didn’t know anyone in the school who interacted with the officers or even knew their names. There is such a disconnect between the police and the students ... Relationship building does not exist - there is no relationship between students and police. There might be between teachers but not with students. So what is the point? The teachers aren’t the ones seen as criminals. The narrative and what they are actually doing aren’t the same - there is no relationship.” Black Former Student

Underlying it is that “We just need to help kids and families see that police aren’t bad.” That is what administrators think. We are helping the police rather than questioning the impact on students. Where is the self-reflection?” Administrator

“Why are we trying to build relationships with the police? Our mandate is a culture of caring and social responsibility etc. Why are we taking on the responsibility to build a positive relationship with the police?” Black Employee

“Is it important for children to have positive relationships with police and if so, is school the right place to engage in those kinds of activities or should it be done outside of schools? Police come into school, stand in hallways and park out front. One person who identified as Black said that police as your friend is a narrative for white kids. It is not what I teach my children. Is having a police officer in school good for Indigenous kids and does it make them feel safe?” Indigenous Parent

“I spend a lot of time gathering with Indigenous youth. I asked them if they would ever approach a police officer in their school with a question or an emergency and all of the young people said that they would never speak to a police officer willingly, under any circumstances.” Indigenous Community Member

The feedback from the survey tends to confirm perceptions and experiences heard in the group discussions and one-on-one interviews. When asked about their level of support for having police in schools to engage in relationship-building with students and families, a substantial percentage (67%) of current students either disagreed with the idea, weren’t sure, thought it should only be done as a last resort or preferred for it to be done by non-police. The level of disagreement was pretty much consistently strong across identity groups, with respondents who identified as Black and respondents who identified as 2SLGBTQ+ having the most significant concerns at 94% and 89% respectively and respondents who identified as Middle Eastern and Muslim having the least concerns at 60% respectively.

Table 7: Current students' level of agreement with police involvement to build relationships with students and families

Identity Group	Combined Categories	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Only as a last resort	Prefer non-police
All	67%	19%	12%	6%	30%
Indigenous	71%	7%	21%	14%	29%
Black	94%	33%	4%	11%	46%
Middle Eastern	60%	15%	12%	6%	27%
Muslim	60%	12%	17%	7%	24%
Disabilities	75%	22%	9%	8%	36%
2SLGBTQ+	89%	35%	9%	4%	41%

What we heard during this consultation process is reflective of research findings that have examined the impact of relationship building between SROs and students, and in particular the impact on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students.

The following research analysis is taken from a literature review on police involvement in schools recently completed by the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB).²⁴

The HWDSB Research and Analytics Department noted that the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in research on SROs is problematic which makes it unclear “if SROs have built positive relationships with students, if they reduce crime and misbehavior or have any impact on school safety whatsoever”.²⁵ It was concluded that the quality, frequency and the average time an SRO spent in communication with a student was significantly related to student’s perceptions of the SRO.²⁶ This suggests that how long and how often police officers communicate with students was connected with the extent to which students positively perceived having an SRO in school.

The assumption that having an SRO present in school will help to build positive relationships between students and police does not appear to be supported by research. It was found that having “a resource officer in school does not significantly predict youth perceptions of police but rather opinions of the police force as a whole played a larger role in predicting youth perceptions

²⁴ See Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (2021), *Police School Liaison Program Literature Review* accessed on June 6, 2021 on p. 9

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Standing-Committee-Agenda-1622755995.pdf>

²⁵ HWDSB Literature Review (2021) a p. 8 citing Kim, Y. (2014). *Students' Perceptions of School Resource Officers* (Doctoral dissertation, Texas State University, 2014). Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest
<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Standing-Committee-Agenda-1622755995.pdf>

²⁶ HWDSB Literature Review (2021) a p. 8 citing Kim, Y. (2014). *Students' Perceptions of School Resource Officers* (Doctoral dissertation, Texas State University, 2014). Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest.

of the police; if a youth has had good interactions with police previously, they were likely to have positive perceptions of police in the future and vice versa for negative interactions”.²⁷

Other research showed that more SRO interactions increased students’ positive attitudes about SROs yet decreased school connectedness.²⁸

The following excerpt from the HWDSB literature review adds nuance:

“When asked about their strategies for dealing with diverse students, SROs said they used a “colour-blind approach” in that they treated all students the same.²⁹ However, findings also indicated that SROs were looking for cues of student disadvantage and made an extra effort to befriend students from low socio-economic, disadvantaged family backgrounds: those who had incarcerated family members, and students with special educational or behaviour needs. Predictably, students perceived such increased attention as intimidating and they felt targeted since they compared the differences in attention between themselves and their peers.³⁰

This SRO conflicting role of building trust and relationships and having to enforce the law could be the prime culprit to student and adult mistrust of the police. This highlights the importance of police reflective practice, the understanding of consequences of positive discrimination and the importance of understanding the foundations of negative perceptions of policing. Indeed, researchers have found that these perceptions do not solely reside with communities or individuals, but rather with the intentions and actions of police, evidence that suggests racialized people are policed in different ways to white people.³¹ Yet other research suggests that mistrust and negative perceptions of the police are deeply rooted in community perceptions and any individual who is seen to be police friendly or

²⁷ HWDSB Literature Review (2021) a p. 8 citing Maybury, M. S. (2019). The Impact of School Resource Officers on Adult Perceptions of Police: Do SROs Influence Youth Perceptions of Police and Do These Opinions Persist Into Adulthood? (Doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University-Central Texas, 2017). Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest

²⁸ HWDSB Literature Review (2021) a p. 8 citing Theriot, M. (2020). The Impact of School Resource Officer Interaction on Students Feelings about School and School Police accessed on May 24, 2021 at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0011128713503526>

²⁹ Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization at p. 416. https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5ff8825e5.pdf

³⁰ Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization at p. 416. https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5ff8825e5.pdf

³¹ Legewie, Joscha and Jeffrey Fagan. 2019. “Aggressive Policing and the Educational Performance of Minority Youth”. American Sociological Review (forthcoming). <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/rdchf/> and Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization at p. 416. https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5ff8825e5.pdf

*sympathizing, is shunned, bullied, ostracised by their peers and accused of being a snitch.*³²

Suggestions for the way forward. Aligned with the suggestions above to limit police presence and involvement at school and to address the negative impacts expressed by a substantial proportion of Indigenous, Black and marginalized participants, relationship building activities in schools between police and students should be halted by the OCDSB.

Educational activities

Giving presentations to assemblies and in classrooms is another way that SROs engage at school. These presentations are given as simple outreach either initiated by the SRO or a request from the school and are also used as part of the progressive discipline process to respond to certain incidents when they arise either through a school-wide or class-wide presentation or through one-on-one engagement with the student and/or their family. An SRO explained:

“In situations where a student or parents don’t want the police to speak to their child directly because they are concerned about the optics, I can take that opportunity to address the class as a whole to speak in general about the impacts that that type of behaviour has on other people.” SRO

Examples include SROs giving presentations to law classes, to newcomers, and at elementary school about internet safety, bullying, child pornography and the sharing of intimate images, and to groups of students in conflict with the law. Other presentations might be given to respond to need - for example, a presentation on vaping or drug use.

Survey respondents indicated a higher level of support for having police involved in educational activities such as presentations about safety and the law or sharing information about the criminal justice process than other activities, but even these questions had a substantial percentage of respondents who questioned and disagreed with police involvement in this function.

A substantial number of participants in the student, parent, community member and employee sessions, as well as in the survey, indicated concern about this practice and expressed a preference to have educational information in classrooms shared by stakeholders other than police.

“My SRO would come in for assemblies and we did not typically have SROs roaming the hallways. A lot of very scary comments would come from police officers and led us to believe that police were not to be trusted because they would tell us things using the threat of jail. We all became fearful.” Former Student

“On one of our PD Days we had a police officer come in and deliver an educational session. It was one of the worst experiences I have had in PD. They

³² HWDSB Literature Review (2021) at p. 11 citing Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization citing Desmond et al 2016 https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5ff8825e5.pdf

played upon racial prejudices and poverty. Some of the videos were incredibly stigmatizing, reinforcing all of the stereotypes that they were trying to move away from.” Former Employee

“Police teaching youth the pathways to their career isn’t a relevant reason to be in schools. Even when there is a violent conflict in the school, why is an enforcement approach being prioritized, when there are other ways that don’t criminalize youth, especially racialized people who are being impacted by this?” Racialized Parent

“We don’t need police officers to teach us about education and safety because they are the main reason we feel unsafe. Police need to repair the harm outside of the school, not inside the school. If it’s about trying to promote positive messages in schools you are asking these children to accept a distorted view of what police officers are like which is different to what they experience in the community. He’s been harassed and criminalized in the school even though he has no criminal record. We’re asking people to examine white supremacy. Our children do not need to be policed or labeled by teachers.” Somali Parent

Concerns were not limited to perceptions alone. A practice was described that raises questions about issues of consent and the creation of a direct risk of harm for students. The SRO is sometimes brought in to talk to groups of at-risk students in direct opposition to their express wishes not to interact with a police officer for fear of being labelled “narcs” by their peers. This was done out of the belief that a positive relationship with police was important and beneficial, so the staff member organized for the SRO to attend meetings with the students without notice. This raises concerns about consent, about mandatory engagement with police in an educational setting and how this might drive a student to disengage from the educational setting. It also shows some disregard for concerns raised about being labelled a “narc” by others, some of whom may be in a position to cause real, physical harm to the student. This was done in favour of prioritizing the development of positive police-student relationships.

Concrete examples were also shared that demonstrated a disconnect between information shared in presentations and OCDSB’s commitment to creating a culture of caring and social responsibility and the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes around race, socioeconomic status and sexuality.

A former student described the lasting, harmful impact that a school-wide assembly delivered by the SRO on child pornography had on them.

“The SRO told us that when girls take nudes for their boyfriends they are risking criminal charges. We were taught that in these cases girls have not only produced child pornography, they have also distributed it. They told everyone that the boys will share it with their friends. And when this happens not only will girls have to face the shame of pictures being online for all to see but also legal repercussions. This talk was to discourage teenage girls from taking and sending nude pictures. I have spoken with high school peers and hardly any of the boys remember this speech. Each and every one of my girlfriends remember it clearly. It relied on rape culture narratives that blame the victims of revenge porn and mislabel them as the perpetrators and sexual offenders.” 2SLGBTQ+ Former Student

They went on to describe the devastating impact:

“So what did I do when my word spread that my first boyfriend shared my nude pictures with his friends after I broke up with him? I cried for hours and told NO adult. Not one teacher, parent or police officer because I feared I would be arrested. I blamed myself. I called myself a whore. I believed it when people called me a slut. I became very depressed and started using drugs and alcohol to mask my pain and deal with my shame... And that is exactly what my SRO upheld in that assembly. It was one of the main experiences that taught me to blame myself. I never saw that SRO or any cop for that matter, as someone I could go to about these events. I expected them to reinforce the ideas they had already solidified in my mind. I broke the law by taking a nude picture as a minor. It was my fault. I deserved this. I broke the law by drinking under age and using drugs. It was my fault. I deserved this.” 2SLGBTQ+ Former Student

In another example of an unintended, harmful impact arose from comments made by an SRO when giving a presentation to a social science class. The students questioned a recent incident at another school that received media attention and involved the targeting of a racialized student by a police officer, and the SRO reportedly responded by denying the existence of racism in Canada and indicating in essence, that racialized people commit more crimes.

What is so troubling about this incident, is the complete unawareness of the damage that had been caused. At the time the SRO informed other adults at the school that the presentation went really well; meanwhile the students, many of whom were racialized, were so traumatized by the response that a significant number of interventions by the school were subsequently required to address the harm. This disconnect in perceptions about a singular intervention are indicative of many of the challenges identified with OCDSB's current use of police in schools. Benefits are assumed based on a hypothesis that has not been evaluated until now for its impact on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students.

“The SRO said it went really well ... It didn't go well at all. Kids were re-traumatized by the experience at [the other school] and from the students' perspective there was a lot of deflection and failure to address the racism - platitudes about racism and police not being racist or seeing colour.” Employee

“... three students left the room in tears and many inside were traumatized.” Employee

“When a police officer comes into a diverse classroom to give a presentation, you would think they would try to keep even their unconscious biases in check, wouldn't you? I mean, there had been a whole police-related incident ... close to our school ... only a short time before. People were feeling a little upset. Having a question about what the police are doing to combat racism eventually led into, in essence, a statement that Black people commit more crime is just not ok.” Student

“We invite people into our school to support us and the messaging that goes out may not always be the messaging that we intend to go out.” Employee

These negative impacts expressed are exactly aligned with research observations that found that when SROs act as a type of police ambassador, it is harmful to marginalized students

because it teaches them that police involvement is a result of criminal behaviour alone and it causes them to internalize negative labels causing lower self-esteem.³³

Specifically, when SROs intentionally teach students that legal issues arise only out of criminal behaviour they are at the same time working on dismissing concerns about biased policing towards racialized or marginalized communities. They may do this by pointing out that the media often portrays the police negatively and that those sorts of action were the responsibility of a “few bad apples” rather than acknowledging the possibility that policing tends to be disproportionately directed towards racialized people.³⁴

“Again, we heard no discussion among SROs of the possibility that policing tends to be disproportionately directed at people of color, despite evidence showing this to be the case (e.g., Kochel et al. 2011). Rather, the SROs taught an opposite message—that policing and the law in general were fair and neutral, with problems (e.g., being arrested) the result of individuals’ criminality alone.”³⁵

Other researchers found that these educational strategies that failed to acknowledge the need for reform within the police and placed the responsibility for engagement with the police on individuals rather than the police themselves were “a real threat to reforms of police practices that might have been a chance of improving the fairness and racial equity of police work”.³⁶

Suggestions for the way forward. The OCDSB should strongly consider ending the practice of using police to give presentations to schools and classrooms and also end the practice of bringing in the police to speak to a student or family one-on-one as part of the progressive discipline process e.g. speaking with a student or family about the potential consequences of their actions.

Support to victims of crime

Administrators valued the support that SROs have provided to students who had intimate images posted on the internet without their consent. In particular, administrators highly valued the ability of the SROs to use their computer to remove the images from the internet. Administrators also placed value on the support SROs provided to help students report or

³³ Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization.
https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5f8825e5.pdf

³⁴ HWDSB Literature Review (2021) at p. 11 citing Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization citing Desmond et al 2016
https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5f8825e5.pdf

³⁵ Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization at p. 414.
https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5f8825e5.pdf

³⁶ HWDSB Literature Review (2021) at p. 10 citing Kupchik, A. and Fisher, B. (2020). Police Ambassadors: Student-Police Interactions in School and Legal Socialization at p. 416.
https://219751e2-9443-42c7-8c01-a1083bc8150f.filesusr.com/ugd/46d76f_1c2ae9239e51427aa4dab6b5f8825e5.pdf

address incidents of sexual assault, relationship-based violence and instances of suspected human trafficking. All of these are mandatory reasons to notify the police.

Value was placed by administrators on the ability of the SRO to engage with both the student and their families and provide necessary guidance and support. These perceptions are consistent with information shared by SROs. SROs, administrators and employees cited examples of times a victim had come forward and either reported the incident to a trusted adult at the school or requested to speak with a police officer (the SRO). There is a belief amongst administrators and SROs that students would not have gone to the police station to report the crime. High praise was given for the professionalism of the specialized police officers with the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit when the SROs referred cases on to them for investigation.

Providing support to victims of crime was more highly supported by survey respondents than other activities. There were, however, a high level of reservations expressed about police involvement in this type of activity, particularly by members of the Black community, 2SLGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities.

Table 8: Percentage of respondents who *do not agree*³⁷ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	All Respondents	Indigenous	Black	Middle Eastern	Muslim	Disabilities	2SLGBTQ+
Support victims of sexual assault	40%	42%	55%	32%	32%	49%	61%
Support victims of crime	39%	44%	53%	31%	31%	48%	60%

In other forums, concerns were raised about the interactions that administrators permitted SROs to have with victims of these crimes. Concerns were raised about

- lack of consent of the child before contacting the police
- lack of parental or guardian consent before having the child speak to police
- failure of the principal to act in *loco parentis* for the child and act as their advocate when parents and guardians were not contacted
- SROs speaking alone to children
- failure to take a child-centred and victim-centred approach
- male SROs interviewing young girls who were victims of sexual and gender-based crimes
- victim blaming (particularly in relation to the unauthorized sharing of intimate images);
- interrogation of the victim rather than starting from a place of belief
- lack of culturally relevant non-police support made available to support the child through the process.

One specific example shared with the reviewer involved a young, developmentally delayed Indigenous child who was the victim of a sexual assault. This experience highlighted the

³⁷ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

intersection of each of the concerns raised above and the importance of having a person specialized in supporting victims of sexual crimes engage with the child, and the need to reinforce the responsibility of the administrator to act in *loco parentis* and as an advocate for the child, if their parent or guardian is not present.

“I’m confused about the role that the SROs play when there is a sexual assault investigation. In some instances our administrators wear the mistakes that SROs make. I think, in general, these should go directly through to SACA because they are the experts.” Employee

Suggestions for the way forward. The concerns raised highlight the need to take a child-rights, survivor-centred approach when supporting survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. Practice changes suggested include (a) being guided by the fundamental rights of the child including their right to have their opinion asked for and valued in accordance with their developmental stage in relation to police involvement. This includes informed consent from the child before contacting the police; (b) ensuring that parents or guardians consent to having the police speak to their child and that the parent/guardian or a trusted adult is with the child as their advocate throughout the process; (c) ensuring that culturally relevant support and accompaniment as an advocate for the child is offered and provided. This could be offered through existing staffing or through community partnerships; (d) that prior to contact the police, administrators advise the child and their parents of the option to request a police officer of their preferred gender prior to contacting the police and respecting their preference. Adjustment to these suggestions would need to be made to adapt to situations where the child may be at risk if the parent were involved. In that case, another trusted adult of the child’s choice should support the child instead.

Lockdown and lockdown drills

The use of police to practice lockdown drills was supported by some respondents to the survey, but there reservations were expressed by Indigenous, Black, people with disabilities and 2SLGBTQ+ people. Actual lockdown incidents (not drills) were recognized as an area of acceptable police involvement when they were responding to significant safety concerns.

Table 9: Percentage of respondents who *do not agree*³⁸ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	All Respondents	Indigenous	Black	Middle Eastern	Muslim	Disabilities	2SLGBTQ+
Lockdown drills	39%	54%	53%	28%	30%	49%	62%

Students with a history of trauma or who are triggered by police shared some personal experiences. A 2SLGBTQ+ student described being terrified in primary school when they didn’t realize that a lockdown had been called and they stumbled across the SRO with their hand on their gun, in the hallway.

³⁸ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

"I really don't think that police officers should have guns in school. I was in grade 3 at the time. It was terrifying." 2SLGBTQ+ Student

A parent of a child with disabilities, with a significant history of trauma with the police removing him from his biological family, and was known to become extremely triggered by the sight of police, related their difficulty in getting the administration to communicate in advance when lockdown drills would be happening so that the parent could keep him home. The parent was told she couldn't be informed in advance because the drill needed to simulate a real-life crisis. On one occasion her child unexpectedly came across the SRO in the hallway and fled. The parent came to school to help search for him.

"He was on a path, hiding. He told me that the police had come to school to get him." Parent of Student with Disabilities

Suggestions for the way forward. These stories and experiences highlight the need for awareness of the trauma that police officers represent for some children and the need for OCDSB to take action to minimize the harm through reduction in contact and better communication between the school and families about police involvement in schools. The OCDSB should give consideration to not involving police in lockdown drills. If police are involved in lockdown drills, then the OCDSB should ensure that communication to both families and students about the upcoming drill is conveyed in advance so that children are aware and can make arrangements to avoid it if the experience is triggering. Consideration should be given to students being permitted to be marked absent, without penalty if they opt out.

Visible presence outside school

Feedback from students, parents, staff and community members at Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools confirmed a highly visible police presence outside both schools. Feedback from the consultations also confirmed a visible police presence at Woodroffe High School and Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School. To get a full understanding of how this high police presence may impact on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students it is important to understand the demographics of these schools, compared to the demographics of the OCDSB population at large. As can be seen below, the higher level of police presence observed by the community is associated with schools that have a higher population of Indigenous, Black, and marginalized students.

Table 10: Demographics of Gloucester, Ridgemont, Sir Guy Carleton and Woodroffe High Schools compared to OCDSB population at large

Student Demographics	Specific High Schools	OCDSB Wide
Indigenous	7.6%	3.5%
Black	18.1%	8.6%
Middle Eastern	22.9%	14.7%
First Language Arabic	18.3%	9.3%

First Language Somali	5%	1.1%
Muslim	35.8%	19.3%
Refugee	9%	5.8%
Disability	9.9%	9.0%

SROs reportedly park their vehicles in parking spaces in front of the school and sit inside their vehicles at the busiest time of day, observing students and their families coming and going. At times the SRO will park the vehicle at the front doors of the school, not in a parking place.

The regular visibility of the police vehicle in front of the school caused considerable concern for many of the people who participated in the consultations. There were significant concerns raised about the stigma the visible police presence has on the reputation of the school. There were concerns raised about the surveillance and information being gathered. There were also significant concerns raised that the visibility of the police vehicle reinforces negative stereotypes and perceptions about the Indigenous, Black and racialized population that attends the school and lives in the neighbourhood that surrounds these schools. These are discussed in more detail in the section below and in **Appendix 11** which takes a detailed look at feedback about Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools and the schools in their catchment area.

“Having a police car parked out front continues a reputation that you cannot outrun.” Employee

Suggestions for the way forward. The OCDSB should take immediate steps to end the practice of having police cars parked at schools, unless the police are responding to a call for service. If the call for service is not an emergency, police vehicles should always be parked in a parking space, and not at the front doors of the school. Meetings that may be necessary between the police and administrators should take place over the phone or off-site, wherever possible.

PERSPECTIVES ON COLLECTIVE IMPACT OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

Overwhelmingly, the narrative that came forward from students, parents, community members and some employees was one of harm. This narrative was reflected in a substantial amount of feedback provided in the survey. This indicates that police presence in OCDSB schools is causing harm to a substantial number of Indigenous, Black, and marginalized community members. The following summarizes the types of impact identified.

Safety

The impact of police presence on safety emerged as a consistent theme throughout the discussions. The agreements between police and educational institutions are premised on the assumption that increased police involvement in schools will result in increased safety. This assumption and the understanding of safety it rests upon have since been challenged. Other considerations, such as psychological, physical, and emotional safety, particularly for Indigenous, Black, and marginalized communities were raised in criticisms of the assumed connection between police presence and overall safety. Throughout the consultation process, 2SLGBTQ+ people and people who experience barriers related to their abilities also voiced this

broader understanding of safety. While not one consistent definition of safety emerged, it was clear that one's experience of safety in relation to police involvement in schools is deeply rooted in Indigeneity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and ability.³⁹

Indigenous, Black and marginalized participants widely described feeling “terrified” “uncomfortable” “traumatized” “awkward” “threatened” “worried” “anxious” “scared” “unsafe” “fearful” “afraid” by police presence in school.

“I know that some of my friends get really anxious and don't feel welcome at school when they see uniformed officers.” Indigenous Student

“Having police officers in schools brings an area of negativity and the sense that the students cannot be trusted ...they shouldn't be a constant shadow over the students as if they are looking for something to happen.” Black Student

“I do not feel safe with police inside a school. In my experience, police officers uphold unjust laws often by violence, and targeting racialized youth... if the District continues the partnership with SROs, this affords the Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) another reason to distrust the school board.” Indigenous Student

“I am extremely uncomfortable around police officers, as are most students I know. They make me feel unsafe in my own school more than any student ever has.” 2SLGBTQ+ Student

“Our kids were terrified watching what was happening to George Floyd, and how he died. When you see the police this is what comes to mind.” Somali Parent

“Having police in schools is almost like having someone who's abusing you in there and asking them to interact with them and be friendly. Outside the education environment they are not allied with you so making people interact is not ok.” Black Employee

“I get feedback from BIPOC students who have told me how it made them feel to have a police officer in school. Some are newcomers and they come to school for that sense of safety. When they see an armed officer they are almost in crisis. They are scared and come to my office for support. Newcomers with a trauma history are not primed to have police come into schools and when they see an officer they are terrified. It's re-traumatizing ... it doesn't become easier for them. They duck into the washroom and peek around the corner to avoid them. It's having a huge impact based on what I've seen in the school.” Employee

“Even if we aren't criminals there are police that will be prejudiced against us and harm people of colour like what happened with George and Brianna. I think that's why we worry when we see the police.” Black Student

“I don't agree with having police in schools. Having police in the schools shows that schools are unsafe. That they are violent. Having police in the

³⁹ Paragraph taken from consultation summary report prepared by Dennergy Resources Inc.

neighbourhood and the schools terrifies students. It puts fear into the hearts of the students.” Somali Community Member

“I once brought the officer into an Indigenous space and it triggered the child and the child walked out of the room. I would never bring a police officer in again without letting the students know first.” Administrator

Some people came forward during discussions to express that police presence in the school created a sense of safety for them. A few of these same students were surprised to learn that not all schools had the same level of police presence as their own schools. A question heard echoed by many, was safety for who?

“Some students may be comfortable but who are we prioritizing - the kids who are ok with it or the ones who fear everything when they see a cop? What does that say?” Arabic parent and former student

“Who is it emotionally reassuring in the school for? It’s not for this community. We need to reimagine what safety looks like. For our communities it doesn’t protect our children; it doesn’t make us feel safe.” Somali Parent

Participants suggested that the presence of armed police affected their academic performance and reduced their sense of psychological safety, in particular for Indigenous, Black and racialized students.

“They try to make students feel safe. There is a disconnect between policy and reality. Someone carrying a weapon can use it.” Black Student

“I feel uncomfortable around officers, especially when they are armed.” Black Student

“Police officers make students feel like they are in the wrong. That can take a toll on mental health.” Black Student

“When a police officer makes his presence known, the atmosphere amongst the students completely shifts.” Racialized Student

When asked about whether police presence in schools makes schools a safer place, 38% of respondents disagreed. Breaking this down further, when we looked at this by identity, 43% Indigenous, 62% Black, 33% Middle Eastern, 36% Muslim, 48% people with disabilities, and 68% 2SLGBTQ+ disagreed with the statement.

The fundamental assumption that schools in urban areas with higher populations of racialized students require extra policing in order to maintain a safe environment is not supported by evidence. In fact information shared as part of the review process indicated that higher suspension rates and discipline is more attributable to leadership style than indicative of unsafe student behaviour.

One employee commented:

“Ridgemont is the school I’ve worked at with the least number of kids engaged in behaviour that requires administrator interference... It’s baffling to me that at some point someone thought they needed more police.” Employee

Stigma

The regular presence of SROs at schools in urban areas with low socioeconomic status and higher populations of Indigenous, Black and racialized community members reinforces the wrong perception that Indigenous, Black and racialized people are dangerous. It reinforces the wrong perception that Indigenous, Black and racialized people are criminals. It reinforces the intergenerational stigma that these high schools are dangerous, that the communities that surround them are dangerous and that the Indigenous, Black and racialized people who live in these communities are dangerous. This has a very real and negative impact on the students who attend these schools. Students conveyed feeling ashamed and finding themselves in the position of constantly having to defend their school and their choice to attend their home school. They conveyed feelings of wanting to be proud of their school, but the ever present stigma surrounding the schools does not allow it. It has become so entrenched that elementary school parents are reportedly making purposeful decisions to remove their children from OCDSB and enrol them in another District to avoid sending their children here.

“...the fact that we have decided to put much needed money into funding an SRO program in Gloucester and Ridgemont, the optics of it causes people to make assumptions about what kind of school it is and what kind of kids go there and “ghettoizes” the kids... My daughter walks to Gloucester every day and on a lot of those days sees police officers in the parking lot. She is very conscious of contact between police and Indigenous people and racialized groups. She wants to get to be a kid and not wonder why police are out there. She wants to be proud of her school.” Indigenous Parent

“There are police cars in front of our school or hiding behind a restaurant. Their eyes were always on us. Lot of issues in Black community and feel like they are constantly watching us because they don’t trust us. Was driving with my mother one night and was followed by the police for a good 5 minutes before driving away.” Black Student

“As a new Canadian with not much experience with police, I thought there might be crime in the school if police are present.” Newcomer Student

“I heard so many bad things about Ridgemont before coming but it’s actually okay. It just goes to show how people view us.” Black Student

“I heard the same [so many bad things] about Gloucester High School - people tried to get me to go somewhere else.” Indigenous Student

“Half of my middle school goes to Cairine Wilson and the other half goes to Gloucester. People have a view of Gloucester High School and Ridgemont High School as not being good schools. Not true. It is frustrating.” Student

“Most of my class went to Ridgemont. Lot of them left and went to Catholic school. Their mother said Ridgemont was bad. There is a big issue at the Catholic school. People have been rude. Catholic school has lots of white

people but it is still bad. People should go to the schools and see for themselves.” Black Student

“The fact that there is extra SRO presence in both Ridgemont and Gloucester only reflected negatively and is an even clearer indication of the problem with this program. Whether it’s intended or not, the optics and the message is that those particular communities which are the majority in those schools need extra policing!” Somali Community Member

“There have been times in my student life where police officers have physically pulled me out of the classroom. This strained my relationships with teachers and peers.” Indigenous Student

When asked what they thought the impact was of having police present in schools, 31% Indigenous, 52% Black, 38% Middle Eastern, 38% Muslim, 34% people with disabilities and 39% 2SLGBTQ+ respondents felt like it contributed to the school having a bad reputation. Overall 28% of the respondents felt that police presence contributed to stigma.

The Provincial Protocol identifies police visibility as a way to prevent violence in school.⁴⁰ When discussing the work of SROs, the OPS sees the visible police presence as a form of community building. In interviews with staff, this was also identified as an impetus behind the priority SRO program when it was initiated - to establish the school as a hub for all community services, including the police. What became clear from listening to students and their families, community and employees, was the wide disconnect between the perceptions of the OCDSB and the OPS and the experiences of the students and community members they serve. It was clear that the intention did not align with the impact.

In fact, the visible police presence outside of schools was identified by many participants as perpetuating stigma against the racialized students who attend these schools. The daily presence of police cars both in parking places and parked directly in front of the front doors of the school sends the wrong message to people passing by, that violent incidents requiring a police response are in progress or that the visible police presence is required to stop violent children from committing crimes. Both of these perceptions perpetuate racism against Indigenous, Black and racialized bodies as being violent and criminals.

Surveillance and Over Policing

Indigenous, Black and racialized students, parents, caregivers and community members identified that they feel targeted and surveilled by the presence of SROs at the school. They expressed that this is a continuation and extension of the over-surveillance and over policing of racialized communities in the neighbourhoods where they live. Parents and children spoke of never being able to escape the feeling of being watched by police. They spoke of leaving their homes and walking down the street and seeing police officers and being followed. They spoke of going to the parks to play basketball and having police officers and vehicles parked watching them play. Then they spoke of arriving and leaving school and having it happen again. Police cars parked out front at the busy times of days; police officers at the front doors greeting them when they arrive and leave. Police officers at the school on the first day back from school

⁴⁰ Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol, (2015) at para. 7 <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/protocol/locprote.pdf>

closure after the pandemic closures. They spoke about feeling intensely uncomfortable, in an educational setting that was supposed to be peaceful, welcoming and inviting them to learn.

“... As racialized people we don’t want surveillance as a part of our lives. To be watched by police officers in schools and in the community is an amount of surveillance Black kids don’t need.” Black Former Student and Parent

“The first day back to school for my children this fall there was a police officer on the grounds. Children were returning for the first time since the pandemic started. There were many rules to coming back to school. Kids were nervous. The first person to be noticed on the school grounds was a police officer. Throughout the pandemic there has been serious concerns about using police to manage a public health crisis, and we were very disappointed to see this brought to our school.” 2SLGBTQ+ Parent

“Many of us are also from the same communities with extra police surveillance. We have a Muslim group here. It is important to look at Ottawa demographics. We are over represented. A significant portion of the Black community is Muslim. They are overrepresented in low income areas of the city. Middle Eastern men are 12 times as likely to be stopped by police. One in 5 kids identify as Muslim in Ottawa, including Black and racialized kids. Lots of police involvement at playgrounds in low income neighbourhoods. Community neighbourhoods and mosques are over-policed on many fronts. It is violent to have SROs in uniform and with guns in schools.” Muslim Employee

Some shared that the relationship between school and the family is meant to be a partnership built on trust, but that bringing police into the school breaks that trust and damages the relationship. The link between being racialized and being surveilled was made by many, with reference to the high proportion of racialized students at the schools with the highest police presence. Students spoke about the psychological impacts of feeling “watched” and the negative effects this has on their ability to feel a deeper sense of belonging in the school community.

“There are concerns regarding certain neighbourhoods. They are considered as tougher neighborhoods. Police presence in those neighbourhoods is very high and students who live there see police on every corner. They develop fear. At school they should feel at home, learning, and at peace. But they are terrified. Everywhere they go makes them feel terrified.” Somali Community Member

“Sometimes when I see police, I wonder if they think I did something wrong. They take things to the extreme. The teacher says at least we are not in America. I feel annoyed when people say things like that. Do we really all have the same rights? We have issues in Ottawa but they don’t talk about that.” Black Student

“We keep expressing this. We’ve been asking for this for many years. We do not want police in schools. You send the message that our voices don’t matter and our children need to be surveilled. It’s such a dehumanizing process to share with our kids why people think they need to be surveilled.” Somali Parent

Feelings of safety were linked to the intergenerational trauma of residential schools and colonialism experienced by Indigenous peoples. They were linked to trauma experienced by newcomers arriving from war torn countries. It was linked to the direct experiences of Indigenous, Black and marginalized students and families who had family members arrested, homes searched, people tasered, loved ones gone missing and not searched for, children taken into care, being racially profiled and followed, of being wrongfully accused.

“As an Indigenous parent who has a long standing mistrust of the police and of being surveilled ... I have tried not to pass it on but intergenerational stuff happens and that never leaves her. So when she goes to Gloucester that is what she feels and that is her experience.” Indigenous Parent

“As an Indigenous woman it is not the officer that is the question, it is the colonial history of the police. Wearing a uniform is not a signal of trust and safety. Indigenous people have been over policed for generations. Our hesitation to approach the police is justified. I teach my girls not to answer the door if the police come to my home. Police should not talk to children or ask for their help. The police state is not something we can put our trust in. In police officer and police union culture it is rare for police to be held accountable.” Indigenous Parent

“Police are good for solving problems like threats inside the schools but those problems will rarely happen. When the police are just on standby, people and especially fellow people of colour, won’t feel safe because of the history with police (specifically their power abuse) and massive distrust.” Black Student

These experiences were reflected in the survey responses from students, parents and community members. When asked whether having police in schools makes them feel targeted or watched, 31% of Indigenous respondents, 56% of Black respondents, 32% of Middle Eastern respondents, 40% of Muslim respondents, 38% of people with disabilities and 54% of 2SLGBTQ+ people agreed with the statement. Overall 29% of survey respondents agreed they felt targeted or watched by police in schools.

There was a recognition by participants throughout the consultation that the over policing of particular schools and neighbourhoods was intrinsically linked to race and socioeconomic status.

I am also very aware of the disproportionate impact of police responses to some racialized communities and First Nations people... There is also a bias about the kids that attend [Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools], where they live, where they come from.” Indigenous Student

“Targeted surveillance at schools is so obvious to our children and they internalize these messages” Somali Parent

“Schools with Black students are being targeted more.” Black Student

“Police officers are present in schools with a larger BIPOC population.” Black Student

"I am Chinese. My family members may not be targeted by SROs but they see it happen to their friends because people from different backgrounds are treated differently. It is very clear to us who gets singled out." Racialized Parent

"There is an obvious difference [at our school compared to schools without a high police presence]. Gloucester High School and Ridgemont High School are predominantly people of colour and low income. They never give a clear answer as to why there are no police at other schools." Black Student

Criminalization

Participants in the discussions also expressed that the presence of police officers in schools perpetuates the criminalization of Indigenous, Black and racialized children. Poignantly, participants highlighted the feeling that there was no room to make mistakes and be a child. Students expressed fear that behaviour that should typically be dealt with by the school, becomes stigmatized and criminalized in the eyes of others when police become involved in the progressive discipline process.

"Students are not given the opportunity to learn and grow from their mistakes like Indigenous communities do." Indigenous Parent

"Children are being robbed of childhood, of making mistakes and the ability to learn from mistakes organically. This is necessary for cognitive development. Negative police interactions induce trauma on young minds. Further, a child shouldn't be labeled "bad" so long as an officer's memory exists or employment lasts... often into adulthood. Racialized children especially need to be allowed childhood." Racialized Parent

"It makes me feel targeted, like because I am a person of colour I am supposed to mess up." Racialized Student

"Racism is evident in the enforcement of the law. When the police are brought into a school to deal with a student's behaviour, the perception of the situation in the eyes of the school community is tainted thereby changing the nature of the event into a criminalized occurrence." Indigenous Student

"Police don't belong in schools. Kids were afraid. Black students were targeted for playing around." 2SLGBTQ+ Student

"There isn't anything at our schools going on that is so serious that it requires police to sit and patrol there 24/7. I would feel safer if me and my peers weren't being treated like we are criminals meant to mess up." Indigenous Student

Concerns were heard that the involvement of police in school means that student names become known to the police over time because of the police involvement in progressive discipline at school. This increases exposure of the child to the criminal justice process. Some participants identified the "school to prison pipeline" and linked experiences of biased and prejudiced discipline practices towards Indigenous, Black and marginalized students from the moment they enter school to the ultimate pushing them out of the educational environment leading to the criminalization of Indigenous, Black and marginalized students.

"Police officers use information that they get from minors and can use it in court to convict them. This concerns us." 2SLGBTQ+ Student

"There is over policing. Kids are new; don't speak the language; don't understand the culture and before you know it the kids do something both in the neighbourhood and school. We all know that certain neighbourhoods are overpoliced and before you know if the child is "known to the police"." Somali Parent

"Having police exposes Black and racialized students to higher exposure to criminality because of hyper surveillance. There is an obvious difference. GHS and RHS are predominantly people of colour and low income. They never give a clear answer as to why there are no police at other schools." Racialized Student

"Police officers should be called after a crime. Not to look for a crime that hasn't been committed." Black Student

"When we say it is a choice to call security or the police for anything, what does that say? Administrators are using the choice to call police on kids. Criminalization is a process and it begins from daycare - from my own experience it begins there. Black bodies, racialized bodies and Indigenous bodies, especially, are seen as a threat." Arabic Parent

"There was a disagreement with a teacher for a child who was new to the country and he was arrested and sent to jail. This is not the right result. The impact on the school culture was terrible. It affected him psychologically and he dropped out of school and went down a bad path and ended up in jail. Before calling the police the school administration needs to explain why they need to have the police in schools." Somali Community Member

"I oppose police in schools because it creates the school to prison pipeline which is a system that impacts BIPOC and pushes them from school to the criminal injustice system." Arabic Parent and Former Student

"Arab, Black and Indigenous people are viewed as a threat and are treated as criminals, even when they are youth." Arabic Parent and Former Student

"What is the message that we are sending to our students? That we have to treat them like criminals from day one?" Racialized Employee

"When students are always being surrounded by police presence we feel like we are in a school where criminals are. That's how some of the students feel. The fact that they're in an environment meant for learning but surrounded by police it's detrimental to their health and to their mental well being ... They shouldn't be policed. They haven't done anything wrong. Police can smile and wave all they want but everyone knows that they are there because they think the students are going to be criminals and if you treat people like criminals they will become criminals. We see over policing in Black neighbourhoods and under policing and it's not creating change" Black Former Student

Concerns expressed in consultations are consistent with observations that researchers have been making for years. Robyn Maynard, her in book *Policing Black Lives*⁴¹ noted formal surveillance and criminalization occur within the public school system. This is done by exposing racialized and marginalized youth to further encounters with the police by mandating police presence in schools and making frequent calls for service. This mandated police presence in school has “*made Black and other racialized youth increasingly vulnerable to criminalization*”.⁴²

Maynard goes on to note the link between disciplinary policies, and in particular suspensions and expulsions, and the “grossly disproportionate encounters between Black youth and the criminal justice system”⁴³ citing extremely damaging, life changing impacts on reducing graduation rates and their direct correlation to ending up in prison.

*“It is well-established in the research literature and by educational advocates that there is a link between the use of punitive disciplinary measures and subsequent patterns of criminal supervision and incarceration.”*⁴⁴

Factors contributing to criminalization include systemic racism that is pushing these students out of school.

*“White-run public schools largely remain a site of racialized violence for many marginalized students. Black youth are exposed to a “hostile environment” in which they undergo “psychological damage, emotional pain, and ... personal humiliation” due to racially discriminatory treatment (Cudjoe 2001: 349, 351) by those tasked with their education. For this reason, many youth disengage from school entirely. While it is frequently referred to as “dropping out” this language disguises the structural racism both inside and outside of the education system that impacts Black children’s ability to remain in school. It presumes an individual problem found in these Black boys and girls, while erasing the contextual factors within school and society that contribute to this phenomenon (Dei et. al. 1997).”*⁴⁵

The factors identified by Maynard are present at the OCDSB. Recent data⁴⁶ tells us that Indigenous students are 3.5 times more likely, Black students 1.8 times more likely, and Middle Eastern 2.0 times more likely, to get a suspension than their proportion of the population would expect. Extending this analysis to gender identity and disability we can also see the same factors at play with gender diverse students being 1.9 times more likely to be suspended and students with disabilities ranging from 2.7 to 6.6 times more likely to be suspended. Combining this information with the fact that schools with the highest proportion of racialized students are the schools with the highest police presence in OCDSB is concerning as it points to an environment where Indigenous, Black and marginalized students may be pushed out and left at risk of exposure to the criminal justice system.

⁴¹Robyn Maynard, *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present* (Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2017).

⁴² Maynard, *Policing Black Lives*, 220.

⁴³ Maynard, *Policing Black Lives*, 221.

⁴⁴ Maynard, *Policing Black Lives*, 221 citing Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. 2015. *Black Lives Matter: The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*. Cambridge: Schott Foundation for Public Education.

⁴⁵ Maynard, *Policing Black Lives*, 221.

⁴⁶ OCDSB 2019-2020 Student Suspension Report at p. 5

<https://pub-ocdsb.escrimetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8618>

Students, parents and staff members shared real examples of how police involvement at their schools is impacting negatively on achievement. These included examples of students feeling vigilant and being unable to concentrate and impacts on attendance. In one case, a child stopped engaging entirely in online teaching for a course after an SRO was sent to their home, unannounced, for a wellness check. The family believed that the school had broken trust and reported them to the police.

“If you feel unsafe because of the police it will hinder your learning.” Student

“... many Black parents need to have conversations with children to help them be prepared for any engagement with law enforcement, which is a life or death conversation. How can we say that students can learn when they can look out the door of their classroom and see an officer walking down the hallway? The trigger derails their learning for an untold period of time. We shouldn’t normalize the presence of police in our schools.” Black Employee

“Kids don’t come to school because they aren’t comfortable seeing police walking around their schools because they have had guns held to their heads in their own country.” Black Employee

“The circumstances I encountered were mostly in terms of attendance. As soon as an SRO would be in the school, kids who had had negative interactions with the police would just get up and go and leave.” Former Employee

Survey feedback confirmed what was raised in the consultations by students, families and employees with a concerning percentage of respondents indicating that the police presence at the school made them not simply uncomfortable, but uncomfortable to attend school. This result should give OCDSB considerable pause, as anything interfering with the desire of a child to attend school and learn, should be raising red flags, as it is creating a barrier for them to equally access their right to education.

Table 11: Survey participants who indicated they were uncomfortable to attend school due to the police officer’s presence

Description	All	Indigenous	Black	Middle Eastern	Muslim	Disabilities	2SLGB TQ+
Uncomfortable to attend school	20%	28%	48%	17%	26%	30%	39%

CONNECTING PERSPECTIVES TO OCDSB POLICY AND PRACTICE

The individual experiences and perspectives shared and their collective impact indicate a pressing need to reconsider how OCDSB is involving police in school, when their involvement is activated, and to identify non-police options instead.

Systemic racism, discrimination and bias

Underlying concerns of safety, stigma, surveillance, over policing and criminalization and threaded throughout the discussions during the review were concerns about systemic racism, discrimination and bias. The *Anti-Racism Act*⁴⁷ recognizes in its preamble that systemic racism is often caused by policies, practices and procedures that appear neutral but have the effect of disadvantaging racialized groups.

It is impossible to look at the impact of police in schools, without also considering the impact of systemic racism and bias on racialized populations in both law enforcement and educational institutions. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) in its report on racial profiling⁴⁸ heard concerns from Indigenous, Black and racialized communities that echo those raised in this review. The OHRC found that racial profiling by way of negative assumptions, higher rates of discipline, presumption of instigation, continues to be a major problem in both policing and education and noted that:

“Racial profiling in schools can have serious long-term negative effects on students. School discipline policies that have a disproportionate impact on racialized students have been linked to poor academic performance, school disengagement and students’ eventual involvement in the criminal justice system.”

The Ottawa Police Chief has acknowledged systemic racism within the police.⁴⁹ A 2019 report examining traffic stops conducted by Ottawa police, reported Middle Eastern drivers were stopped 3.18 times more than what you would expect based on their segment of the driving population while Black drivers were stopped 2.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population.⁵⁰ It only noted a very modest decrease in disproportionality from 5 years before. The same report noted that *“in many racialized communities in Ottawa, initial consultations ... found that these communities felt subject to excessive surveillance by the police ...”*⁵¹ The authors noted the adverse impact of traffic stops on Black and Middle Eastern communities and identified the need for alternative practices to promote community safety because of the adverse impact on Black and Middle Eastern communities in Ottawa.

A statement⁵² released by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police noted a dearth of research on the efficacy of SRO programs. It goes on to acknowledge that a major limitation through a critical race perspective is that rarely do these studies take race/ethnicity seriously as a variable of interest. The literature on SROs tends to take a “colour blind” approach to examining SRO

⁴⁷ *Anti-Racism Act*, 2017, R.S.O. 2017, c. 15

⁴⁸ Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Report: Under Suspicion: Research and Consultation Report on Racial Profiling in Ontario*, Toronto: Ontario Human Rights Commion, 2017 accessed June 3, 2021 http://www3.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/Under%20suspicion_research%20and%20consultation%20report%20on%20racial%20profiling%20in%20Ontario_2017.pdf

⁴⁹ Sloly, P. *Sloly: Ottawa police are committed to resolving bias and systemic racism*, Ottawa Citizen Sept. 4, 2020 accessed on 02/25/2021 <https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/sloly-ottawa-police-are-committed-to-resolving-bias-and-syst-emic-racism>

⁵⁰ Foster, L. and and Jacobs L., “Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project II Progressing Towards Bias-Free Policing: Five Years of Race Data on Traffic Stops in Ottawa”, November 2019 at p. 4 <https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/news-and-community/resources/EDI/OPS-TSRDCP-II-REPORT-Nov2019.pdf> accessed on 02/25/2021

⁵¹ *Ibid* at p. 3

⁵² “Statement: School Resource Officer Programs,” OACP, July 20, 2020, <https://www.oacp.ca/en/news/statement-school-resource-officer-programs.aspx>.

programming that does not acknowledge or recognize the impact of systemic and other forms of racism on the experiences, perspectives, and educational outcomes of Black and other racialized students. This is, for example, a major criticism of a study done in Peel Region a few years ago.

It noted that the current state of the literature makes it difficult to justify SRO programming in schools and called for police leaders to support evidence-based SRO research, particularly with respect to evaluation that places the experiences of BIPOC students front-and-centre.

Systemic racism is also recognized within the educational system, including at the OCDSB.⁵³ Recent OCDSB reports on suspensions and expulsions are indicative of discrimination against Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern, 2SLGBTQ+ and students with disabilities in the discipline process, showing that they were at a higher risk of being suspended when compared to their proportion of the student population, than other students.⁵⁴

Participants shared, very strongly, the need for police reform as well as educational reform. Indigenous participants called for the decolonization of the entire system to rebuild a system where Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and ways of knowing are centred and valued. While some expressed a desire to have a better relationship with the police in the future, they put that responsibility on the police to make that happen in partnership with their communities rather than in their schools. Participants articulated that it was not truthful to be teaching Indigenous, Black and racialized students to trust one officer when statistics and history show that they have a higher likelihood of being targeted by police as an institution.

“Layering the racist policing institution on top of the racist educational institution makes no sense.” Parent

“While there were some excellent SROs, we have to look at the whole institution of policing. The SROs started in the early 2000 as part of the Safe Schools Act. It was essentially a militarized response to safety in the schools. I dealt with a lot of traumatized students who had to deal with the police. It is incumbent on the Board to change the relationship because it is based on a dated model. It is racist and classist. Yes there were some excellent SROs, but the things other SROs told the students on sexuality and race was crap. On the whole, as an institution, the OCDSB needs to re-think their involvement with police. The program does not serve the interest of minoritized students.” Former Employee

“As a student, I do not want to play a game of “Russian roulette” as to whether the police officer assigned to my school is either “a good cop or a bad cop”. I am perplexed by the District’s plan to move forward to reduce disproportionate representation by employing a greater number of Indigenized and Black professionals and teachers, yet in parallel, continue to partner with a police force, proven to be systematically racist.” Indigenous Student

⁵³ See, for example Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap accessed on May 24, 2021 https://ocdsb.ca/news/indigenous_equity_and_human_rights_roadmap

⁵⁴ Indigenous students were 3.5 times more likely to be suspended; Black students were 1.8 times more likely to be suspended; Middle Eastern students were 2.0 times more likely to be suspended; Gender Diverse students were 1.9 times more likely to be suspended; students with disabilities were from 2.7 to 6.6 times more likely to be suspended, depending upon the type of disability. See OCDSB 2019-2020 Student Suspension Report accessed on May 24, 2021 <https://pub-ocdsb.escrimetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8618>

“The SRO said that the reason why racialized people distrust police is because they come from countries where police are untrustworthy and so he was denying any problems with police in Canada.” Former Student with a Disability

“It’s a lie if we are telling students that they can trust the police - that is not a true thing to be teaching right now - maybe in the future but not right now.” Administrator

Themes of anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism⁵⁵ coursed throughout the conversations and were apparent in experiences shared by participants. Concerns about Islamophobia and how it impacts on discipline and incorrect perceptions of racialized children as gangs rather than simply groups of children hanging out were also raised.

My son is traumatized and feels unsafe in school. He’s been harassed. He had police point guns in his face. Labelled by police as a gang member but he’s never been in conflict with the law. His only crime was being Somali, Black and male.” Somali Parent

“SROs work for a system that upholds white supremacy. SROs should not be in schools because white students are often overlooked while BIPOC students are often looked at.” Black Student

“Sometimes police will sit outside or inside the school or in hallways. They will stare you down for no reason and try to be intimidating. I have never been racially profiled by a police officer in school but I know people who have been and it’s Black students mostly. I have never really seen anything bad happen with police officers at the school but I know that there are things that could happen. It’s not necessary to have them standing in hallways or in the office when you want to call home. It makes you feel uncomfortable.” Indigenous Student

“I have concerns about the surveillance conducted by police at rallies by Indigenous peoples. I also want to address the intent of the SRO program, versus the impact of the program. Two full time SROs are placed at Ridgemont High School and Gloucester High School, both with an enrollment of high numbers of racialized students and large Indigenous populations. Who made this decision? Who precisely do the officers serve and protect?” Indigenous Employee

“Police would roam around at lunch and only around the students of colour, particularly the boys. BIPOC students feel they are being labelled as criminals, we live in a world where POC are targeted by law enforcement more than white folks. To bring in officers to schools keeps that mindset that the only reason they are following you is because of your skin colour, not because of your actions or anything you have done in school. It is because you are a Black boy.” Somali Former Student

⁵⁵ Anti-Black racism concerns in the education and justice sector are aligned with concerns expressed in: Chelby Marie Daigle, 2016). *Addressing Anti-Black Racism in Ottawa: Forum Summary Report* accessed on May 31, 2021 https://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/anti-black_racism_forum_report_2017-02.pdf

“Even speaking Arabic is not seen well ... When BIPOC students are together it’s seen as a threat when they form a group; If Arabic kids are together in a group speaking Arabic, someone will come and tell them to stop being together. They’re viewed as a gang but when white kids are all together it’s seen as normal. It’s complex. It’s not just based on language being spoken but also based on what they say. “Ya Allah” is a normal Arabic word but white people are scared when they hear Allah. It makes many white people uncomfortable and afraid.” Arabic Parent

“When we are saying we are uncomfortable about having children enter schools that have people with guns ... My heart beats and drops and I get scared and have anxiety and think they are coming for me every single time I see the police because of the traumatic experiences I have had with police. I didn’t develop this because I became criminalized but because I knew it in my flesh and I have seen what police officers do to people who look like me and are darker than me - even when I was 15 or 16 I felt like this.” Arabic Parent and Former Student

“The perception is that the SROs are there because the students are immigrants and Black and new to the country and police and teachers are taking advantage of the children. This is what we feel as parents and as children. The administration and the police gang up on the children in those schools. Why are there more police there? The perception of the community is because they are immigrants and Black.” Somali Parent

“When you combine the SROs in the schools with administrators who are racist, it is a problem”. Racialized Community Member

“School is a place that strives to make students feel safe ... we cannot solve all cases of bullying but we can if the bully is the SRO; we can if it’s a person we are bringing into the building to promote safety but in reality it is promoting racial bias and promoting segregation which I have seen first hand.” Indigenous Student

“There are questions in these consultations around police training. Teachers receive training on equity and anti-racism and we know students are still experiencing racism at the hand of teachers. Training isn’t sufficient to address the problems with police. We are doing lots of training with our teachers at school and we still have racism.” Employee

“Police aren’t really super successful at doing the job in society without bias, so what makes us think that they would be effective in school? We should use other tools that have been proven to be more effective.” Student

Parents and students shared how they adapted the way they raise their children and their behaviour in order to avoid the disproportionate impact of biased punishment and consequences and the life changing impacts these can have on them and their community. The weight of knowing police involvement was a possible response for misbehaviour was ever-present.

“Racialized kids are more at risk and it’s important to educate minorities that they are going to be more targeted by a police officer.” Middle Eastern Student

"I tried my best to stay out of situations like these because I don't want to be another statistic or another stereotype. For my 4 years I tried my best to stay out of trouble because I knows it's not just getting a warning - it would be heavy consequences not just for him but for people in my community so I tried my best to stay out of trouble," Black Former Student

"We teach them to try to be perfect but we know it's not going to work because everything they are going to do is going to feel like a threat to other children, to teachers. It's not only about calling the police but also about how the children are seen as a threat to teachers and other children. We don't give them the chance to make any mistakes. And we don't ask the same thing from white kids but when it comes to BIPOC we do and they are already seen as problematic." Arabic Parent

Concerns were also expressed about bias in discipline, both conscious and unconscious, and the way it affects the discretion of educators when they decide to escalate something and administrators when they decide to involve the police. Employees shared examples of disproportionate discipline that they witnessed and identified how challenging it is to remove unconscious bias - even with all the training that has happened, they are still witnessing it in the schools where they work. Students expressed fear about the police being used as a threat against them. Racialized students expressed experiences of being wrongfully accused and witnessing people being wrongfully accused, because of their race, by both educators and police.

"The staff use the police in different ways for different communities. I think a big part of the discussion that should be raised is that the greater school culture is at play with staff as they choose which ways to go about solving issues through police involvement. My racialized friends do not feel safe at schools." Student

"From a primary perspective I've seen the SRO used to play the role of disciplinarian for a child who did something wrong. There were two 6 year old children and both used classroom tools to try to hurt other students. One was white and one was Black. The only child who the principal chose to have the officer speak to was the young Somali boy. The principal had no right to subject a 6 year old child to a police officer. The only child who saw the officer was the Black child even though they both did the same thing." Black Employee

"The school called when my child was 4 years old because they wouldn't put on their snow pants. They wouldn't have done it for a white kid. It starts with small details and it gets worse and worse." Arabic Parent

"I have concern about the lack of work that we are doing to help administrators understand their own biases. We are doing nothing to address this. When you have these images and beliefs and bring in someone else who can enforce these beliefs there are a whole lot of other factors that come into play. The information that principals share with a police officer is consistent with their own biases. Black Employee

"The whole program doesn't operate in a vacuum. The use of officers in our schools reflects the unconscious bias of administrators in our school. If we find out it is primarily BIPOC students having police intervention, even with training of

administration about inequities and trauma informed and compassion informed education, they are a reflection of their unconscious bias. We can't say if we make some tweaks to the program it's going to be ok. Without police reform we're peddling the same old program" Administrator

"There are disproportionate responses towards racialized and white students for similar actions. We see unconscious bias play out all the time." Racialized Employee

"Teachers could use the police against students if they are always in the school. Police presence should be removed." Black Student

"The Black and Middle Eastern story - the boys have their story. They talk about how teachers since they were little kicked them out in the halls and how they got in trouble with the principals." Employee

"We already know we have higher suspension and expulsion rates and adding police presence to that dynamic only makes things more difficult for our kids who are likely to come into contact with police in their communities and neighborhoods again...further traumatizing them." Somali Parent

"Someone at the school can call the police for anything - especially when we already know that the police will target BIPOC - How can we feel as parents knowing that it is a choice for the school to call or not the police? We know we live in a society where racism exists and we know being a teacher or an educator doesn't protect against racism. Who's going to choose whether it's time to call the police on a kid or not? It's going to be based on stereotypes, racial bias, perceptions and research already shows us that there is profiling racial in school and BIPOC kids are going to be the ones who are targeted. Asking the question is kind of like having the obvious answers - schools are not the space for police." Arabic Parent

Suggestions for the way forward. It is evident from the experiences shared, that the OCDSB must take further action to address anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism in as well as discrimination against 2SLGBTQ+ and students with disabilities within the OCDSB. This starts with a more intensive professional development program for educators and administrators focusing on identifying and addressing implicit biases, understanding trauma, and in-depth anti-racism training, including looking at how anti-racist practices should be incorporated into the discipline process. This training should be reinforced by checks and balances as well as transparent accountability mechanisms to hold employees accountable for meeting OCDSB's competency expectations.

Some best practices to address implicit biases in the suspension process and when making decisions about whether to involve the police were identified in the Review of the Peel District School Board⁵⁶ (PDSB). The OCDSB should consider adopting something similar into its practice across the District. The best practice includes:

1. Initially remove yourself from the situation to de-escalate yourself;

⁵⁶ Chadha, E., Herbert S., and Richard S. Review of the Peel District School Board. 2020. Accessed May 26, 2021.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/new/review-peel-district-school-board-report-en.pdf>

2. Unpack the incident by asking (i) What is the type of incident? (ii) What are the assumptions being made about the student and the student's behaviour? (iii) After walking through the version of events from the teacher's perspective and the student's perspective, what makes sense?

The OHRC has recommended anti-bias training; developing policies, procedures and guidelines; and creating effective accountability monitoring and accountability mechanisms that include complaint procedures, disciplinary measures and collecting, analyzing and reporting on data as a way to broadly address racial profiling and systemic discrimination.⁵⁷

OCDSB culture not to question role of the police

It became evident over the course of the review, that it is ingrained in the OCDSB culture not to question the actions or involvement of the police. Fundamental assumptions underlying the involvement of police in schools have not been open to question and there has been no critical interrogation of the impacts of police involvement on students, and in particular on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students. On rare occasions when particular actions or approaches of the police were questioned, employees recalled feeling like they had been reprimanded for making the police uncomfortable or putting the partnership in jeopardy. In the course of consultations, several employees and former employees indicated concern that it was career limiting to question the status quo and raise concerns about the impacts of how we are working with police on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students.

"We're going to worry about the police feeling uncomfortable when we've got a whole school of kids feeling uncomfortable." Employee

"I also wanted to add some additional thoughts about today's session that I did not feel comfortable raising during the consultation itself. I was very concerned that everyone in today's meeting is a white administrator in our secondary schools and, as a result, our own bias and "appreciation" for police work in schools may not be reflective of the reality of the students we serve in our schools. As much as I appreciate my colleagues and the work we do, I'm not sure how many folks are engaged in questioning their blind trust in the police and how they carry out matters in our schools. I admit that I am new to these realizations myself; for many years, I implicitly trusted the SRO's who entered the schools I worked in and did not really question the impact of their role or their presence on students. These experiences ... combined with my own work in equity and inclusion, have brought me to this point where I am actively questioning the need for the police in our schools. While I'm not saying we should not have the police at all, I do wonder how we can possibly have them in schools without causing further harm to our vulnerable students. There is so much to be repaired and I'm hoping that some of my Principal colleagues are reaching out to you with the same questions and concerns as me!" Administrator

Relationship between administrators and SROs

⁵⁷ See OHRC webpage

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/under-suspicion-research-and-consultation-report-racial-profiling-ontario>
accessed June 3, 2021

The feedback from some administrators, employees and participants throughout the review, established some substantial concerns that the relationship between the administrators and SROs is negatively impacting on the experiences of children in school, and in particular on the experiences of Indigenous, Black and marginalized students.

"We value the way that police support our work and this stops us from reflecting on how it impacts on students.... I have worked with really amazing SROs but looking back now after what I've learned in the last year, I now realize that some interactions were harmful or potentially harmful to students but I didn't perceive them as harmful at the time." Administrator

It became evident that while this review did not reveal substantive evidence of positive relationship building between SROs and many students beyond friendly banter and conversations with some students, it did reveal evidence of a strong relationship built between administrators and the SROs. Many administrators expressed heavy, and perhaps undue, reliance upon the SRO to navigate issues at their schools. While at first glance, a positive relationship between an administrator and an SRO may seem like a beneficial result, the impact of that relationship on the experiences of students, and in particular on the experiences of Indigenous, Black and marginalized students is something that must be examined.

"I'm very concerned that the voices of administrators will have power when we haven't spent time as administrators thinking about trauma and impact, simply because we value them in helping us to do our work. This can't be the only guiding principle on why we need to have police officers in our schools." Administrator

"I like for students to understand that there are more people out there (other than their teachers) who want to help and support them. That being said, the relationships between police and our most marginalized students are not grounded in support, even though we might assume/think they are. So, while the SRO's presence has benefitted me (as an Admin), I'm not sure it totally benefits my students." Administrator

In the survey, administrators indicated that they highly valued the advice and guidance that they received from SROs, many identifying this as the aspect of the relationship that they valued most. Concerns were raised by students, community members and other employees that this close relationship can inadvertently contribute to the criminalization of children in OCDSB schools. When administrators use their discretion to consult police on an issue regarding a specific child, or to involve police in assessing potential threats, or involve police in educating children and their family as part of the progressive discipline process they are involving law enforcement in the life of a child and increasing the risk that the child will become "known to the police". This is one of the grave fears expressed by parents of racialized children during the consultation process. It is common practice for administrators to involve police in progressive discipline responses for non-criminal matters such as fighting, bullying and harassment for incidents beginning as early as primary school. This practice and the subsequent familiarity that police develop with a child as a result of the administrator inviting them into the process is of significant concern.

"The danger is the staff, to be honest with you. You can have an SRO in the school who is completely inclusive, but the SRO will react based on the administrator's reaction towards a student. For me, that is the danger. The

relationship between the SRO and the administration. The administrator is the one who decides to involve and report to the SRO. The SRO only gets their information from the staff... It's human instinct to feel like the SRO needs to support or model the reaction of the "Friend" of the administration - so this can drive unfair responses." Employee

Other impacts of the close relationship include, the expansion of police involvement into areas of education and discipline where they were not previously involved with impacts for students involved in the discipline process. For example, involving the SRO in giving advice about, responding to, or engaging in the progressive discipline response for a discretionary incident may increase the likelihood of punitive and carceral responses to incidents rather than educative, corrective and restorative responses. The close relationships between administrators and the SROs can lead to the SRO being embraced as "*part of the team*" leading to SRO's being treated as a "*second VP*" or being "*seen as staff*". This raised concerns about SROs being delegated responsibilities or becoming involved in matters that cross boundaries into responsibilities that should be taken on by educators rather than law enforcement. It also may impact on the sharing of personal information between the administrator and the SRO about students and families that may go beyond what is strictly required by law.

Experiences were shared that corroborated these concerns. For example, the law requires police officers to have a warrant to search a locker; the OCDSB policies allow a principal to search a locker if they have "reasonable and probable grounds". A student was accused of shoplifting and the administrator, who had a relationship with the police, used their discretion to search the child's locker while police officers, who did not have a warrant, watched. This was not in relation to an incident that impacted on the school climate and is a clear example of when lines become blurred between an administrator's duty to the student in *loco parentis* and their relationship with the police.

It is apparent from elementary administrators that the largest proportion view their relationship with SROs as being collaborative or consultative on topics related to school safety. However, amongst the panel of secondary administrators, this shifted away from being a consultative relationship to the largest proportion of administrators identifying the SRO as part of the school team. This is indicative of the close relationship built between the administration and the police.

When asked what they valued most about the service provided by the SROs many administrators named the advice that the SROs provide to them and the ability to call with questions. Benefits to students and families were also generally referenced, with value being placed on their interactions and engagement with individual students and families in response to a situation.

Suggestions for the way forward. The concerns raised above, combined with the more detailed concerns outlined below, suggest that the OCDSB should re-examine the close relationship between the OCDSB, administrators and the police and put in place safeguards, that include the accountability mechanisms below but that might also include other checks and balances, that preserve the necessary boundaries between administration and the police and that re-centre the administrator's role in *loco parentis* to the child.

Information sharing between OCDSB, administrators and police

Violence/threat risk assessment

A significant amount of information about both students and their families is also reportedly shared as part of the Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Process. The Ottawa Protocol currently provides for police involvement as part of a multidisciplinary team to respond when “*a student engages in behaviours or threatens to engage in behaviours that may result in serious injury to a person(s)*”⁵⁸. The current VTRA practice requires SRO involvement for all worrisome or threat making behaviour, regardless of the risk level. The Ottawa Protocol mandates the SRO to be involved in the data collection process as well as part of the multidisciplinary team that assesses the level of threat and decides on next steps. This institutionalizes police involvement in incidents that do not require mandatory police notification under the Provincial Protocol⁵⁹ and can have the impact of expanding police involvement into the lives of children who attend school.

The Ottawa Protocol emphasizes that informed consent should be obtained prior to sharing information, when wherever “*possible and reasonable*”⁶⁰ but goes on to outline the exceptions in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protections of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA), *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA) and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA). The Ottawa Protocol specifically mentions an MFIPPA exception that permits the sharing of information if there are compelling health and safety reasons⁶¹. Absent from the Ottawa Protocol is mention of the fact that this particular exception *requires* the OCDSB to inform the individual that they have shared information about them, in writing, after the information is disclosed. The only other way MFIPPA permits the sharing of private information with law enforcement is if it relates to determining whether a police investigation is required or to aid a police investigation, which is not part of the VTRA process.⁶²

The PHIPA exception referenced in the Ottawa Protocol *permits* the disclosure of some personal health information without consent, but it does not *require* it.⁶³ The *Youth Criminal Justice Act*⁶⁴ applies to young people between the ages of 12 and 17. The YCJA gives the police the discretion to share information about a youth with the OCDSB if it is necessary to ensure compliance with a youth justice court order, to ensure the safety of staff, students or other persons, or to facilitate the rehabilitation of the young person.⁶⁵

“Admins want to keep their SROs because it makes their life easier. What they do and the relationship between the school and the SRO is that they are sharing information they have no legal right to share. Patrol officers would never do this.”
Employee

A number of examples were shared about the VTRA process that highlight the concerns raised by the participants. One situation involved an Indigenous student who was prevented from

⁵⁸ See Ottawa Protocol, (2020) at p. 43.

⁵⁹ For example the Provincial Protocol does not require police notification in relation to all threats. It only requires police notification in relation to threats with a weapon and bomb threats.

⁶⁰ Ottawa Protocol, 2020 at p. 51.

⁶¹ Ottawa Protocol, 2020 at p. 51 referencing s. 32(h) *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990 c. M.56.

⁶² See *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990 c. M.56. at and s. 32(g)

⁶³ See *Personal Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 2004, c. 3, Sched. A at ss. 38 to 43.

⁶⁴ *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, R.S.C. 2002, c.1 (YCJA)

⁶⁵ See *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, R.S.C. 2002, c.1 (YCJA) at s. 125(6).

returning to school because a community partner refused to share additional health information that is not required to be shared. In other situations background information was shared not just about the student by the participants in the VTRA team, but about students' families and histories of interactions with the police to inform decision making. In all of these situations the SRO is involved in the process, learning private information shared about the student's discipline history, medical history and other information, including Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and possibly safety plans.

This raises concerns from a privacy perspective, as well as concerns in terms of an institutional process that creates increased exposure to police and increased knowledge about a student by a police officer. This has the potential to contribute to pushing marginalized students out of school and increase the risk of criminalization.

Suggestions for the way forward. Police involvement in the VTRA process, and the scope of information shared in the process, particularly with the police about a student, should be examined carefully. Serious consideration should be given to limiting police involvement, if any, to cases that require mandatory notification of police under the Provincial Protocol and to assessing the risk only. Information sharing should be limited to that which is absolutely required in order to ensure safety. Care should be taken to follow the requirements of MFIPPA for consent and to inform the student in writing about private information shared and with whom the information was shared. The OCDSB should ensure that all participants in the VTRA process have training on the parameters of information sharing. If the participants are unable to access training, they should have a detailed briefing on information sharing parameters prior to joining a VTRA meeting.

"VTRA meetings are ridiculous. People sitting around the table with a police officer talking about whether or not the child is at risk. Police talking about a student ... I don't want the police there. If the report isn't in the OSR then the school doesn't need to know. The idea that you need to know about the child's personal family matters in order to educate them is a concern - you need to know about the child and the child's learning needs and that's it." Employee

"The extent of information shared in the VTRA, for example the number of contacts with police over the past months, is absolutely shocking! They shouldn't share this information. They often come in to chat with the Vice Principal or Principal and they often find out information about students and it's shocking to me what they will share. There are blurred lines because of the relationship between the administrator and the SRO and this leads to too much information sharing." Employee

"We use SROs in schools a lot out of fear because we don't know what to do and we don't have enough information about what else is possible. They are seen as part of the school team, but they're not really, and you see a lot of information going back and forth about the family and the kid, when it shouldn't. Because they are seen as part of the school team, they are called more quickly because a dysregulated kid needs the support. They are our go-to rather than building the skills and confidence in the building to respond. Relationships and connections create safety in schools - if we can get back to that, that's in the best interests of the kids." Employee

Sharing student index cards

Other information sharing that was mentioned by Administrators, involved the sharing of student index cards with the police to facilitate location of a missing child (who had left the premises without authorization) or to help understand a child to adjust the police response. The Index card is an easy way to share information, but it contains far more information than what is required to be shared.

Suggestion for the way forward. The OCDSB should emphasize the obligation to share the least amount of information required with the police, in order to protect the privacy of the children it serves.

Identification of photographs

Concerns have been raised that, at times, the information shared, not just in the VTRA process, appears to cross the threshold of what is permissible and highlights blurred lines of responsibility created by the close administrator/SRO relationship. The sharing of photographs by the SRO with school staff for identification purposes was raised as one area of concern. This process is more prevalent in secondary schools than elementary schools with 70% of secondary administrators reporting this happening a few times a year or more and only 14% of elementary administrators reporting the same.

This typically involves the image of a youth who is suspected to have been involved in an incident that may or may not have a link to the school climate. Of the administrators who reported this taking place, only 20% were able to say that the requests were always related to incidents that had a direct impact on the school climate or school safety; a notable 80% either said it only sometimes had a link or that the link wasn't clear.

In a particularly concerning incident, the school identified a student for something that was not a crime and did not involve something that occurred on or was related to the school climate. It resulted in a homeless, racialized student being targeted for having provided a false name to the police after they were found to be loitering inside a public shopping area to get warm. This is an example of how students can become known to police as a result of the SRO program in schools and the close relationship between SROs and school staff. This is concerning because it can contribute to the process of pushing children out of school and be a factor in criminalization.

"Everytime you go to the court and someone is charged or accused of something you read in the paper 'He was known to the police'. Parents believe that schools are providing this information to the police and this label ends up labelling them as gang affiliated and known to police and stigmatizes them as trouble kids."
Somali Community Member

"We've seen officers who have relationships with kids in schools come into the community and then have kids punished in schools - they share information with teachers and schools and this creates harm." Somali Former Student and Parent

Section 11(2) of the Ottawa Protocol *requires* the principal to disclose a student's full name, date of birth, address and telephone number if there is a criminal investigation or an investigation that will lead to a court proceeding or tribunal being conducted. While this disclosure is permitted by

the exception⁶⁶ in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA), it is not *required*. Therefore the Ottawa Protocol introduces a requirement to share information with the police that is not required under the law. This is concerning because it can contribute to students feeling concerned about attending school and it has the potential to contribute to them being pushed out of school which has a high link to criminalization.

In discussions, most administrators said that they acquiesced to identifying pictures of students shared by police, because they had always been told that is the administrator's role to cooperate with the police. However, the administrator's duty, first and foremost, is to protect the best interests of the child who is entrusted to them because of the standard of care required by the doctrine of *loco parentis*. Additionally, OCDSB's first priority is to create a welcoming and safe environment for all students, including marginalized students. Administrators come to know the identity of a child and have access to their personal information because they attend school. If students need to worry about an administrator sharing this information with the police as a matter of right, it may contribute to lower attendance, a decreased sense of belonging and help push students out of the school system. The fear about being identified to police has driven racialized students to go so far as to avoid having their photograph in the school year book. Cross-racial identification is notoriously unreliable because of own-race bias and this helps to drive the fear of having school authorities incorrectly identify a student to the police.⁶⁷ Participants shared their own experiences with the police mistakenly identifying them because of similar names or an incorrect eyewitness identification

When asked about how often they are asked by an SRO to identify a child, 67% of secondary administrators indicated this happens a few times a year. The rest indicated that they weren't sure or never. One respondent said it happened on a monthly basis. When asked about the nexus between the request for identification and their school climate, 87.5% of secondary administrators noted that the nexus to their school climate was not always clear, that it was only sometimes evident or that it was never connected. This result reinforces the concern raised by parents and students that information is being shared between administrators and the police, that isn't clearly related to incidents that involve the school.

Suggestions for the way forward. To address the concerns raised above and to reinforce the goal of OCDSB schools as a welcoming place for all students, the OCDSB should consider providing practice direction to administrators to limit identification of students in photos provided by the police to situations where not identifying the person may result in serious or imminent harm to another person. The OCDSB should also consider providing professional development to administrators about the difference between what information sharing is *permitted* under law and what information sharing is *required* and guidance on how to use their discretion to decide when and what to disclose.

Informed consent and parent/guardian consent

Concerns were raised by some participants about whether sufficient student consent and/or parental/guardian consent is obtained prior to police engaging with students involved in incidents, either as suspects, witnesses or victims. 41% of survey respondents thought it should be mandatory to get parental consent before a student is permitted to speak to the police. An additional 26% thought it should be obtained if possible.

⁶⁶ See *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990 c. M.56. at s. 32(g)

⁶⁷ Bryan S. Ryan, *Alleviating Own-Race Bias in Cross-Racial Identifications*, 8 Wash. U. Jur. Rev. 115 (2015). Available at: https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/law_jurisprudence/vol8/iss1/5

The principal has no right to call the police without informing the parents first. If the parents can't intervene, maybe, but parental notice is required first. The parents must know first before the call is made." Arabic Parent

Parents and community members in the consultation also emphasized the need for not just parental consent, but also for parental presence if a child is going to speak with a police officer in relation to an incident.

The Ottawa Protocol addresses the duty to notify parents or guardians if police will be interviewing a student.⁶⁸ It places the obligation on the principal to make best efforts to contact the parents of children under 18 prior to the interview and requires a parent or guardian, third party adult, or the principal to be present if the parents cannot be present. It notes that if the principal is in attendance during the interview that they must be aware of any potential conflict arising from their own duty to investigate and their role as an advocate for the student.

The only exceptions to the principal's duty to notify the parents arise when:

- The student is 18 years of age or older;
- In exigent circumstances or if the parent may be implicated; or
- The child is 16 or 17 years of age and has withdrawn from parental consent

The YCJA sets out specific and detailed requirements about the duty of police officers to inform young people about their right to contact a lawyer and/or contact their parents before making a statement to the police. These safeguards are clearly reflected in the Ottawa Protocol as well as in Appendix D to the Ottawa Protocol which sets out the format for a student to be informed of and choose whether or not to waive these rights.

Concerns were raised that the protections built into the Ottawa Protocol are not sufficient to counter the power imbalance between a student suspected of being involved in a crime and the authority figure of a principal and a police officer seeking to interview them about that alleged crime.

One parent noted their child's experience being interviewed by the police at school and used this experience to reinforce the need for all children, even those under 18 or who have withdrawn from parental control to have a parent or trusted adult present before they are interviewed by a police officer:

"The SRO seems to put students in a position where they feel automatically guilty and this is where it's a problem without having the parent there. This is why parental consent and presence is so important. I'm coming from a place of experience with my own son. Students don't know when they sign the paperwork [withdrawal from parental control] that there are implications if they get involved with the SRO.

My son was literally interrogated by an SRO - back and forth between him and his friends. When my son described it, it sounded like a real interrogation. If I was present as a parent I would have had some input. How many times have they done this to a young student? Specifically, when it comes to the interview when a student signs a document saying they are no longer under parental control, they

⁶⁸ Ottawa Protocol, 2020 at p. 21

should still be informed of what their options are - then and there - if there is an incident in the future, they should still be informed that we could involve your parents if you want.” Black parent

The YCJA and the Ottawa Protocol set the minimum standards. If a parent or trusted adult does not attend to represent the student, the principal can oftentimes find themselves in a conflict of interest because of their opposing obligations to both investigate the incident and advocate for the best interests of the student being investigated. The law clearly recognizes that the principal and teachers stand in *loco parentis* to a student. The Supreme Court of Canada has interpreted this to mean that the principal must provide supervision and protection to the student that is that of a careful or prudent parent.⁶⁹

It is questionable that an administrator can sufficiently fulfil this fiduciary obligation when a child is in conflict with the law or involved in a serious incident that requires a principal's investigation under the *Education Act* because of their conflict of interest.

Suggestions for the way forward. A child rights approach should always guide any decisions to permit children to interact with the police. This means being guided by the best interests of the child and ensuring that the child provides informed consent. The informed consent of the child must always be obtained before an administrator permits a child to speak to a police officer about an incident. This consent should initially be obtained by the administrator and then again by the police officer after the child provides informed consent to the administrator. This should apply whether the child is a victim, suspect or witness.

In order to help level out the power imbalance and ensure that child has the benefit of a parent's advocacy and support, it is strongly recommended that parental *consent*, not just notification, be a mandatory requirement at the OCDSB *before* a child can meet with the police, except for in exigent circumstances such as imminent risk of serious harm or if the parent is suspected to be involved. It is also strongly suggested that parental presence be required. If parental presence is not possible, it is suggested that the interview be delayed until such a time that the parent can be present.

As alternatives, if parents are unwilling or unable to be present, the OCDSB could consider developing a partnership with a community-based, culturally relevant youth advocacy or legal aid organization who can attend at the school during an interview and represent the best interests of the child. Examples of organizations doing student advocacy work that were mentioned by participants during this consultation include Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families,⁷⁰ The Rajo Project (Somali for “Hope”) operated by the Centre for Resilience and Social Development⁷¹; and the Somali Centre for Family Services⁷². Considerations should be given to having third-party advocates who are culturally appropriate to support the child and their family through every stage of the process.

It is important to note that the Ottawa Protocol only speaks to the duty to *notify* parents or guardians; it does not create a requirement to obtain parental or guardian consent to the interview. It also does not speak to delaying an interview until a parent can be present. Subject to exceptions for exigent circumstances where there is a significant threat to imminent safety,

⁶⁹ *Myers v. Peel County Board of Education*, 1981 CanLII 27 (SCC), [1981] 2 SCR 21

⁷⁰ See <https://inuqatigiit.ca/> for more information.

⁷¹ See <http://thecrsd.org/rajo/> for more information.

⁷² See <https://scfsottawa.org/> for more information.

these are protections that should be built into the Ottawa Protocol to protect the best interests of the child.

For situations where the child has withdrawn from parental consent, the principal should still inform them of the option of notifying their parents or another trusted adult or the right to refuse to be interviewed by the police, prior to permitting the child to speak with the police officers. The Ottawa Protocol should be adjusted to reflect this additional protection.

Weaponization of police by other parents

An observation arose from examining the feedback administrators provided about the most recent times that police were involved in responding to incidents at their school. Several incidents reported indicated police becoming involved at the request of a parent, when they were presumably not satisfied that the school could or would sufficiently address the issue. This happened in situations involving children who were involved in fights, bullying and harassment and for some incidents, involving children under the age of 12, which is the age of criminal responsibility. Some incidents involved concerns about racialized children. This is concerning for several reasons. First, it removes discretion from the principal, who, taking a considered view of all factors, is in the best position to make the decision about whether or not the incident necessitates police involvement. Second, it takes what is often school-based misbehaviour that should be dealt with through progressive discipline at school, and opens the behaviour up to criminalization. Third, it creates an opportunity for parents to weaponize the police against another child. Parents have the choice to make a police report about another child, but providing increased access to this recourse through the school has the potential to increase police involvement in matters where it is not required. Allowing parents to dictate the involvement of police on matters that involve school discipline creates a dynamic that is open to misuse and subject to personal bias, power and privilege and interferes with the administrator's discretion.

Suggestions for the way forward. The OCDSB should consider revising its practice to make it clear that only the administrator can make a decision about whether or not police involvement is warranted in matters relating to school safety. The accountability mechanisms suggested later in this report should help ensure that this discretion is exercised judiciously. If a parent wants to involve the police in an incident that the principal does not feel warrants police involvement, the administrator should direct the parent to register a report at the nearest police station, rather than facilitating the parent to meet with a police officer at the school or who is attached to the school through the SRO program.

Data collection, accountability and transparency

It became apparent very early on in the review that the OCDSB has not engaged in a substantive evaluation of the impact of the program until now and does not collect data to evaluate and report on how it is involving police in schools. No reporting mechanism exists for administrators to record when they make calls for service to the police and there is no accountability mechanism within the District to allow for an examination of this particular issue.

Review impact of Ottawa Protocol

The Ottawa Protocol calls for a review of the protocol every two years, or more often if required. Schools boards are tasked with soliciting input from school councils, parents, staff and students in the review process. The review is to be completed by members of the Regional Safe Schools

Committee and must include members of the four Boards and the OPS. No information is provided on what it expected to be covered by the review.

The Ottawa Protocol was first signed in 2011 and then revised in 2016 and 2020 respectively. There is no indication of any review being done of the impact of the program over this time period on students. Rather, the review process for the Ottawa Protocol was limited to making revisions to align it with new developments in the legislative and policy framework in Ontario, such as the legalization of cannabis a few years back.

The OCDSB conducted informal surveys from its administrators annually to understand their experiences implementing the Ottawa Protocol and identify operational challenges. The OCDSB then engaged with the OPS to work out operational changes to practices to address the challenges. Information gathered from these assessments was used to modify practice rather than to revise the review. No assessment was done of the impact of the program on students and assessments were limited to operational concerns.

“Underlying it is that “we just need to help kids and families see that police aren’t bad.” That is what administrators think. We are helping the police rather than questioning the impact on students. Where is self reflection?” Administrator

“The fact there is little or no trust between the police and racialized communities, regardless of the positive intentions of the program, it is not working.” Black Employee

“Where is the data on any Indigenous youth engaging in a positive way with officers inside a school? Indigenous Community Member

Suggestions for the way forward. Moving forward, as the partnership between OCDSB and OPS is reimagined, it is incumbent to build a requirement into any revisions to the Ottawa Protocol to engage in a regular, identity-based evaluation of the impact of all forms of police involvement on students. This can only be done by collecting appropriate data, disaggregating the data by Indigeneity, race, sexual and gender identity and disability at a minimum, and engaging in human-rights based, participatory discussions and identity-based consultations with students, parents and guardians and community members to assess impact.

Accountability of administrators

Currently at OCDSB there is no mechanism to hold administrators accountable for how and when they are involving police in schools. Accountability, and transparency about how police are being used in schools is a foundational aspect of a human rights-based approach. The preamble to the *Anti-Racism Act* recognizes that systemic racism can be perpetuated by a failure to identify and monitor racial disparities and inequities and to take remedial action.

Engaging with police to respond to serious incidents in schools will remain a reality into the future. Participants in the review expressed concern that the support provided to administrators until now has not been sufficient to support them in recognizing and addressing their own implicit biases and giving them the information they need to reduce the potential negative impacts of police involvement on students. To reduce the impact that individual administrator discretion can have on police involvement it is important to develop clear training and written guidelines on OCDSB’s expectations around police involvement that are child rights and human

rights-centred and that help administrators identify and address implicit biases. This may include factors to consider prior to involving the police and alternatives to police involvement.

Suggestions for the way forward. It is also important for the OCDSB to develop checks and balances to help limit implicit bias in police involvement. This could include a requirement that the relevant superintendent of instruction be informed or required to provide approval *prior* to an administrator making a call for service to police, making exceptions for situations that pose a significant risk of imminent harm.

“What is missing is putting responsibility on principals for how they are using the police officers. There is no learning or responsibility placed on them.” Employee

“I have deep concerns about the ability of administrators to make discretionary decisions about having police in schools.” Black Employee

“The area of discretion is the area of the most concern. Who is making that decision and what is informing it? Is it monitored and who is holding them accountable for the decisions? There was something that happened after hours and the school got the SRO involved. Personal mental health information was shared with the SRO and the school defended it. It was defended in the multidisciplinary meeting too. When people don’t have an understanding of the harm that can be caused and there is no accountability it is really worrisome.” Employee

“If the outcome is that the SRO stays, then there needs to be accountability built into that decision. It’s terrifying that race-based data is not collected... Tracking will hold people accountable. Race-based data and documentation for the reasoning without disclosing confidential information as well as training...” Administrator

Accountability of OCDSB

Accountability of the OCDSB for the involvement of police in schools is also currently missing from OCDSB policy and practice. Data collected by administrators about police involvement should be aggregated and reported publicly by the District each year. The public reporting should be identity-based to allow for transparency and public accountability for any disparities and to provide early evidence to support changed practice to remove disparities.

Suggestions for the way forward. It is incumbent upon the OCDSB to establish a transparent accountability mechanism that requires administrators to track and record police involvement. This mechanism should allow for monitoring and analysis of the identity of children engaged with the police including information about their age, gender and sexuality, disability, race and/or Indigeneity. Information should also be collected about the reason for police involvement and the outcome of the involvement. Details about parent or guardian notification and presence should also be recorded. This information should be monitored and analyzed annually and Superintendents should be given responsibility to hold administrators accountable for addressing disparities.

This accountability mechanism should allow for the internal and public reporting of all police involvement in schools disaggregated by identity in order to identify and address any disproportionate impact on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students. This is aligned with

standards and obligations to identify and remove barriers under the *Anti-Racism Act*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. Annual, public reporting, disaggregated by identity is an important element of transparent accountability. Changes that the OCDSB might consider include:

- a. Mandatory data collection by principals that includes a description of the reason for police involvement, the student's age, Indigeneity, race, gender, disability, whether parental consent was obtained;
- b. Mandatory, identity-based annual public reporting; and,
- c. Annual school-based meetings between administrators and SOI to discuss disproportionality in application and make plans to reduce disproportionality.

Additionally, the OCDSB should consider implementing a regular review cycle that evaluates the impact of how OCDSB is involving police with students, with a particular focus on its impacts on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students. This evaluation should seek out and include student and parent feedback.

To ensure consistency of practice and help to reduce unconscious bias, the OCDSB could consider developing written practice guidelines for OCDSB administrators on police involvement that are child-centred, rights-based and focused on limiting police involvement. The written guidelines should clearly outline OCDSB expectations around issues such as parental and guardian consent, sharing of information about students with the police, search and seizure, considerations that should be taken into account prior to making a call for service to police and expectations around accountability. The guidelines could also identify non-police alternatives to police involvement and other service provider options.

To provide administrators and educators with the skills they need the OCDSB should consider embedding child-centred, human rights-based, anti-oppression and trauma-informed approaches to all safe schools training moving forward. The OCDSB should also consider making space to discuss the results of this review with administrators in order to create a better understanding of the implications of OCDSB's current practices in progressive discipline and police involvement on Indigenous, Black and marginalized communities. The OCDSB should consider taking on a proactive role to help administrators better understand the new practice direction and changes to the policies and procedures and become more trauma-aware and bias-aware in their practices.

Finally, it is important for accountability that the OCDSB take steps to also ensure that students and their families are aware of their rights. The OCDSB should consider providing annual rights-based training for students and their families that includes information on children's rights and in particular on children's rights if they are in conflict with the law. The training should include information on where to raise a concern if they are uncomfortable to approach administration and how to contact a community advocate to accompany them through the process.

Inconsistencies between Provincial Protocol requirements and OCDSB policies, procedures and practices

Narrow definition of incidents requiring mandatory police notification

Incidents that require mandatory police notification are identified in the Provincial Protocol. All other involvement of police in schools is *legally discretionary*. The Ottawa Protocol and the OCDSB police involvement policies and procedures have created a more expansive list of incidents requiring mandatory police notification than the list in the Provincial Protocol.

For example the Ottawa Protocol includes all threats of serious physical bodily harm not just threats with a weapon as an incident that requires mandatory police notification. The Ottawa Protocol also names the possession of child pornography. Various OCDSB policies and procedures also expand the definition of what requires mandatory police notification to include giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor (identified as mandatory in [PR.533.SCO](#) [PR.528.SCO](#)); bullying (identified as mandatory in [PR.533.SCO](#)); bullying; if, i. the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying; and ii. the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person (identified as mandatory in [PR.528.SCO](#)); and vandalism causing extensive damage to school or property located on school premises (identified as mandatory in [PR.533.SCO](#) [PR.528.SCO](#)).

The inclusion of these items on the mandatory list takes away the administrator's discretion to determine when police involvement is necessary and contributes to increasing levels of policing to respond to incidents that don't necessarily warrant a police response. For example, the consensual sharing of intimate images between young people might technically meet the definition of child pornography, but it is not the type of incident that requires a police response.

This widening of the definition of mandatory incidents requiring police notification has the impact of institutionalizing police response and involvement in incidents where a school-based disciplinary response might be more appropriate. It also potentially exacerbates the negative impacts experienced by some Indigenous, Black and marginalized students and community members.

Suggestions for the way forward. For consistency and to limit police involvement to the extent possible, it is recommended that both the Ottawa Protocol and the OCDSB policies and procedures be revised to reflect the Provincial Protocol definition of incidents that require mandatory police notification and remove the additional items on the list, unless they are serious crimes. Police notification response to non-mandatory incidents should be at the discretion of the administrator, with appropriate training and accountability mechanisms built in to ensure that the discretion is applied appropriately and in a way that does not disproportionately impact on Indigenous, Black and marginalized students. For clarity, it is also suggested that references to involving the police in responding to discretionary incidents like mischief, bullying, vandalism, giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor, being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs also be removed from the Ottawa Protocol.⁷³ Suggested preliminary revisions to the Ottawa Protocol are set out in **Appendix 15**.

Exceptions for children under 12 and children with special education needs

Important adjustments are also suggested to align OCDSB policies and procedures⁷⁴ and the Ottawa Protocol, with the Provincial Protocol. These adjustments will help to centre the best interests of the child and address disproportionality in police involvement for children with disabilities and children who are marginalized by limiting police involvement.

Under the Provincial Protocol, involvement of police in responding to incidents involving children under 12 is *always* legally discretionary, even if the incident is on the list requiring mandatory notification.⁷⁵ If an incident that requires mandatory notification of the police occurs, the

⁷³ Ottawa Protocol (2020) at p. 12 and 13.

⁷⁴ [PR.533.SCO Police Involvement in Schools](#) at Art. 2.2

⁷⁵ Provincial Protocol (2015) at p. 23.

Provincial Protocol clearly gives administrators discretion to determine whether or not to involve the police. This is important because children under the age of 12 are below the age of criminal responsibility. It is also important because it allows for the appropriate application of discretion which can help to reduce experiences of over-policing and criminalization reported by marginalized children in the school system and in their neighbourhoods.

The Ottawa Protocol and the OCDSB policies and procedures take this discretion away, making it a requirement for administrators to notify the police for all mandatory incidents, even if the child is under the age of 12. A more appropriate, child-centred approach would be to allow for the discretion noted in the Provincial Protocol and to give administrators the training and guidance they need to appropriately exercise that discretion in an unbiased way. This is aligned with the philosophy guiding changes made in 2020 to Ontario's suspension and expulsion policies for young children.

A similar revision should be made to clarify administrator discretion for incidents involving children with special education needs. The Provincial Protocol requires police to be notified of mandatory incidents involving children with special education needs.⁷⁶ The Ottawa Protocol recognizes that there are times when a police response is *"neither necessary nor appropriate."*⁷⁷ The OCDSB should consider revising the Ottawa Protocol and associated policies and procedures to clarify that while notification is mandatory, police response is not. Administrators should be aware of this distinction and apply it appropriately to avoid unnecessary interaction between children with special needs and the police, particularly when the behaviour involves stress behaviour.

Limit police involvement and police presence and harmonize policies and procedures

"There are some that have no issues and others who will be triggered. Motto should be to use the police as little as possible. Really really think about whether you need to bring the police in or not." Administrator

The experiences documented in this review call for a fundamental, cultural shift in how the OCDSB is viewing police engagement in schools. It is suggested that OCDSB review the 27 policies and procedures that reference police engagement (see **Appendix 2**) and make changes needed to limit police involvement and presence in schools to incident response only and only when required by law or as a last resort. The OCDSB should make serious efforts to map and identify non-police alternatives.

It is also suggested that these policies and procedures be revised to centre and affirm commitment to Indigenous rights, human rights, children's rights and the best interests of the child; to clearly set out the rights and responsibilities of children, students, families and employees; and to create an accessible and safe complaints mechanism for students and families who encounter discrimination in application of the safe schools process.

Some preliminary suggested revisions are outlined in **Appendix 15** and include harmonizing and narrowing the definition of "critical incident" to align with the Provincial Protocol's list of mandatory incidents and increase clarity in application; harmonizing and aligning the requirement to notify the police about weapon possession; introducing a definition of criminal

⁷⁶ Provincial Protocol 2015 at p. 22 to 23.

⁷⁷ Ottawa Protocol 2020 at p. 13.

harassment and a requirement to notify the police of same; and harmonizing the definition of bullying, but removing it from the definition of critical incidents.

CONNECTING PERSPECTIVES HEARD TO REVIEW FINDINGS

In June 2021, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board completed a comprehensive literature review of research in both Canada and the United States looking at the impact of police involvement in schools. The review looked at 10 sources of Canadian literature, five sources of Canadian school board and academic literature, and 22 sources of American academic literature.

It found that there was no conclusive evidence that school resource officer programs have a causal effect on reducing misbehaviour, safety issues in schools, or improving the school climate.”⁷⁸ It noted:

“Although some research reviewed, offered suggestions on improvements that could be made to the School Resource Program, the majority of research points to the link between challenging student behaviour and the deeper systemic, personal, family and community difficulties they face daily. In addition, the research points out the fatal flaw in the program - it puts police in the lives of at-risk youth and equips them with one strategy to address behaviour: the criminal justice system.”⁷⁹

It concluded that resources should be directed away from school policing programs and towards improving partnerships between school, medical, mental health and community programs.⁸⁰

Human rights-based reviews from other school districts

A number of other school boards in Ontario have also undertaken human rights-based reviews of the police involvement in school programs. Some are still underway. Below is information on school boards across Ontario that have or are currently reviewing the presence of police in schools:

Table 12: Summary of Ontario school board reviews of SRO programs

Date	School Board	Type of SRO program	Decision
Ottawa Area			
Current	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	SROs’ roles include education, prevention and intervention. 24 SROs across 4 school boards	Under review - decision pending

⁷⁸ CBC News, January 21, 2021 accessed on May 2, 2021

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/hwdsb-police-liaison-letter-1.5887602>

⁷⁹ HWDSB, Literature Review (2021) at p. 17

⁸⁰ HWDSB, Literature Review (2021) at p. 17

Current	Ottawa Catholic School Board	SROs' roles include education, prevention and intervention. 24 SROs across 4 school boards	Education about SRO role
No review	French Language Public School Board	SROs' roles include education, prevention and intervention. 24 SROs across 4 school boards	No review
No review	French Language Catholic School Board	SROs' roles include education, prevention and intervention	No review
Outside Ottawa Area			
Current	Waterloo Region District School Board	10 police officers assigned to elementary and secondary schools - proactive and reactive duties. ⁸¹	Police involvement paused by the Board in June 2020 while the program is under review. ⁸²
Current	Thames Valley District School Board in collaboration with the London District Catholic School Board	SROs' roles include education, prevention and intervention. ⁸³ Some are dedicated to one school and others cover a range of schools and are not assigned to schools on a full-time basis	Under review - decision pending
April 2021	Upper Grand District School Board	SROs are engaged in education, prevention and intervention. Some are dedicated to one school and others cover a range of schools and are not assigned to schools on a full-time basis. ⁸⁴	School board trustees voted to discontinue the SRO program after an extensive review of students, staff and community members found disproportionate, negative impacts on marginalized students (racialized and students with disabilities).

⁸¹ Waterloo Regional Police webpage accessed on May 2, 2021

<https://www.wrps.on.ca/en/our-community/youth-programs.aspx>

⁸² See <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/school-resource-officer-wrdsb-1.5614012> accessed on June 2, 2021

⁸³ <https://www.tvdsb.ca/Modules/News/index.aspx?newsId=0ddeaaa2-7649-4dad-b9c4-ba1c234927f9>

⁸⁴ Upper Grand District School Board, Police Presence in Schools Task Force Report, March 18, 2021 accessed on May 2, 2021

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021-03-23-Police-Presence-in-Schools-Task-Force.pdf>

November 2020	Peel District School Board	One SRO is assigned to each secondary school. One SRO assigned to several elementary and middle schools. ⁸⁵	Peel Regional Police Service announced a permanent end to the school resource officer program.
June 2020	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board	Not stationed in schools. 11 police officers supported 196 schools with lockdown drills, investigations and education sessions.	School board trustees voted to end the SRO program based on recommendations from their human rights and equity community advisory committee. Based on a literature review that found lack of evidence to support positive benefits, and significant evidence to support harm, in January 2021, HWDSB wrote to the province asking the province to review and replace police programs in schools with more support for health, families and the schools themselves based on a literature review that found “no definitive conclusion that the program has a causal effect on reducing misbehaviour, safety issues in schools, or improving the school climate”.
November 2017	Toronto District School Board	Full time police officer stationed in each school.	Discontinued the SRO program based on consultations with thousands of students, staff, parents and community members. The report found that while many students had a positive impression of the program, a number of students said that the presence of an SRO made them feel uncomfortable, intimidated and/or watched or targeted.

In 2017 the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) undertook a review of its school resource officer program.⁸⁶ The collected data revealed mixed feelings about the impact of the school

⁸⁵ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/peel-police-resource-officer-program-cancelled-1.5807706>

⁸⁶ Toronto District School Board, School Resource Officer Program Review, November 15, 2017 accessed on May 1, 2021
<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Leadership/Boardroom/Agenda-Minutes/Type/A?Folder=Agenda%2f20171115&Filename=171115+School+Resource+Off+3269+FINAL.pdf>

resource officer program. However, of significant concern were the findings that indicated a negative impact and potential harm experienced by some students.

A majority of students in the focus groups indicated that they were very uncomfortable having the school resource police officer in their school, reporting feeling intimidated and like they were under continual surveillance. They reported staying away from school. Students spoke of the stigma associated with having a school resource police officer assigned to their school, and the impact of this perception on both the school and their community as a whole. They noted the disproportionate presence of school resource police officers at schools with a high proportion of racialized students and felt that they were already overly policed that the presence of police officers in schools made them feel like they were targets for discrimination.⁸⁷

Community members and former students of TDSB echoed the sentiments of the students, noting being uncomfortable, afraid and in particular of the uniform and the fact that officers were armed.⁸⁸ These sentiments were particularly shared by Black male students. They felt like trained adults such as social workers and child and youth counsellors would better fill the role than the SRO.⁸⁹

The TDSB report noted that serious concerns had been brought forward by a significant number of students. It also noted that the presence of school resource police officers made these students feel less safe, less welcome and less engaged in learning. It recognized the overt systemic discrimination faced by these students and negative impact it had on their achievement, well-being and ability to be successful in their future lives. The report highlighted the Board's clear duty to act to address and mitigate these concerns, irrespective of the fact that many people also reported positive aspects of the program. The Board voted to discontinue the school resource police program in schools.⁹⁰

More recently, in June 2020 the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) also voted to discontinue police involvement in schools on the basis of unanimous recommendations from its advisory committee on human rights and equity based on substantial community pressure because of the harm caused to marginalized students.

In March 2021 the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) published the results of an extended review of police presence in its schools.⁹¹ The report made a number of recommendations, including the discontinuation of the school resource officer program. These recommendations were approved by the board in April 2021.

Consistent with the findings reported by the HWDSB literature review, the UGDSB review also found that "marginalized communities are more likely to experience the negative impacts of school policing."⁹² It noted broad community support from both the BIPOC and white community to remove police from schools and that despite a police perspective that the program was

⁸⁷ Ibid at p. 3

⁸⁸ Ibid at p. 4

⁸⁹ Ibid at p. 4

⁹⁰ Ibid at p. 5

⁹¹ Upper Grand District School Board, Police Presence in Schools Task Force Report, March 18, 2021 accessed on May 2, 2021

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021-03-23-Police-Presence-in-Schools-Task-Force.pdf>

⁹² Ibid at p. 73

intended to build relationships, “it is clear however that the negative impacts of police in schools are disproportionately felt by racialized and marginalized communities”.⁹³

The UGDSB took an equity and human rights-based approach to the review. The task force noted that policing in schools is not well researched across Canada and elsewhere⁹⁴ and recognized that which does exist tends to focus on the impact of SROs on school safety and the results of these studies are inconclusive.⁹⁵

The Review of the Peel District School Board also touched on issues of policing in schools. It noted complaints from members of the PDSB, both Black and non-Black, that teachers and principals were not implementing progressive discipline, that teachers and principals escalate trivial issues unnecessarily and that they were involving the police for minor issues leading to arrests and stigmatization of Black children at a very young age. The report observed that Black children are leaving the PDSB because it is not safe for them.⁹⁶

THE WAY FORWARD

“What else do we need to say? We have shared our trauma, what now?” Black Employee

Similar to what was heard by the TDSB, HWDSB, and UGDSB, a significant proportion of the OCDSB school community has shared that the presence of police officers in schools makes them feel less safe, less welcome and less engaged. OCDSB’s first priority must be to the safety, wellness and educational success of its students.

The right to education is a fundamental right of every child. Realizing that right for every child, is the core business of the OCDSB. This means that OCDSB bears the duty to take proactive steps to remove barriers to ensure that every child has the equal opportunity to access their education without discrimination. It is clear from the information that came forward during the review process, that the current practice of involving police in schools is creating barriers for some Indigenous, Black and marginalized students that prevent them from fully enjoying their right to education without discrimination. It is evident that the way OCDSB is currently using police to regulate behaviour of children in school is disproportionately impacting on children with disabilities and who are Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+. It is also evident that the inclusion of the police in the school community is creating barriers to the educational success of some Indigenous, Black and marginalized students who do not feel safe in the schools as a result. Connections were made between police presence in schools and disproportionate discipline of Indigenous, Black and marginalized students, lower attendance rates and higher push-out rates which all contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline.

⁹³Ibid at p. 74

⁹⁴ UGDSB, Task Force Report 2021 citing Petrosino, A., Guckenburg, S., & Fronius, T. (2012) ‘Policing Schools’ Strategies: A Review of the Evaluation Evidence, Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation, Volume 8, Number 17.

⁹⁵ UGDSB, Task Force Report 2021 citing Broll, R. & Howells, S. (2019) *Community Policing in Schools: Relationship-Building and the Responsibilities of School Resource Officers*, Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice

⁹⁶ Chadha, E., Herbert S. and Richard S. (2020). Review of the Peel District School Board accessed on May 25, 2021 <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/new/review-peel-district-school-board-report-en.pdf>

A rights-based approach to education requires the OCDSB to make fundamental changes to remove these barriers. The roadmap for achieving this is set out in the international human rights instruments that should act as a compass for OCDSB practice. The OCDSB should centre Indigenous rights, human rights and children's rights as it navigates changes to respond to concerns highlighted. Every child has the right to participate in decision-making that impacts on them, to have their voice heard and be given due weight in accordance with their development. Every child has the right to have their own best interests centred in decision-making about them. Children in the district have spoken and shared their perspectives and the OCDSB should centre these voices as it charts a new direction forward.

Changes need to be made to limit police engagement in schools, create monitoring and accountability mechanisms for when police do need to be involved and to re-centre the engagement, welcoming and success of all students in the school setting.

It is important to honour and hear the brave voices that came forward during this process and make changes that will address the issues raised, rebuild pride and a sense of belonging in the schools they attend and limit engagement with law enforcement. This is aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's [Calls to Action](#) and recommendations put forward following the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#). It is also aligned with the commitments this Board made when it endorsed the [International Decade for People of African Descent](#), including the commitments to recognition, justice and development, the commitments made to identifying and removing barriers to success in the OCDSB [Indigenous Education, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap](#) and OCDSB's commitment to cultivating a culture of caring and social responsibility.

"I don't believe the Board will listen to me. I still wanted to come because it is really important and it matters." Indigenous Student

"I want the Board to take a step back, reflect and put themselves in our shoes, maybe then they'll understand what some students feel." Black Student

"I hope it is also clear that some perspectives ARE more important than others when this report is made ... Students who are scared and hurt by police should be prioritized, even if some students, white students, may have good experiences sometimes. No one should be intimidated or unsafe at school. No amount of harm is acceptable." Racialized Community Member

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the OCDSB end its participation in the School Resource Officer Program.

Recommendation 2: That the OCDSB revise and harmonize all relevant contractual commitments, policies and procedures to limit police involvement at schools to necessary involvement, introduce accountability and transparency mechanisms for all police involvement and embed Indigenous rights, human rights and children's rights and survivor-centred practices.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Steering group terms of reference

Steering Group Review of Police Involvement in Schools

This steering group is an informal mechanism. It will be made up of approximately 16 people including students, parents/guardians/caregivers, community representatives, and a representative of ACE, IEAC, and SEAC (non-staff and non-Trustee members). The steering group will guide and support the OCDSB staff leading the review. To ensure that student voice is centered, efforts will be made to ensure that at least 50% of the steering group's members are students. Members of the steering group will be inclusive of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black, Muslim, 2SLGBTQ+, newcomers and people receiving mental health support or in special education programming.

The steering group will support the identification of sources of scholarship and study for the literature review, identification of people and groups to be consulted, review of the consultation tools. The steering group will also be consulted on interpretation of the results of the consultation, development of the consultation's recommendations, and the revised policy draft.

Engagement with the steering group will include virtual meetings and email communication for updates and input throughout the consultation process. Updates to ACE, IEAC and SEAC will be made through their member representatives. The steering group is an informal mechanism. Quorum is not required for meetings or engagement to proceed.

Criteria for participation

- Lived experience as a person or parent/guardian/caregiver of a person who is Indigenous, Black, or minoritized (racialized including because of religious identity, 2SLGBTQ+, living with a disability including mental health challenges or dysregulated behaviour, and/or experiencing poverty)

Or

- Demonstrated interest in, experience volunteering with or working on equity or human rights issues

Or

- Experience conducting human rights-centred reviews of programs

Role and responsibilities

- Voluntary role
- Time commitment of approximately 2 hours per month from December 2020 through to September 2021
- Good faith, collaborative approach to participation
- Representatives from IEAC, ACE and SEAC responsible for reporting back and providing updates to their Council and Committee members each month on progress of the consultation

Appendix 2 - OCDSB policies and procedures that reference police involvement

OCDSB Policies and Procedures That Reference Police Involvement				
No.	Name	Number	Section	Summary
1	Police Involvement in Schools	P.043.SCO	Entire policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out objectives of collaboration with police • Requires Board to facilitate access for police • Identifies SRO as main police contact with school
2	Police Involvement in Schools	PR.533.SCO	Entire procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies critical incidents that require principals to contact police. Note: These are wider than those mandated by the Provincial Protocol • Identifies the SRO as a response to issues through prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies. • SRO may be called upon both formally and informally by the school principal when it is felt that police intervention is in the best interests of a student <u>and/or the school</u>. • Establishes investigation rights of police • Establishes information sharing requirements of Principal • Establishes rules for consent, parental involvement and interviews for under 12s, 12 to 17s and adult students. • Discusses arrests and warrants • Requires Principals to report all incidents reported to the police in accordance with PR.528.SCO Critical Incident Review Process
3	Critical Incident Review Process	PR.528.SCO	1.0, 3.1(c), 4.1(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to establish procedures for reporting critical incidents to the police and the Ministry of Education • critical incidents reported to police, regardless of age of child
4	Weapons	PR.525.SCO	4.1(d), 4.2(c), 4.3(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For possession, police <i>may</i> be involved and charges may be laid (PR.525.SCO)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For possession of weapons combined <i>with</i> threatening to use police <i>must</i> be involved. The procedure doesn't say what to do if there is a threat to use the weapon but no possession. • For use of a weapon, police <i>must</i> be involved • Critical Incident Form OCDSB 653 must be completed, filed internally in the OSR and submitted to the Superintendent of Safe Schools and the designated staff person on the CIRC.
5	Investigation, Search and Seizure	PR.534.SCO	4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police may only <i>independently</i> conduct a search if they produce a search warrant or other legal authority • The Principal may search Board property any time without prior notice, provided the Principal has reasonable and probable grounds • If there are reasonable and probable grounds that an offence which <i>requires</i> police involvement has been committed, the principal or designate <i>will</i> contact Ottawa Police Services • Upon reasonable and probable grounds that there has been a serious breach of the school code of conduct, including but not limited to possession of a weapon or an illegal substance, and that a search of a student's property would reveal evidence of such a breach, the principal <i>will at their discretion</i> contact the police or carry out the search with a witness and the student. • Reasonable and probable grounds that the student possesses a weapon, the principal <i>may</i> contact the police • If there are reasonable and probable grounds that a criminal investigation will result from a search, the police should be consulted prior to the search and/or attend the search for evidentiary purposes
6	Safe Schools	PR.521.SCO	4.19, 4.20, 4.22, 4.25, 4.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will offer in-service programs to raise staff awareness of procedures for involvement in police investigation and legal rights of students when being questioned • schools <i>will</i> develop, maintain and strengthen relationships with the police • schools <i>will</i> communicate information about violent acts

				<p>committed or likely to be committed, whether on or off Board property, to the School Resource Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if staff believe student or visitor poses immediate danger, they <i>must</i> obtain police assistance immediately defines violent and critical incident and <i>requires</i> all critical incidents to be reported to the police and <i>requires</i> all to be recorded using the Critical Incident Report Form OCDSB 654
7	Student Suspension and Expulsion	P.026.SCO	3.38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all critical incidents, regardless of age of child, must be reported to police
8	Alleged Harassment/Abuse of a Student by a Student)	PR.544.SCO	4.3, 4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the behaviour is a critical incident, must follow procedures in PR.528.SCO for reporting to police Principal has duty to inform victims of victim support services offered by police
9	Guidelines for Dealing with Reports of Strangers Approaching Students	P.042.SCO	2.1(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> requires Board to maintain close working relationship with police
10	Guidelines for Dealing with Reports of Strangers Approaching Students	PR.532.SCO	4.1(b), 4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> requires Principal to immediately notify police
11	Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect - Student Under 16 Years of Age	P.090.SCO	2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognizes protocol with police and CAS that covers responses to child abuse
12	Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect - Child Under 16 Years of Age	PR.605.SCO	4.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> police may accompany child protection worker to apprehend child in need of protection and must have court order or warrant authorizing it

13	Alleged Suspected Violence within a Student's Family	P.091.SCO	3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director may issue procedures that support students, families and, where involved, the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa, police and shelter in serving the child;
14	Alleged Suspected Violence Within a Student's Family	PR.606.SCO	4.1(h)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event a student discloses or suspicion exists of incidents of family violence, staff <i>will</i> in case of an urgent situation when school supports are not available, contact the School Resource Officer (SRO) or supervising Youth Division sergeant at Ottawa Police Service
15	Student Substance Abuse	PR.523.SCO	4.1, 4.4(a) and (d), 4.6(c), 4.7(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals <i>will</i> ensure that all students receive alcohol, cannabis, and drug education and are <i>encouraged</i> to seek assistance from police deliver confiscated alcohol, drugs, cannabis or other prohibited substance to police for identification principal <i>will</i> consult with the police when they have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a student is in possession of alcohol, drugs, cannabis or other prohibited substance principal <i>will</i> seek advice and assistance from police when they have reasonable and probable grounds to believe a student is giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor trafficking in controlled or prohibited substances, Principal <i>will</i> contact the police
16	Access to School/Board Premises	PR.524.SCO	3.6, 3.8, 3.9(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> authorized person may call police to lay charge if trespasser causes property damage or will not leave call police to make arrest neighbours should be encouraged to call police if they have concern about school security after hours
17	Custody and Access to Students by Parents/Guardians	PR.531.SCO	4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals <i>should</i> take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized access to a student by his/her parents, including, where necessary, contacting the police for assistance and intervention.

18	School Dances (secondary)	PR.560.SCO	4.1(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> school dances <i>must</i> include two police (ideally SROs)
19	Bomb Threats	PR.604.SCO	Entire policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> call 911 immediately
20	Crisis Prevention, Intervention and Postvention	PR.607.SCO	4.13, 4.16, 4.17, Appendix B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In immediate risk situations (e.g., life threatening emergency or crime in progress) requiring an immediate police response, the principal or designate <i>will</i>: a) activate the school lockdown/secure school plan to ensure safety for all; and b) call 911 and the OCDSB emergency line (613-596-8765) If behaviours appear high risk, a police incident report <i>will</i> be initiated, as outlined in the Protocols to Accompany Safe Schools Policies in the City of Ottawa. The principal <i>will</i> proceed to a Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) with school and LSS staff and invite the SRO/designate, as per the Community based Violence/Threat Assessment Protocol. Urgent Care for Mental Health Protocol at Appendix B directs If serious threat-making behaviour is involved, consult with SRO and your school Social Worker or Psychologist (see VTRA protocol)
21	Confidential Communication Between Students and Staff	PR.608.SCO	4.3(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will generally keep communication from a student confidential <i>except</i> at the specific request of a third party, for example, the parent(s) and/or police, in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
22	Bullying Prevention and Intervention	PR.659.SCO	4.4(j)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies school resource officer as an intervention strategy to address bullying
23	Alleged Employee Misconduct Towards a Student	P.103.HR	1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborative working relationship with police and CAS to assist with employee misconduct in their jurisdiction

24	Alleged Employee Misconduct Towards a Student	PR.542.HR	4.1(a)(iv)l, 4.4(a),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when an allegation is received the Principal <i>will</i> advise the employee whether its reportable to the police • superintendent may cooperate with the police with some investigations
25	Alleged Harassment of a Student	PR.525.HR	4.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if principal believes it is a critical incident, the principal will follow procedures for reporting critical incidents and contacting police
26	Student Safety Patrol	P.084.SCO	3.3, 4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultation with SRO developing program
27	Student Safety Patrol	PR.612.SCO	1.0, 4.2,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based safety patrol program (crossing guards), by students, in partnership with the OPS. When developing the program the Principal is to consult with the SRO, the Ottawa Police Service and School Crossing Patrols for the school area. SRO gives advice. SROs provide annual training to the school patrollers. • SRO advised on appropriateness and location of school patrols • SRO participates in annual reviews of safety and appropriateness of continuing the program given the age of the students involved, the number of students involved and any other concerns that may arise (P.084.SCO - Student Safety Patrols)

Appendix 3 - Summary of group discussions offered

Group Discussions			
Description	Stakeholder Group	Date	Participants
Students			
African and Afro-Caribbean descent and Black	Students	March 10, 2021	26
Gloucester and Ridgemont*	Students	March 25, 2021	12
2SLGBTQ+	Students	March 29, 2021	10
General* (not identity-based)	Students	April 7, 2021	6
African and Afro-Caribbean descent and Black*	Students	April 8, 2021	3
Indigenous	Students	May 6, 2021	1
Racialized	Students	Cancelled	No registrants
		TOTAL	58
Parents, Guardians, Caregivers and Community Members			
Somali-speaking (interpretation provided)	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	March 23, 2021	36
Arabic-speaking (interpretation provided)	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	March 25, 2021	8
General (not identity based registration)*	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	March 25, 2021	30
Gloucester and Ridgemont*	Parents/Guardians	March 31, 2021	15
2SLGBTQ+	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	April 6, 2021	11
Disability	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	April 6, 2021	13
African and Afro-Caribbean descent and Black*	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	April 8, 2021	18

General* (not identity-based)	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	April 9, 2021	43
Indigenous	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	May 10, 2021	15
		TOTAL	189
Employees			
Principals and Vice Principals	Employees	5 sessions March 15, 2021 March 15, 2021 March 16, 2021 March 18, 2021 March 18, 2021	82
Muslim	Employees	April 19, 2021	16
African descent/Black	Employees	April 20, 2021	22
2SLGBTQ+	Employees	April 20, 2021	13
Disability	Employees	April 21, 2021	6
Indigenous	Employees	April 22, 2021	3
Racialized	Employees	April 27, 2021	8
General	Employees	April 26, 2021 April 29, 2021	27
		TOTAL	177

*sessions facilitated by Dennergy Resources Inc.

Appendix 4 - Summary of key informant interviews

Key Informant Interviews by Stakeholder Group	
Stakeholder Group	Number of Kils
Students and Former Students	6
Parents and Community Members	5
Administrators	11
Employees and Former Employees	9
OPS	1
TOTAL	32
Key Informant Interviews by Identity Group*	
Indigenous	7
Black	7
Arabic Speaking	2
Disability	2
2SLGBTQ+	2
Not disclosed	13
GHS and RHS Catchment Area	16

*because of intersections of identity this does not total 32

Appendix 5 - Summary of written submissions

Written Submissions by Stakeholder Group	
Stakeholder Group	Number
Administrators	4
Employees and Former Employees	5
Parents	7
Community Members	8
Students and Former Students	1
TOTAL	25
Written Submissions by Identity Group*	
Indigenous	2
Black	2
Arabic Speaking	1
Racialized	2
Disability	0
2SLGBTQ+	3
GHS and RHS catchment area	3
Not disclosed	15

*because of intersections of identity this does not total 25

Appendix 6 - Perspectives shared by Indigenous communities

These discussions about education and police involvement are taking place on unceded and unsurrendered Algonquin territory. Therefore, it is also important to centre the voices of the Algonquin people in their territory. Within this Algonquin territory, there are many of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people who call this territory home. We need to listen to their voices too.

Discussions with Indigenous students, parents and guardians, Elders, community members, and employees made it clear that consideration of the impacts of police involvement in schools on Indigenous peoples cannot be fully understood without taking into account the genocide against Indigenous Peoples that was brought about by colonialism, the residential school system and the human rights and Indigenous rights' abuses committed against missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ people. It is within this context that police involvement in schools must be considered.

Small group discussions and one-on-one interviews were held with Indigenous students, parents and guardians, Elders, community members and employees. Two written submissions were received. Minutes from the indigenous Education Advisory Council meeting were reviewed where they documented discussions about police involvement in schools. Feedback from people who identified as indigenous in the anonymous public survey was also considered.

A range of opinions were expressed in the group discussions. What came through clearly was that Indigenous Peoples are not a monolith and that the experiences and perspectives of everyone, and in particular students, should be centred when charting the way forward.

"It's important for the school board to recognize that Indigenous Peoples are not a monolith ... This always happens for Indigenous Peoples - one person agrees with the institution so you say it's ok even though you've already talked to hundreds of others who say differently." Indigenous Community Member

Themes emerged around the intergenerational trauma of residential schools and colonialism still impacting today on how Indigenous people feel when they interact with police and the harm it can trigger. Other concerns were raised about the ongoing over-policing and surveillance of Indigenous Peoples by the police. It was recalled that participation in peaceful protests for Indigenous rights is regularly met with a heavily-armed police presence including snipers pointing guns at unarmed participants, including youth.

"It's not the officer that's the issue. It's the colonial history of being policed that is the problem. The fact that they are wearing a uniform is not a signal of trust and safety. The stigma against police officers is from our intergenerational trauma of being over policed. Fear and hesitance in approaching a police officer is very much warranted because of the history that has been put upon us as a People." Indigenous Parent

"As an Indigenous parent who has a long standing mistrust of the police and of being surveilled, I have tried not to pass it on to my child but intergenerational stuff happens and it never leaves my daughter. So when she goes to Gloucester that is what she feels and that is an experience that others who have never had a history of trauma will never understand." Indigenous Parent

"As an Indigenous person you are often watched - everything you do is watched."
Indigenous Community Member

Participants in discussions recounted personal experiences within their own families and circles that led to a profound distrust and fear of police. Stories of parents being taken away; homes being raided and searched; children being taken into care; children's dysregulated behaviour being responded to by a police officer to the detriment of the child's mental health; parents going missing and police refusing to search for them; wellness calls being answered with a family member being tasered; being arrested. Participants spoke of "fear", of "raised blood pressure" when seeing a police officer, of "shaking" after learning their child had an encounter with the police. Underlying all of these stories of pain were the impacts of intergenerational trauma and blood memory.

"And there is a fear of cops. There is definitely a fear. For some non-Indigenous folks they might feel protected when they see a cop, but I've never seen an Indigenous person say that and that's why youth aren't coming out to speak out about this. I also feel scared to talk about it. I've been arrested and tackled by a cop when I was 18 years old. Someone called the cops because I was being 'rowdy' and the cops were looking for me. When I finally decided to go back and deal with it the cops were there and I was literally just walking - not screaming, not hurting anyone - and they threw me in the back of a cop car. I was crying."
Indigenous Community Member

Links were consistently made by participants between racism and the higher level of police presence at schools with larger Indigenous and racialized populations. It was noted that increased police presence does not have a preventative effect but in fact leads to the criminalization of behaviour by Indigenous students. It was also noted that the practice of using police to respond to incidents at school is not aligned with Indigenous Peoples customs, traditions and beliefs. One administrator recalled a time that an Indigenous student was triggered when an SRO walked into an Indigenous space at school without being invited and highlighted their own error in not recognizing the impact that the police officer's presence there might have on an Indigenous student.

"There were experiences in my student life where police officers have physically pulled me out of my classroom. This strained relationships with my teachers and peers." Indigenous Student

"We cannot solve all cases of bullying but we can if the bully is the SRO; we can if it's a person we are bringing into the building to promote safety but in reality it is promoting racial bias and promoting segregation which I have seen first hand."
Indigenous Student

"Racism is evident in the enforcement of the law. When the police are brought into a school to deal with a student's behaviour, the perception of the situation in the eyes of the school community is tainted thereby changing the nature of the event into a criminalized occurrence." Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) Participant

"If there are societal teachings to give to kids it shouldn't be a police officer giving them because they are a representative of a punitive society. Indigenous peoples

didn't have cops, we have Elders and Grandparents to do the teaching."
Algonquin Parent and Community Member

"We need to flip the conversation on its head. We need to talk about how we can decolonize the discussion around education ... Police are not what I want to see involved in school. Instead, we should ask the police service board and the school board to tell us what has been the positive benefit of police involvement and look at it in the context of all students; don't ask us to tell you what has been the bad."

The police presence in school, I suspect, did not come from the Indigenous community. I suspect it did not originate because Indigenous people asked for it... If police in schools were simply being treated as an introduction to services that you might need to use, that might be ok but that's not what we're talking about. We're talking about a level of authority that has been shown to lead to negative outcomes for racialized students and families." Indigenous Community Member

"Look at the story of Chantal Moore. People say it was just happening in New Brunswick, but it happens all over. Even here in Ottawa there are at least 5 Indigenous peoples who have been murdered. When we see the faces of people who have been murdered by the police, we can see ourselves in them. It's scary. It could have been me." Indigenous Community Member

Some expressed an openness to the idea of building positive relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the police and felt that school was an appropriate place to do this, but others felt strongly that school was not the place for those relationships to be cultivated.

"... The officers who go to schools truly are the 'good cops'. They are professional, they are honourable and are not racist or dangerous to the emotional health of our young people. Let them (the officers) prove it to our students. Not all cops are bad! ..."

I believe that if we deny our young people (students) an opportunity to speak to and get to know a police officer, we make a grave mistake. If a student is in such fear of the police, then I recommend counselling for him/her. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to sit in a circle with a student who is terrified of the police to hopefully calm them and bring peace to their mind. Police in the community is a fact that will never change. Let's make the best of it and seize the opportunity before us. Change for the good is more possible than not by having honourable police officers in our schools." Algonquin Elder

Other Algonquin community members also noted the lack of trust between Indigenous communities and the police but felt strongly that school was not the place to repair that relationship, noting the harm that exposure to police officers can create.

"What are we telling our children when we are trying to make them create a relationship with the police -- that the onus is on the child? It shouldn't be, it should be on the system..."

... it feels like a trick to tell Indigenous kids to have a great relationship with a cop -- until they pull you over, or they think you did something wrong, or your brother gets beat up, or you are taken on a starlight tour ...

... it's systemic. You're expecting them to build a relationship with the police but you are asking them to play nice with the abuser. It doesn't matter that it's a different guy. It matters that it's the uniform." Algonquin Parent and Community Member

Positive interactions with police at school were reported by some Indigenous survey respondents. When they were asked to describe what made the interaction positive, the descriptions focused on the demeanor of the police officer - smiling, being friendly and polite, being professional and supporting. Some participants reinforced the idea that exposure to positive interactions with the police will lead to positive relationships between students and the police.

"I think we have to move past the idea that police are bad. While I know there is traditional mistrust for many - this needs to be overcome through understanding. Understanding comes through sharing of ideas and respectful good interactions." Indigenous Participant

"People who are feeling unsafe around police officers have their own issues, let's not make it everyone else's to deal with, it's ridiculous! Having police officers available in school allows children to feel more safe around officers, having a better understanding of their role, will feel more comfortable approaching them when in danger and make the schools a safer place." Indigenous Participant

Negative interactions were also reported by respondents. These respondents recalled interactions where police officers were *"overly suspicious, demeaning and intimidating"* and that involved *"over-policing"*. One person reported confinement and unnecessary use of force, another recalled a police officer opening the door to their car at drop off without asking permission, and another recalled not being given sufficient options by the police when experiencing abuse at home. Other experiences shared included:

"They harass us, people have been surprised with a call for you to go to the office with zero warning or knowledge and forced to be interrogated by them, they instantly treat you like a criminal, threaten and accuse you of things you've heard absolutely nothing about." Indigenous Survey Participant

"Our experience with the police in school altered my daughter's life profoundly - she and I no longer have any faith police exist to protect people - the complete lack of racial understanding and heteronormative proud swagger behavior is appalling." Indigenous Survey Participant

"Police presence does not create safety in our communities or within schools. Many 'roles' you describe above could be managed by other helping professionals. Police are and should only be used in an emergency situation. We also know that each community/area has youth officers already assigned. Children and youth of all races, cultures, ethnicities and beliefs need to feel safe at school and that includes from the police." Indigenous Survey Participant

“Indigenous people have been and are still abused, assaulted and killed by police. For the school to wield the power of calling in the police, is too much.” Indigenous Survey Participant

The notion of police involvement in school is premised on the assumption that involvement of police in schools contributes to safety at school and that increased exposure to police increases positive relationships between students and police. However, when asked about these assumptions 43% of Indigenous respondents disagreed that having police in schools made schools a safer place, with 28% sharing that they felt uncomfortable to attend school because of the police officer’s presence.

Looking at assumptions around relationship building 49% of Indigenous respondents did not agree with the idea of having police in schools to build relationships with students and families. They either disagreed, weren’t sure, felt like it should only happen as a last resort or felt like that role was better handled by non-police.

The strategy of having police in schools to make students more comfortable with police was also called into question with 41% of Indigenous students disagreeing that police presence at school made them more comfortable with police and an additional 12% not sure. In fact, 29% of the respondents reported being intimidated by the police presence at school and 31% reported feeling like they were being watched or targeted.

One student noted that they would like to have a positive relationship with a police officer, but they would never dare speak to them at school for fear of being labeled as a “narc” by other kids. Another spoke of the desire to learn to feel more comfortable around police officers so that they could avoid acting “weird” [out of fear] in the future when they get pulled over. This observation of self-preservation was telling as it highlighted the assumption that as an Indigenous person they would in fact, be profiled and pulled over and the knowledge that if they acted nervous it could result in negative consequences.

While perspectives and experiences varied, a large proportion of Indigenous people who participated in the review spoke out against police presence in schools citing the harm and trauma that it causes to Indigenous students and families, highlighting that its punitive nature is contrary to Indigenous approaches to conflict and healing and putting the onus on the police themselves to work to rebuild trust and relationships, outside of the school setting. There was a certain level of openness from some participants to having police invited into schools to share information about the services they provide, but only if it was linked to a series of presentations by other service providers as well and if there was a clear commitment from the school to share information with families about the presentations so that parents and guardians could be brought into the process. Overall the preference was for non-police to deliver many of the services that police are currently called upon to deliver in schools.

The participants either disagreed, weren’t sure, felt like someone else should provide it or that police should only be used as a last resort for the following activities:

Table 13: Impact of police involvement based on perceptions of Indigenous survey respondents

Impact	Agreed or Disagreed	Unsure
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Makes me feel like school is a safer place	43% disagreed	9%
Make me feel watched or target	31% agreed	12%
Make me feel less worried about problems like bullying, drugs, weapons, vandalism, etc.	41% disagreed	14%
Makes me more feel comfortable with police	41% disagreed	12%
Makes me feel uncomfortable to attend school	28% agreed	14%
Makes me feel safer in the neighbourhood	38% disagreed	10%
Makes me feel intimidated by the police presence in school	29% agreed	9%
Makes me feel like my school has a bad reputation because the police are there	30%	21%

Table 14: Percentage of Indigenous respondents who *do not agree*⁹⁷ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	Disagree	Only as a last resort	Prefer this be handled by non-police
Relationship building with students and families	25%	3%	19%
Share information about criminal justice process	6.5%	1.6%	16%
Presentations on the law and safety	8%	0%	16%
Lockdown drills	14.5%	1.6%	27%
Respond to fighting	26%	23%	18%
Respond to trespass	18%	24%	13%
Respond to bullying	26%	21%	19%
Respond to out of control behaviour	13%	16%	21%
Support victims of sexual assault	8%	5%	26%
Support victims of crime	10%	5%	26%

⁹⁷ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

Appendix 7 - Perspectives shared by communities of African, Black and African-Caribbean Descent

Small group discussions were held with Black students, families, community members and employees to gain insight into perspectives on police involvement in schools. Key informant interviews were also held. Feedback from the survey was also used to inform this summary.

Concerns and experiences with anti-Black racism within both the education and policing, and how it negatively impacts on Black students' achievement permeated the discussion.

Students and other participants in the discussion clearly made the link between having a higher police presence in the school and the school having a higher racialized population of students. They spoke about schools with similar behaviour but police only being deployed to the school with the racialized population, not the one with a predominantly white population, even though the problems are the same.

"There should be no police officers in any school no matter high school or any school or how high crime is... If you say it's because of schools with high crime rates and drugs, we can all admit that these schools are predominantly schools with people of colour and the whole thing of Black people being over represented in crimes starts to rise, because of the presence of police officers there. We are minors. There is no need for police officers to be there trying to prevent crime from happening." Black Student

"We can all agree that the main reason that police should not be in schools is because they are going to target students of colour no matter what. Even if that specific SRO is nice, the whole institution of police officers and what they stand by is racism and it's built on white supremacy and it needs to be eradicated. We can't have police officers in schools anymore because they are a threat to Black students and students of colours. No matter what ... because they overlook white students ..." Black Student

"There are optics of having a police car sitting in front of a school...There is a police car there every day! The community projects additional biases on the racialized population of that school [Gloucester] and the tie is the police officer. These are negative connotations." Black Employee

When discussing safety, some students commented that the presence of police at their school made them feel safe. Other students were neutral. Other students were clearly opposed, indicating that it made them uncomfortable and scared. Participants discounted the narrative that placing police in schools contributed to the prevention of crime and instead linked it to experiences of criminalization of Black people.

"There is always a police officer at the school. I think it's a good idea to have police officers because you know that you're going to be safe in a way. But it's important to have educated police officers who know how to work with students." Black Student

"I wonder who is feeling more safe with the police? Whose safety is it for? Cause I know I don't personally feel more safe, I feel uncomfortable around the police,

even when they're not in my school that often. I feel uncomfortable, especially when they are armed. That just feels dangerous, not safe." Black Student

Concerns were raised about the disproportionate discipline experienced by Black children in the school system compared to their white peers, and specific incidents of racial profiling were shared that occurred both within and outside of the school environment. Employees shared stories of young Black students, including students with significant trauma histories, being exposed to the SRO for relatively benign behaviour. They shared examples of the SROs being regularly called in to address the behaviour of Black children in primary school. They shared examples of similar behaviours between Black and white students, but the administrator only involved the SRO to address the behaviour of the Black student.

"I tried my best to stay out of situations like these because I don't want to be another statistic or another stereotype. For my 4 years I tried my best to stay out of trouble because I knows it's not just getting a warning - it would be heavy consequences not just for him but for people in my community so I tried my best to stay out of trouble," Black Former Student

"From a primary perspective I've seen the SRO used to play the role of disciplinarian for a child who did something wrong. There were two 6 year old children and both used classroom tools to try to hurt other students. One was white and one was Black. The only child who the principal chose to have the officer speak to was the young Somali boy. The principal had no right to subject a 6 year old child to a police officer. The only child who saw the officer was the Black child even though they both did the same thing." Black Employee

"I don't want them in schools. How many times do staff have to be made to feel uncomfortable until we don't want them there? How many times do they need to profile? I have a little boy who is a Black child. We all have biases but I would be afraid for him, having an SRO at school, because I don't know how he is going to be judged. As a mother, community member and employee, I don't want them there." Black Employee

Students, parents, community members and employees shared personal experiences of witnessing a young Black student being tackled to the floor for riding his own bicycle, when the police officer at school assumed he was stealing it; of being racially profiled by police officers on their way to school and at places around school. Examples were shared of the threat of involving the police by educators being used to scare Black children. One student shared his experience of having a teacher wrongly assume he had been involved in a fight and then threatening him with police involvement.

"They are weaponizing the police. Black men fear that at any time someone can call the police as a weapon. The "karen's" calling the cops because they see or assume something suspicious - walking while Black or jogging while Black - it's a genuine fear because we see it all the time. Just doing nothing and you can get the cops called on you. Sometimes nothing happens but sometimes you get arrested, sometimes you get traumatized. It's not something that should be taken lightly." Former Black Student

The concept of relationship building was referenced by some. Employees noted that over the years the SRO program had moved away from its proactive, relationship building roots, towards

a more reactive role within schools. It was observed that SROs main role is to make the job of administrators easier and that their advice function to administrators could be fulfilled over the phone, rather than in person at schools. One employee commented that during their entire teaching career at OCDSB they had never seen the proactive, relationship building side of the SRO in action. Some students who came forward for the consultations, shared positive views of the SRO based on friendly interactions they had at school, but this was not the reality for all students. Other students described staying away from the police officers and noted the wide disconnect between officers and the students.

“Gloucester seems like this crazy kind of school but we’re really not like that. There’s not many problems that arise. Most of the time the officer is just there to connect with us and talk to us. Honestly my old SRO was really really nice and I didn’t have a problem with him at all... at first, obviously seeing him was like “whoa”, but after I had a conversation with him I was able to see he was just trying to make conversation.” Black Student

“There shouldn’t be police in schools. There shouldn’t be assigned officers that have no connection to the school at all. They call them School Resource Officers but there is almost no connection between the officers and the students. I was well known in the school but I don’t know anyone in the school who interacted with the officers or even knew their names. There is such a disconnect between the police and the students. It’s more like fear mongering and knowing that you have to keep in line at times. Relationship building does not exist. There is no relationship between students and police. There might be between teachers but not with students. So then, what is the point? The teachers aren’t the ones seen as criminals.” Former Black Student

Students with low police presence commented on rarely seeing the police officers unless they were responding to incidents like, for example, a bomb threat. Others, students even in schools where there was a high police presence, noted that not many incidents happened that required a police response. One student shared their experience of attending an education session where an SRO reportedly denied the existence of racism in Canada.

The police uniform, and in particular the fact that SROs are armed when they are at school made students uncomfortable and scared. The combination of having an armed police officer at school and the link that students made to the perceived targeting of Black people by law enforcement and biased discipline in education caused worry.

“Personally with a police officer in my school in terms of them being armed and having weapons it makes a lot of people uncomfortable, particularly those who are targeted by police but as I grow up and learn more about racism I do understand that ... especially after the BLM movement I’ve become more and more conscious around police and that I might not be looking at them the same way that they are looking at me ... they’re looking at me different from my friends but they ARE looking at me different from my friends because of the colour of my skin ... and that’s something to always think about. Even if you don’t feel like you are being targeted, you are, for the most part.”

Links were made between insufficient mental health support in schools and student behaviour. Students, families and employees commented on the need to increase mental health support

available to students to help address root causes of behaviour. This was preferred over a policing presence.

“These police officers are responding to issues of students acting out, but we are never addressing the issues of why students are acting out and how we can help them rather than punishing them. It just makes the situation get worse and snowballs.” Black Student

“When I was talking about mental health before, it’s a super serious thing. Some people only have just a home and school environment. That’s it. And if you’re not getting support at home, the only place to get it is at school. Having mental health support at school would be extremely useful.” Black Student

Recommendations came forward about how to adapt the current presence of police in schools. It was clear that if police were going to be present in schools that they needed to be officers with specialized training on interacting with children and youth from different backgrounds, understanding racism and its impacts on racialized communities and understanding mental health concerns. It was also clearly stated that police officers, when they are in school, should not be in uniform and should not be armed with a gun.

“If it’s a school, police officers shouldn’t be armed. Students don’t have guns and police do not need guns or tasers.” Black Student

While perceptions and experiences varied across the table, the significant experiences with anti-Black racism and the fear and concern identified by some Black students and community members signal that significant change to OCDSB practices of involving police in school is needed. Survey results confirm this perspective with a significant proportion of Black survey respondents indicating concerns about the impact of police presence in their schools including 48% who said it made them uncomfortable to attend school. There was also a substantial call for non-police responses to many behaviours.

Table 15: Impact of police involvement based on perceptions of Black survey respondents

Impact	Agreed or Disagreed	Unsure
Makes school a safer place	62% disagreed	11%
Make me feel watched or target	56% agreed	11%
Make me feel less worried about problems like bullying, drugs, weapons, vandalism, etc.	57% disagreed	8%
Makes me more comfortable with police,	63% disagreed	6%
Makes me uncomfortable to attend school	48% agreed	9%
Makes me feel safer in the neighbourhood	55% disagreed	9%
Makes me feel intimidated	54% agreed	14%

Makes me feel like their school has a bad reputation	52% agreed	13%
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Table 16: Percentage of Black respondents who *do not agree*⁹⁸ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	Disagree	Only as a last resort	Prefer this be handled by non-police
Relationship building with students and families	38%	6%	26%
Share information about criminal justice process	15%	7%	25%
Presentations on the law and safety	18%	4%	16%
Lockdown drills	22%	5%	19%
Respond to fighting	41%	17%	17%
Respond to trespass	31%	16%	19%
Respond to bullying	37%	12%	24%
Respond to out of control behaviour	27%	11%	24%
Support victims of sexual assault	18%	8%	22%
Support victims of crime	19%	9%	21%

⁹⁸ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

Appendix 8 - Perspectives shared by the Somali Community

A discussion group was held in Somali language to better understand perspectives within the Somali community on police involvement in school. Perspectives of people who identified themselves as a Somali community member in other discussions are also included. The survey did not collect information about ethnicity so survey information was not used to inform this summary. Significant concerns about racism in both the education and policing system were raised, as were concerns about the over policing of Somali children resulting in their criminalization. Participants expressed that seeing police officers in schools caused their children to feel “terrified” “fear” “trauma” “unsafe”.

There was unanimous consensus that police presence in schools was detrimental to the feelings of safety for the Somali community and that police should only be brought into schools to respond to very serious issues. Participants expressed that in the Somali culture the relationship between parents and school is a partnership and built on trust. School should feel like a home. Having a police officer in the education space and responding to problems breaches that trust and destroys the feeling of peace that should come from being in a home environment. Schools should involve Somali parents more in their children's education and reach out to them in partnership - once police are involved Somali parents will step back. There was an acknowledgement of the need for better relationships between the Ottawa Police Service and the Somali community however it was clearly stated that police presence at school and over policing of neighbourhoods with large Somali populations was not the way to achieve this aim. The following themes emerged from the discussion:

The presence of police officers in schools negatively impacts the relationship between parents, children and the school.

“The police have no place in the home or at school. There is no need to have them in the school ... School is a place of education where kids go and learn but when police are there it changes the message.” Somali Participant

“The police are a very hurtful topic for us. We don't need extra. Police should be there when it's bad. School should be a place of learning, Books, blackboards. Not the police.” Somali Parent

“This is the first time I have ever come to a public forum. Our kids are terrified after watching what happened to George Floyd. It terrified the kids. They saw it on TV and they all watched how he died. Basically that is what they see when they see police.” Somali Parent

The presence of police officers at schools sends the message that the school is not safe.

“When there are police in the school what the parent thinks is that everyone is telling them that the school is not safe. That is the message that you are sending out. Schools are not safe... People's understanding of being in Canada is that it's one of the safest countries in the world but the message you are sending is that it's not enough” Somali Participant

Racism in the education system and racism in the police force results in worse outcomes for Somali children.

"I graduated two years ago... SROs only roamed around boy students of colour. We discussed it with the administration because we felt like we were being targeted in our own community. BIPOC feel like they are being labelled as criminals in their very own schools and this shouldn't be happening. We live in a world where people of colour are targeted by law enforcement a lot more than white folks and that's just the reality of the world that we live in today. To bring more police into schools maintains that mindset - they follow you around because of your skin colour and because you're a black boy. It's demoralizing at a certain point when you walk out of your class and the same thing happens on the street." Somali former student

Somali children are over-policed.

"There are concerns regarding certain neighbourhoods. They are considered as tougher neighborhoods. Police presence in those neighbourhoods is very high and students who live there see police on every corner. They develop fear. Being at school should feel like home ... for learning ... peace, but they are terrified. Everywhere they go makes them feel terrified." Somali Participant

"I have seen kids as young as 6 and 7 interacting with police and teachers using police as a scare tactic is perpetuating this fear and trauma. We are doing this to people who are vulnerable and marginalized. We've seen officers who have relationships with kids in schools come into the community and then have kids punished in schools - they share information with teachers and schools and this creates harm." Somali Parent

Overexposure of Somali children to the police in the education system, leads to criminalization of Somali children.

"There was a disagreement between a teacher and a child who was new to the country. The child was arrested and sent to jail. This is not the right result. The impact on the school culture was terrible. It affected him psychologically and he dropped out of school. He went down a bad path and ended up in jail." Somali Participant

"Everytime you go to the court and someone is charged or accused of something you read in the paper 'He was known to police'. Parents believe that schools are providing this information to the police and this label ends up labelling them as gang affiliated and known to police and stigmatizes them as trouble kids." Somali Participant

"There is over-policing. Kids are new; don't speak the language; don't understand the culture and before you know it the kid does something both in the neighbourhood and school. We all know that certain neighbourhoods are over-policed and before you know if the child is known to the police." Somali Participant

"I grew up in Ottawa and have family and younger relatives currently in the OCDSB. For some of my relatives, I am often called upon to accompany the parents to school when there is an issue involving one of the children. On a few occasions, the school procured the help of a Somali police officer ahead of our

arrival. I am assuming the thinking being that somehow the parent would have a language barrier or could better connect with the parent. I found this really troubling. In essence, the school was making assumptions about the capabilities of the parent based on stereotypes. Relying on police officers to be interpreters or form a connection with the parent equates to obfuscating responsibility on the part of the OCDSB. This fosters a sense of criminality in the Children and normalizes interaction with police officers. Racialized persons are already under intense pressure to conform to discriminatory stereotypes, the last thing they need is for the OCDSB to reinforce this.” Family Member

The presence of police officers causes Somali children to feel unsafe.

“Who is it emotionally reassuring for in the school? It’s not for this community. We need to reimagine what safety looks like. For our communities it doesn’t protect our children; it doesn’t make us feel safe. We don’t need police officers to teach us about education and safety because they are the main reason we feel unsafe. Police need to repair the harm outside of the school, not inside the school. If it’s about trying to promote positive messages in schools you are asking these children to accept a distorted view of what police officers are like which is different to what they experience in the community. He’s [my son] been harassed and criminalized in the school even though he has no criminal record.” Somali Parent

“We keep expressing this. We’ve been asking for this for many years. We do not want police in schools! You send the message that our voices don’t matter and our children need to be surveilled. It’s such a dehumanizing process to share with our kids why people think they need to be surveilled.” Somali Parent

“When we come here and go to school the children come from war torn countries where war is still raging. The perception of police is not good. They [police] are in the neighbourhood and they are in the school and that creates anxiety and a lot of feeling for those students and they don’t feel safe in the schools or the neighbourhood because of the police ... For ones who have just arrived the fear level is much higher and having police in school will make them hate their school environment.” Somali Participant

Appendix 9 - Perspectives shared by community of people with disabilities

Small group discussions were held with parents, community members and employees to discuss the impact of policing in schools on children with disabilities. Where discussions in other groups also raised perspectives on the impact of police involvement on students with disabilities, they are also included here. Two key informant interviews focusing on this perspective also took place.

Themes that emerged from discussions included the intersection between disability and Indigeneity, race, and 2SLGBTQ+ identity and how these intersections further compound negative impacts experienced by people with disabilities as a result of police involvement in schools. An employee who works with children with disabilities noted the intersection between disability and race in the classrooms where they worked. The failure to recognize disabilities for people who are newcomers, but to instead blame behaviour on their status as immigrants was also recognized.

“There are things that Indigenous people know that could have helped these kids. Just the smell of the smudge, it makes you feel better. There are things that could be helpful to these kids that other people just don’t know. What if that could help a child calm down and not have to call the police? You just don’t know if you haven’t tried.” Indigenous Family Member

“The majority of our experiences being racialized students is that police presence around and inside schools has caused nothing but anxiety or stress. We have been targeted... It’s been hostile and stressful, not only for me going to school, but the worry that comes from me thinking about my family members who are still in school and in particular my brother. I really do fear for their lives. And it affects disabled students and especially disabled students who are racialized and disabled students who are queer.” Former Student with a Disability and Racialized

“In my own case, a lot of my issues were attributed to being from an immigrant family [even though I was born in Canada! and not having then-undiagnosed disabilities.” 2SLGBTQ+ Community Member with Disabilities

Another theme that emerged centred around lack of training and lack of resources within schools leading to the involvement of police to respond to outbursts when they happen. Administrators, teachers and many EAs lack the specialized training needed to both understand the behaviour of children with disabilities and to effectively de-escalate. The District’s perceived change in practice to move to a staff “hands off” approach, is identified as being a main driver for increased police contact for children with disabilities.

A former staff member who worked mainly with children with Autism noted:

“Kids with these disabilities can’t self-regulate and that is the problem. Speaking to the parents I would ask about what they do at home. At home parents hug the kid until they calm down. When they are not restrained, they hurt staff, they hurt other kids and they destroy property and there is no other choice but to call the police if you can’t get in touch with parents. We need to look at revisiting policies at the Board around staff contact with children. It’s a grey area open to abuse,

but there needs to be discretion between allowing staff to be hands-on or allowing staff to call police because staff can't be hands-on." Former Employee

"Police aren't trained or equipped to deal with disabled students, Almost all the folks we hear about in the news are people with mental health issues and police aren't equipped to deal with them. Police need to be removed from schools." Former Student

The characterization of stress behaviour as misbehaviour for children with disabilities was highlighted by some participants.

"A victim of bullying, my son had learning differences, impulse control and mental health issues, resulting in physical outbursts. SRO was brought in to explain that if he were an adult, his behavior would be considered assault and he would be arrested. Fear tactics like this only make matters worse when stress behavior is treated as misbehavior. Very poor use of SRO." Parent of Student with Disabilities

Concerns were raised that the use of police to respond to outbursts of behaviour by students with disabilities leads to the criminalization of students with disabilities and contributes to the school to prison pipeline.

*"...how to actually *prevent* dysregulated behaviour is communication! So often people on the outside don't see the *why*, only what's happening in the moment, and criminalize students for being in distress and not getting supports they need... there are so many people with my same diagnoses who end up being singled out for criminal charges and other disciplinary measures because they'd been failed by people who were supposed to provide them with what they need, and are expressing themselves in the only ways they have available"* 2SLGBTQ+ Community Member with Disabilities

"Often kids with Autism see the world in slightly different ways. They have behaviours that involve the police but it's because they don't have the language to communicate what they are feeling." Parent of a Student with Disabilities

"The police force was historically created to remove Indigenous people and enforce policing of Black people. It is intrinsically linked to the way we have dealt with disability over the years. 5 to 10% of the general population has a disability whereas up to 77% of the prison population has a disability. It is so intrinsically linked to how we respond, to how we treat people who don't fit the norm. If we look at it like we are going to police them and remove them when they deviate, then it is not going to create a good environment and good camaraderie and have them feel safe in school." Former Student with Disabilities

"Using the police brings the whole criminalization lens onto their behaviour when we use them to respond to dysregulated behaviour in the classroom. Other organizations have staff who go hands-on, but sometimes it doesn't even need to go there if you deal with it well." Former Employee

Concerns were also raised that using the police to respond to behaviour of children with disabilities can sometimes trigger an escalation, lead to restraints and handcuffs being used,

and ultimately result in the stigmatization and long term traumatization of the student. One participant cited the example involving a 9 year old child with Autism who was handcuffed by police when they responded to a call about his dysregulated behaviour.⁹⁹

“SROs are often in the hall. In 2015, a 9 year old child was handcuffed in their classroom by a police officer and the OPS said it was necessary because the child had Autism and it was needed.” Former Student with Disabilities

“Police got very physical very fast. Police did not listen to parents at all in terms of suggestions as to how to interact with their child. Police had attitude of power and control and used intimidation tactics instead of de-escalation tactics” Survey Respondent

Several examples of hands-on restraint used by police officers when they were called to respond to dysregulated behaviour of students with disabilities were shared, as were examples of patient de-escalation by both SROs and regular patrol officers.

One parent of a child with disabilities raised concerns about the lack of communication between the school and parents about police involvement. The concern highlighted the larger problem of police presence alone triggering negative feelings in some children and in fact putting their safety at risk. Their child had a significant history of trauma involving the police removing them from their home and was triggered by sight of the police. The parent requested numerous times to be informed in advance if the police would be at the school, but the administration was not willing to accommodate the request. One day, the child inadvertently saw the police officer in the hallway while he was on his way back from the bathroom and ran away.

“The school called me and said that they can’t find my son. I panicked and went to the school and we were looking everywhere. He was on a path hiding and he told me that the police came to the school to get him.” Parent of a Student with Disabilities

Another person shared the long-term trauma that resulted from an incident involving police and their young family member:

“He was in grade 5 and had some pretty severe depression and impulsive ADHD so he would blurt things out. He uttered a threat against a teacher. The teacher didn’t change their behaviour and he did it again. They called the police to respond to the office. It’s what the school needed, but this isn’t what the child needed. Was this the administrator reacting because of policy or because of fear of litigation or to scare him into behaving? When you have someone with mental health struggles, the second person to call shouldn’t be the police. He’ll never forget that – never forget having police called on him because he’s so sensitive – it had a negative impact on him – he thinks he’s a bad kid.” Indigenous Family Member of Student with Disabilities

The institutionalization of the police response to respond to the behaviour of students with disabilities, through the incorporation of a police response into the student’s written safety plan was identified as a significant concern.

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“Police involvement is written into safety plans and have become a necessary step as part of the safety plan - are we failing our students by having things escalate because our overall planning for these students aren’t sufficient. Safety plan institutionalized police response. There don’t seem to be a lot of steps before that.” Employee

Recommendations heard centred around increasing mental health supports and having dedicated mental health professionals to help kids and prevent issues from escalating to the point that police are involved. Someone with experience and qualifications. Someone who can work on mental health relationship building.

“A mental health professional is needed to help kids before the next thing and the next thing and the next thing. Let’s help them before they build up all that scar tissue that makes them harder to help down the road ... Hopefully if they do start helping these children with mental health relationship building the need for calling the police will go away.” Former Employee

“Disabled students don’t need relationships with cops, they need actual resources to thrive.” 2SLGBTQ+ Community Member with Disabilities

The need for more EAs who are properly trained and can invest time in building relationships with kids was also emphasized by participants.

“Every year they [schools] have to go begging for an EA based on their special education needs ... EAs could do so much to alleviate a situation of a kid having a bad day if they had the time and this would help to reduce police involvement.” Employee

Not all perspectives heard were negative. The same parent whose child was triggered on sight of the police and went missing, praised the patience and engagement of a subsequent SRO who, with the parent’s permission, spent time slowly building trust with her child, to the point where the SRO was able to de-escalate the child after they were the impetus for a lockdown at their school.

An employee who previously worked with youth in prison noted the high rate of youth with intellectual challenges in prison and noted the need to help them understand their rights, obligations and the law, while they are in school to help them make better choices and avoid prison. The employee saw the role of the SRO in this area as beneficial, but indicated it did not necessarily need to be a police officer performing that function but it was beneficial to have it be someone external.

A parent came forward to share the positive experience their child had accessing a diversion program and community support through the SRO.

“The SRO was instrumental in getting my child into the diversion program. If we had a police officer come in who didn’t have a relationship with him, there would have been a much different result. The SRO advocated on behalf of my child and got him a lot of other services. He had bullying behaviour and it has been life changing for him. If it had been a patrol officer it wouldn’t have been dealt with in the same manner.” Parent of a Student with Disabilities

Employees also recognized the important role police play in ensuring staff safety when incidents of dysregulated behaviour arise, but other employees are starting to question whether a police response is the best answer.

Recalling an occasion where a patrol officer was called to respond to the dysregulated behaviour of a 12 year old racialized boy in special program class, the Administrator reflected on the long term stigma it caused to the child and noted that it has caused her to question whether police are the right response:

“Although the students were often dysregulated they were still young children. One particular day a student had a very bad day, was dysregulated and was being quite destructive - none of his trusted teachers or admin were able to calm him. The police were called, unfortunately our regular SRO was not available. This particular student was 12, a bigger student and of colour. The police officer took the child out of the school, quite forcefully with hands behind his back, pushing him through the halls and the door.

Now as a school we were able to keep the majority of the students away from windows, but of course they knew what was happening. Staff also knew what was happening. The stigma that this had on the child was a big one - teachers and students were wary of him and stayed away.

Teachers also commented on the use of force the police officer used, some thought it was ok to give him a shove as the student was not listening, most were disgusted that this happened. I know that the student was acting in an unsafe way, but I have often reflected on whether the police were the right people to deal with this child. It also raises the question about who we should be using if our SRO is not available - relationships are so very important when dealing with students.” Administrator

Results from the survey of students, parents and community members who identified themselves as having disabilities signaled significant reservations about whether police presence improves safety and almost 40% said they felt watched or targeted or intimidated. There was also substantial opposition to the idea of police engagement in non-mandatory areas as described in the tables below.

Table 17: Impact of police involvement based on perceptions of survey respondents with Disabilities

Impact	Agreed or Disagreed	Unsure
Makes school a safer place	48% disagreed	11%
Make them feel watched or target	38% agreed	15%
Make them feel less worried about problems like bullying, drugs, weapons, vandalism, etc.	51% disagreed	11%
Makes them more comfortable with police,	48% disagreed	12%

Makes them uncomfortable to attend school	40% agreed	12%
Makes them feel safer in the neighbourhood	45% disagreed	14%
Makes them feel like their school has a bad reputation	34% agreed	15%

Table 18: Percentage of respondents with Disabilities who *do not agree*¹⁰⁰ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	Respondents with Disabilities
Relationship building with students and families	57%
Share information about criminal justice process	43%
Presentations on safety and the law	39%
Lockdown drills	49%
Respond to fighting	70%
Respond to trespass	61%
Respond to bullying	75%
Respond to out of control behaviour	65%
Support victims of sexual assault	49%
Support victims of crime	48%

¹⁰⁰ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

Appendix 10 - Perspectives shared by 2SLGBTQ+ community

Small groups discussions were held with 2SLGBTQ+ students, families, community members and employees in addition to key informant interviews and written submissions received.

Discussions with people who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ revealed a range of perspectives, many of which were rooted in the historic and current day oppression of marginalized people. Intersectionality between 2SLGBTQ+ identity and Indigeneity, race and disability came through in the conversations and in particular how those intersections in identity can impact on lived experiences. Conversations highlighted the deep divide within the 2SLGBTQ+ community in relation to the police because of the historic criminalization and targeting of people in the 2SLGBTQ+ community and recognized how that continues to impact today.

"The policing system has a long history of systemic racism and brutality against minorities. I don't feel comfortable in an environment where police involvement is mandatory or encouraged. Personally, I have witnessed and experienced police using their powers against students and vulnerable populations. The OCDSB must decide if their focus is on the protection and safety of students; or on the side of oppressive regimes." 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

"There is a well documented history of queer and gender non-conforming people experiencing greater harassment and targeting by police. In our communities, we know this and have experienced it. We are very concerned for our kids' safety out in the world and about the way their identities, gender expressions, and family are seen in a heteronormative society. For us, safety does not come from policing, which is an institution that is designed to protect only the privileged." 2SLGBTQ+ Parents

Participants noted and questioned the link between high police presence in some schools and people's identity.

"There is no place and no good rationale for police in our Schools. The reason our school is singled out and stigmatised in this way is due to racist, classist and ableist assumptions about our kids. I don't see cops in schools with mostly rich white kids." 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

Many participants questioned the use of police in schools to respond to children's behaviour, noting that it can lead to criminalization and that a non-police response that centres well-being and mental and psychological support would be more appropriate.

"Police involvement can cause traumatized/distressed children to shut down. At times they'll just agree to whatever they need to in order for things to "return to normal". Even in cases of bullying by young children, odds are their home lives suck and they need emotional/psychological support, not to be labeled as a "trouble maker" or criminal at such a young age; that's setting them up for failure." 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

"Police make racialized and queer/ trans students less safe in general and there are other more appropriate services to use." 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“Police do not belong in schools. Inviting/allowing them increases criminalization of youth, particularly racialized, mentally ill, disabled, LGBTQ2+, immigrant, poor and otherwise minority students, families and staff. Get them out before they do even more harm. They do not have the skills required to deal with any of the situations you have listed in this survey and should absolutely not be your go-to for anything short of terrorism.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“They harass us, people have been surprised with a call for you to go to the office with zero warning or knowledge and forced to be interrogated by them, they instantly treat you like a criminal, threaten and accuse you of things you've heard absolutely nothing about.” 2SLGBTQ+ Student

“In all of my time speaking to others about their experiences with police in schools, I have never heard a positive experience. Often, police in schools lead to increased fear, poor self-esteem, anxiety and trauma, and in some cases, a record of police involvement that haunts them for the rest of their lives. We need compassion and empathy for those with complex needs, and police do not provide that service. Social workers and other community advocates would be a far better choice.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“Vulnerable groups include people with learning differences and with a lot of students who are neurodivergent go into melt downs. I've been there when people smash windows and run out of class screaming and threatening to hurt people. In many of them, involving police could become more threatening for students. I hope police have training for dealing with marginalized groups and dealing with people with different needs but mental health professionals are what we need.” 2SLGBTQ+ Student

“I have worked directly with police in schools. I know their intentions are typically good. However, they do not have the training that youth workers do. Why are we engaging police rather than trained supports? What message are we sending to students that this is our go-to? For students who have disabilities and are racialized, a police presence can be incredibly scary.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“There is a bittersweet relationship with having police in schools. Space where it is essential and space where it hasn't worked out in the student's favor. There is an expectation that police have a lot of training that they don't have and they end up being called into situations that they don't have the experience or training to do.” 2SLGBTQ+ Employee

2SLGBTQ+ students and families came forward to share their concerns about discrimination that their children experience in the school system. One parent spoke of the fear of their child being bullied for being from a 2SLGBTQ+ family and the comfort that knowing an SRO was available to respond brought. Another family shared the experience of their non-binary child being bullied at school and their satisfaction with how the administrator responded to the situation and their relief that the SRO had not been involved. They went on to say:

“We would never have wanted anyone in school to resort to police when either of our children were being bullied, nor when our youngest was experiencing homophobic bullying. Our children feel the same way - when filling out your survey, our oldest said that it makes them nervous when the police come to do

fire or safety drills, and that they strongly disagree with having police in schools. They said that schools should have more social workers, mental health and harm reduction supports instead.” 2SLGBTQ+ Parents

A young trans student shared their experience of being a victim of bullying in primary school because they were trans. At that time, the student wasn't ready to come out to many people, but they had trusted the other child and come out. When the bullying got out of control, the school called the SRO. When the SRO responded the child wasn't ready to be out and reveal their identity to the police officer, but the other child did anyway. The SRO reportedly blamed the victim and threatened to arrest them.

“I really think that police shouldn't be so involved with schools. They only should be involved when something really bad is happening. Another time I was being bullied by a guy who knew I was bi and trans. When the bullying got out of hand the school called the SRO... I wasn't ready to come out to anyone ... they threatened to arrest me, and I was only in Grade 5! And that was terrifying..” 2SLGBTQ+ Student

The use of SROs and police to support survivors of sexual assault and to educate and respond on matters related to sexual and gender-based violence was questioned. The mandatory requirement for a school to notify the police in situations involving sexual assault was raised as a concern by some. These people advocated for a survivor-led practice that centred survivor consent.

“The fact that sexual assault survivors can be threatened with police involvement when speaking out about their experiences or asking for safety is a testament to how committed the education system is to surveilling and infringing. I don't believe it is necessary to have police in schools. It disproportionately affects BIPOC students.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

A former student shared their experience of how victim blaming rhetoric had significant impacts on the trajectory of her life.

A former student described the lasting, harmful impact that a school-wide assembly delivered by the SRO on child pornography had on them.

“The SRO told us that when girls take nudes for their boyfriends they are risking criminal charges. We were taught that in these cases girls have not only produced child pornography, they have also distributed it. They told everyone that the boys will share it with their friends. And when this happens not only will girls have to face the shame of pictures being online for all to see but also legal repercussions. This talk was to discourage teenage girls from taking and sending nude pictures. I have spoken with high school peers and hardly any of the boys remember this speech. Each and every one of my girlfriends remember it clearly. It relied on rape culture narratives that blame the victims of revenge porn and mislabel them as the perpetrators and sexual offenders.” 2SLGBTQ+ Former Student

They went on to describe the devastating impact:

“So what did I do when my word spread that my first boyfriend shared my nude pictures with his friends after I broke up with him? I cried for hours and told NO adult. Not one teacher, parent or police officer because I feared I would be arrested. I blamed myself. I called myself a whore. I believed it when people called me a slut. I became very depressed and started using drugs and alcohol to mask my pain and deal with my shame... And that is exactly what my SRO upheld in that assembly. It was one of the main experiences that taught me to blame myself. I never saw that SRO or any cop for that matter, as someone I could go to about these events. I expected them to reinforce the ideas they had already solidified in my mind. I broke the law by taking a nude picture as a minor. It was my fault. I deserved this. I broke the law by drinking under age and using drugs. It was my fault. I deserved this.” 2SLGBTQ+ Former Student

Some people came forward to share the perspective that having police in schools was important so that it could help *other* people become more comfortable with the police.

“Exposure to non-enforcement, proactive contact creates trust and works to educate and diminish barriers between devalued voices and police.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“Racial used and marginalized communities often have an “all police are bad” mentality. The only way to repair this relationship is to have police presence in schools so children in those communities learn that police are not all bad and to normalize their presence.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

But others spoke of individual, personal feelings of discomfort and fear as a result of having police in schools and shared observations about negative impacts on marginalized communities.

“Police officers in full uniform and guns is terrifying” 2SLGBTQ+ Student

“I am extremely uncomfortable around police officers, as are most students I know. They make me feel unsafe in my own school more than any student ever has.” 2SLGBTQ+ Student

“As the parent of a trans/ nonbinary child I am profoundly aware of their vulnerability to policing, and feel strongly that there are many communities who are not served by the presence of police in schools, including racialized, immigrant and LGBTQ2S+ students and families.” 2SLGBTQ+ Parent

“School is no longer a safe and comfortable environment when there is constant policing. It makes students feel unwelcome and unheard. With all the attention violence and policing is getting, I think the school should recognize how policing impacts...” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“Social worker or legal advisor would be able to provide the same support to victims and help with check ins etc. and taking care of the needs of students in a way that a police officer with a gun who can threaten you or criminalize you.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

“The SROs are very overwhelmed with 1 police officer to 15 schools - if you're just showing up when things are going south you are not building relationships.” 2SLGBTQ+ Employee

“Super triggering for students when they see the cruisers out front - you can see the change in their behaviour when they see police. Many have a history of police involvement either themselves or their family and it doesn't matter their race or how they identify or their socioeconomic status. If you have a negative experience that is what is being drawn up and it's very dysregulating for them.” 2SLGBTQ+ Employee

There was significant agreement that the role of police in schools needs to be limited to when it is a last resort and that non-police responses were preferred for many types of discretionary incidents. This was reflected in the survey responses.

“Police officers shouldn't be involved with students at school unless they are called for an emergency. It is unnecessary for officers to be stationed at each school on a regular basis. Many students may feel intimidated/afraid and it may interfere with their ability to learn. Students should feel safe in their school, and involving the police would have the opposite effect. It makes students feel as though their school is unsafe to the point where it needs protection. It does more harm than good.” 2SLGBTQ+ Participant

Table 19: Impact of police involvement based on perceptions of survey respondents with Disabilities

Impact	Agreed or Disagreed	Unsure
Makes school a safer place	68% disagreed	8%
Make me feel watched or target	54% agreed	14%
Make me feel less worried about problems like bullying, drugs, weapons, vandalism, etc	68% disagreed	6%
Makes me more comfortable with police	70% disagreed	10%
Makes me feel uncomfortable to attend school	39% agreed	13%
Makes me feel safer in the neighbourhood	65% disagreed	11%
Makes me feel intimidated at school	64% agreed	5%
Makes me feel like my school has a bad reputation	39% agreed	13%

Table 20: Percentage of 2SLGBTQ+ respondents who *do not agree*¹⁰¹ with having police involved in specific activities or see police involvement as a last resort

Type of Activity	Disagree	Only as a last resort	Prefer this be handled by
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¹⁰¹ Includes respondents who selected strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, only as a last resort or who prefer it to be handled by non-police

			non-police
Relationship building with students and families	30%	4%	40%
Share information about criminal justice process	10%	2%	39%
Presentations on the law and safety	16%	4%	37%
Lockdown drills	14%	10%	27%
Respond to fighting	26%	22%	35%
Respond to trespass	16%	28%	27%
Respond to bullying	24%	14%	42%
Respond to out of control behaviour	17%	20%	37%
Support victims of sexual assault	13%	12%	34%
Support victims of crime	11%	13%	30%

Appendix 11 - Perspectives shared by Gloucester and Ridgemont catchment areas

Focus: Priority SRO officers at Ridgemont and Gloucester as per MOU

Human rights-based report. For this particular part of the review, small group discussions were held with students from Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools as well as parents, caregivers and community members. Small group discussions were also held with SROs including SROs who have or continue to serve GHS and RHS and elementary schools in their catchment area. Additionally, as part of the wider review, small group discussions were held with students; parents, caregivers and community members; and employees who identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized, 2SLGBTQ+ and living with a disability. Additionally small group discussions were held in Somali language for the Somali community and in Arabic language for the Arabic-speaking community. Where reference was made in these discussions to being from the Urban Priority SRO Program Schools, these perspectives were also taken into account as part of this focused report.

Key informant interviews were conducted with a number of employees, students, parents and community members. A summary of these engagements can be found in Annex A.

Background to SRO involvement at GHS and RHS. Beginning in or around 2010, reportedly as a result of recommendations made by committees of community members and the administration from both Rideau High School and Ridgemont High School, some of the funding from the UPHS program was used to establish two full-time SROs at both these schools. The two SROs also provide support to the seven elementary schools in their catchment area¹⁰². The OCDSB entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)¹⁰³ with the OPS to outline the terms of the arrangement. This is a ratio of approximately one SRO for every 4.5 schools. Approximately \$95,000 per year is contributed by the OCDSB towards the salary of one of these SROs. Mid-way through 2013, the OCDSB started funding this extra police presence directly rather than through the UPHS funding. The remaining 23 SROs in the Ottawa SRO program are paid for by the OPS.

The objectives of the MOU include enhancing safety for students and staff¹⁰⁴ and strengthening the partnership between OPS and the OCDSB¹⁰⁵.

The MOU justifies the extra police presence on the basis that these schools have a *higher level of need*.¹⁰⁶ There is no indication in the MOU as to what criteria was used to determine the “higher level of need”. However under the MOE Urban and Priority High Schools Program, need is determined by considering criteria such as the following:

- Rate of credit accumulation of students at the end of grades 9 and 10 and other student achievement data
- Prevalence of youth crime in the community

¹⁰² Emily Carr Middle School, Queen Elizabeth Public School, Henry Munro Middle School and York Street Public School are the elementary schools in Gloucester High School's catchment area. Featherston Drive Public School, Roberta Bondar Public School and Sawmill Creek Elementary School are in the Ridgemont High School catchment area.

¹⁰³ Urban Priorities Schools Program, Memorandum of Understanding between the Ottawa Police Services and Ottawa-Carleton District School Board hereinafter “Urban Priorities MOU”.

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum of Understanding between Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa Carleton District School Board at para. 1.2 [hereinafter MOU].

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid* at para. 1.4

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid* at para. 1.4

- Rates of student absenteeism
- Local poverty statistics
- Number and type of violent incidents in the school
- Number of expulsions; and/or rate of recidivism
- Rate of school staff turnover
- Youth crime statistics by type of incident and gender/age
- Percentage of parents with low educational attainment

It is relevant and important to note that collectively GHS and RHS and schools in their catchment area have a significantly larger Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern, Arabic-speaking, Somali-speaking, Muslim and refugee students compared to the rest of the District. The following table compares the demographics of the Urban Priority SRO Program Schools to the OCDSB school population as a whole¹⁰⁷:

Table 21: Demographics of Urban Priority SRO Program Schools Compared to OCDSB Population

Student Demographics	Urban Priority SRO Program Schools	OCDSB Wide
Indigenous	6.5%	3.5%
Black	19.4%	8.6%
Middle Eastern	31.5%	14.7%
First Language Arabic	25%	9.3%
First Language Somali	4.9%	1.1%
Muslim	45.1%	19.3%
Refugee	9.8%	5.8%
Disability	7.3%	9.0%

The demographics of these schools is relevant because the review of the SRO presence is a human rights-based review. This means that the impact of the program on the minoritized student population is of particular importance. This includes its impact on the schools' Indigenous, Black, racialized students as well as students who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ and with a disability.

The Role of the SRO: The role of the SRO is not clearly defined in OCDSB's policies or procedures. The MOU says it is the SRO's duty to:

- Work cooperatively with school administrators, staff, students, parents and the community to proactively identify and address school concerns or problems relating to the school safety;

¹⁰⁷ Information extrapolated from "Identity Matters! 2019-2020 OCDSB Student Survey Results", Ottawa-Carleton District School Board as well as voluntary Indigenous self-identification information.

- Be a visible presence in the school and the community through:
 - referrals to community services;
 - structured class presentations, lectures and distributing educational resource; materials related to school safety;
 - continual interaction; and
 - mentoring
- Conduct investigations and enforce applicable law and statutes; and
- Employ problem-solving initiatives to address issues in schools relating to school safety.

The MOU goes on to note that the SROs are *not* in the school for the primary function of providing school security, but rather their function includes both proactive and reactive police investigative services.¹⁰⁸ This is consistent with the description of the SRO program on the OPS website.¹⁰⁹

Activities SROs Engage in at Urban Priority SRO Program Schools: As part of the review, students, parents and guardians, community members, staff members and the SROs themselves were asked to share information about the types of activities that they are involved in at the schools they serve. The following examples of activities were identified.

Visible Presence Outside School: Feedback from students, parents, staff and community members at Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools confirmed a highly visible police presence outside both schools. SROs park their vehicles in parking spaces in front of the school and sit inside their vehicles at the busiest time of day, observing students and their families coming and going. At times the SRO will park the vehicle at the front doors of the school, not in a parking place.

The regular visibility of the police vehicle in front of the school caused considerable concern for many of the people who participated in the consultations. There were significant concerns raised about the stigma the visible police presence has on the reputation of the school. There were concerns raised about the surveillance and information being gathered. There were also significant concerns raised that the visibility of the police vehicle reinforces negative stereotypes and perceptions about the Indigenous, Black and racialized population that attends the school and lives in the neighbourhood. These are discussed in more detail under the “Impacts” section below.

“Police cars sitting outside of the school. They are almost always there.”
Indigenous student

“Why do they park their car in front of the school in a NO PARKING ZONE?”
Somali participant

“You allow SROs to park in front of the school in the no parking zone. Asserting their power.” Racialized participant

“Having a police car parked out front continues a reputation that you cannot outrun.” Employee

¹⁰⁸ Urban Priorities MOU supra note 6 at para.

¹⁰⁹ See

<https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/safety-and-crime-prevention/School-Resource-Officer-Program.aspx>
accessed on April 26, 2021

Information Sharing: One type of information sharing that takes place is the sharing of photographs by the SRO with school staff for identification purposes. This happens several times each year and typically involves the image of a youth who is suspected to have been involved in a serious crime in the neighbourhood and that crime may or may not have a link to the school climate. Other information sharing reported, includes the sharing of information to support better outcomes for victims of crime.

At times the information shared crosses the threshold of what is permissible and highlights the blurred lines of responsibility that are created by the close administrator/SRO relationship. In a particularly concerning incident the school identified a student for something that was not a crime and did not involve something that occurred on the school property. It resulted in a homeless, racialized student being targeted for having provided a false name to the police when they were found to be loitering inside a public shopping area to get warm. This is an example of how information sharing between the OCDSB and the OPS can place students onto the radar of police and result in them being exposed to the criminal justice process for incidents that do not impact on the school climate.

“Everytime you go to the court and someone is charged or accused of something you read in the paper “He was known to the police”. Parents believe that schools are providing this information to the police and this label ends up labelling them as gang affiliated and known to police and stigmatizes them as trouble kids.”
Somali community member

Talking to Students Inside School: The proactive role of the SRO inside the school engaging in relationship-building is not clearly evident. There are rare examples of visible police presence inside the schools noted by students. These include police officers being seen in the hallway or chatting with students in the lobby. Only two students noted this and one student noted they had never seen a police officer inside their high school at all.

“I remember having an officer in the lobby just talking to students and trying to get along with them. I think building that relationship was a good thing.” White student

“I have not seen police talking with students at Ridgemont. I feel like they are watching us.” Black student

Some administrators at schools with high SRO presence noted that they ended the practice of having police walk in the hallways approximately one year ago because they did not see the need for it. However the SRO still pops in regularly to check in with the administration and will spend some time in the foyer talking casually with students. It is reported that large groups of students will gather around the SRO for these casual chats. At the other school the SRO will sometimes go to the lunch area and casually talk with students. Reportedly large numbers of students will gather around for the conversation. In both of these situations, the students are self-selecting whether they want to engage with the SROs.

In another example, an employee noted that SROs pop into specialized program classrooms to speak with students with disabilities because the students reportedly enjoy interacting with first-responders. However, overall the information shared in the consultations indicates that significant two-way relationship building is not going on between SROs and students.

Presentations to Students: Giving presentations is another way that SROs engage at school. Examples include SROs giving presentations to law classes, to newcomers and at elementary school about internet safety. One student reported the SRO giving a presentation recently to their law class and indicated that this is also being done in the elementary schools that feed into their high school. This is consistent with information shared by staff indicating that SROs are invited to present in classrooms from time to time.

"I met with a police officer recently at school in a law class. Most students are of colour and felt awkward with the police officer. She goes to all schools in our area including feeder schools. She talks about how nobody ever talks to her. She is trying hard but students are wary." Black student

However, a number of participants in the parent, community member and employee sessions indicated concern about this practice and expressed a preference to have educational information in classrooms shared by stakeholders other than police.

"Police teaching youth the pathways to their career isn't a relevant reason to be in schools. Even when there is a violent conflict in the school, why is an enforcement approach being prioritized, when there are other ways that don't criminalize youth, especially racialized people who are being impacted by this." Racialized parent

"There's nothing beneficial about police officers with guns coming into classrooms. It's a privilege for them to be in that space. Not a right." Racialized parent

"We don't need police officers to teach us about education and safety because they are the main reason we feel unsafe." Somali parent

"When I hear that SROs are also going to the elementary feeder schools it makes me more alarmed. This means it's going to the JK level and it's setting up the expectation with BIPOC students that we are surveilling them and getting involved in their lives." Employee

Traffic and personal safety: Supporting traffic and personal safety in and around the school was an activity valued by a parent at the consultation and in a written submission by another parent.

"We require Police School Officers onsite in both schools, for everyone's security, safety and sense of well-being. SRO's provide imperative support to our school communities, students, parents, and administrators, as they deal with incidents that occur when students are on their way to school or on their way home, they offer counseling, mediation, provide law and safety lectures, provide guidance on school issues and they play a key preventative role in transgressions just by their very presence ... The idea of not having an SRO greatly concerns me, as well as countless other parents. I know for a fact that Ridgemont students have become very familiar with the SRO's and it has had a very positive effect in the school environment." Racialized parent

"My daughter will start Ridgemont next year and safety is a big issue. We are constantly raising issues about traffic safety on Alta Vista Drive. It will be handy to have police at Ridgemont for continuity. "She [my daughter] also fears for her

safety generally. For our family, the decision to attend Ridgemont was difficult because of Ridgemont's reputation. We talked to teachers and students and decided to attend because SRO is in the school." Parent

However, other parents questioned the validity of having police undertake this function at the expense of racialized children who feel unsafe around police and advocated instead for more qualified mental health support.

"It's interesting how certain parents want cops with guns to console/comfort their children instead of advocating for actual mental health professionals. You are worried about the safety of your children but disregard the fact that our children are seen as unsafe around cops. So pretty much we have cops with guns to do things other people can do." Racialized parent

"Supporting an anxious child, keeping children safe from traffic - all of these roles are jobs people who are not SROs can do. Those are not good reasons to support them in schools. Why do the schools not get more guidance counsellors instead?" Racialized parent

The fundamental assumption that these schools require extra policing in order to maintain a safe environment is not supported by most of the administrators at school. It is also not supported by the violent incident report data. These data sets do not demonstrate any significant differences in the rates of violent incidents or suspensions in these schools when compared to schools in the rest of OCDSB.

One employee commented:

"Ridgemont is the school I've worked at with the least number of kids engaged in behaviour that requires administrator interference... It's baffling to me that at some point someone thought they needed more police." Employee

Response plan for a student with disabilities: One benefit valued by an administrator was the care an SRO put into developing helpful information to guide police response for a non-verbal student with disabilities who was known to run away from school from time to time. Taking the time to attach information to the student's name in the police system would ensure that patrol officers who responded to the student were able to effectively support the student.

However, in other discussions staff members, including educators and staff responsible for supporting student well-being not just at GHS and RHS but in schools across the District, expressed considerable concern over the institutionalized use of police to respond to dysregulated behaviour expressed by children with disabilities.

Responding to incidents: Response by SROs to incidents within the school was also noted as action undertaken by SROs. However, serious emergencies were often responded to by patrol police because of their urgent nature. In general, students, parents, community members and employees acknowledged the appropriateness of having police respond to serious, mandatory incidents. However, significant concerns were expressed by a number of participants about the overuse of police in responding to non-mandatory incidents involving racialized students and students with disabilities.

“A key concern that I find is that police are called to discipline “problem students” more than they are to respond to serious criminal concerns in the schools. Unfortunately labelling “problem students” comes with many biases from administration or teachers. Also, the use of police to discipline students when the school feels they can’t, often traumatizes students and therefore is not in the student’s best interest.” Somali community member

It was acknowledged by employees that, at times, having a police officer on hand when responding to an incident can lead to an unintended, negative impact because police officers may become involved in incidents that do not warrant a police response, at times escalating the situation.

Lockdown: Lockdown was recognized as a time that SROs have been seen in the school and as an area of acceptable police involvement for some participants.

“Lockdowns and secure schools are ok. But to allow them to target students because of color is sad and it is definitely something that needs to be changed.”
Somali parent

Support for victims of crime. Administrators at both schools valued the support that SROs have provided to students who had intimate images posted on the internet without their consent. In particular, the administrators highly valued the ability of the SROs to use their computer to remove the images from the internet.

However, in other forums, not directly related to GHS and RHS, concerns were raised about the interactions that SROs have had with victims of these crimes. While the removal of the images was appreciated, there were reports of SROs being insensitive to the well-being of the student and engaging in victim-blaming.

Administrators also placed value on the support SROs provided to help students report or address incidents of sexual assault, relationship-based violence and an instance of suspected human trafficking. Value was placed on the ability of the SRO to engage with both the student and their families and provide necessary guidance and support. However, similar concerns were raised by participants and in written format about SRO responses to support victims of sexual assault in general.

“School administrators use SROs to bully students and intimidate/threaten them. Hmmm if police are supposed to deal with issues of sexual assault, how come students have come forward saying that when they confided in their SRO, the officer did nothing? And instead asked “what she was wearing” and if she did anything to cause it???!?” Participant

Police officers being used to scare children: There were several concerns raised about SROs being used as part of progressive discipline to scare children.

“My experience with SROs, I can’t think of one that was positive ... I remember this one specific case where I was helping a newcomer student ... There was a disagreement with a group of girls and the SRO just happened to be visiting the schools. I saw the girl crying and asked her why she was crying. She said that the principal told her that the SRO was here for her for the fight that happened earlier ... the principal said that the SRO just happened to be there, so they were

using the SRO to scare her a little bit. I hear a lot from people I work with and students who say they have had very bad experiences.” Employee

“There is no benefit by scaring kids at school, neither is that the place to create more trust. It only furthers the distrust.” Racialized student

“School administrators use SROs to bully students and intimidate/threaten them.” White parent

“There is no separation between what happens in the community and in school. I have seen kids as young as 6 and 7 interacting with police and teachers using police as a scare tactic is perpetuating fear and trauma. We are doing this to people who are vulnerable and marginalized.” Somali former student and parent

Police officers engaging with students in diversion programs: SRO support to students in conflict with the law was identified by two employees as an area of positive impact of the SRO program. At the time of completing this report, we were unable to speak to any students from the diversion program to confirm perspectives. Students supported under this program typically include students who engaged in a fight, theft, or assault.

The SRO was invited to meetings and reportedly forged relationships with some students. Specific impacts reported by staff from this type of engagement were:

- A small number of students trust the SRO and seek out the SRO for advice and information in relation to criminal proceedings.
- A student seeking out the SRO, through the Administrator, for help related to social media, bullying or pictures on the internet.
- A student seeking out the SRO for help to get out of a fight that is going to happen.

Impact of SRO Presence at School: Overwhelmingly, the narrative that came forward from students, parents, community members and some employees was one of harm. Police presence in school causes harm to Indigenous, Black, racialized and minoritized communities. The following summarizes the types of impact identified.

Perpetuates stigma. The presence of SROs at these Urban Priority High Schools reinforces the wrong perception that Indigenous, Black and racialized people are dangerous. It reinforces the wrong perception that Indigenous, Black and racialized people are criminals. It reinforces the intergenerational stigma that Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools are dangerous, that the communities that surround them are dangerous and that the Indigenous Black and racialized people who live in these communities are dangerous. This has a very real and negative impact on the students who attend these schools. They are ashamed and find themselves in the position of constantly having to defend their school and their choice to attend their home school. They want to be proud of their school, but the ever present stigma surrounding the schools does not allow it. It has become so entrenched that elementary school parents are reportedly making purposeful decisions to remove their children from OCDSB and enrol them in another District to avoid sending their children here.

“...the fact that we have decided to put much needed money into funding an SRO program in Gloucester and Ridgemont, the optics of it causes people to make assumptions about what kind of school it is and what kind of kids go there and “ghettoizes” the kids... My daughter walks to Gloucester every day and on a lot of those days sees police officers in the parking lot. She is very conscious of

contact between police and Indigenous people and racialized groups. She wants to get to be a kid and not wonder why police are out there. She wants to be proud of her school.” Indigenous parent

“There are police cars in front of our school or hiding behind a restaurant. Their eyes were always on us. Lot of issues in Black community and feel like they are constantly watching us because they don’t trust us. Was driving with my mother one night and was followed by the police for a good 5 minutes before driving away.” Black student

“As a new Canadian with not much experience with police, I thought there might be crime in the school if police are present.” Newcomer student

“I heard so many bad things about Ridgemont before coming but it’s actually okay. It just goes to show how people view us.” Black student

“I heard the same [so many bad things] about Gloucester High School - people tried to get me to go somewhere else.” Indigenous student

“Half of my middle school goes to Cairine Wilson and the other half goes to Gloucester. People have a view of Gloucester High School and Ridgemont High School as not being good schools. Not true. It is frustrating.” Student

“Most of my class went to Ridgemont. Lot of them left and went to Catholic school. Their mother said Ridgemont was bad. There is a big issue at the Catholic school. People have been rude. Catholic school has lots of white people but it is still bad. People should go to the schools and see for themselves.” Black student

“The fact that there is extra SRO presence in both Ridgemont and Gloucester only reflected negatively and is an even clearer indication of the problem with this program. Whether it’s intended or not, the optics and the message is that those particular communities which are the majority in those schools need extra policing!” Somali community member

Perpetuates the feeling of being surveilled. Indigenous, Black and racialized students, parents, caregivers and community members identified that they feel targeted and surveilled by the presence of SROs at the school.

“As an Indigenous parent who has a long standing mistrust of the police and of being surveilled ... I have tried not to pass it on but intergenerational stuff happens and that never leaves her. So when she goes to Gloucester that is what she feels and that is her experience.” Indigenous parent

“We keep expressing this. We’ve been asking for this for many years. We do not want police in schools. You send the message that our voices don’t matter and our children need to be surveilled. It’s such a dehumanizing process to share with our kids why people think they need to be surveilled.” Somali parent

“... when I was at Gloucester, the argument to keep SROs was to prevent graffiti or fights. But when we talk about actually helping people in the community

everyone goes silent, no one wants to participate in that conversation. As racialized people we don't want surveillance as a part of our lives. To be watched by police officers in schools and in the community is an amount of surveillance black kids don't need." Black former student and parent

"People are being surveilled in our communities, these people who are surveilling our community are enforcing violence in our schools. This is reinforcing colonial violence. If we want to create safer spaces for everyone, we have to reimagine fundamentally how we approach conflict in our schools in general." Racialized community member

"Targeted surveillance at schools is so obvious to our children and they internalize these messages" Somali community member

Perpetuates feelings of being unsafe. When asked about the impact of having police in schools, Indigenous, Black and racialized participants widely reported feeling various negative emotions. Feelings like "terrified" "uncomfortable" "traumatized" "awkward" "threatened" "worried" "anxious" "scared" "unsafe" "fearful" came up in conversations across different groups.

"I want staff to understand where fear of police is coming from. They should give us space and become aware. If staff understood how students feel, they [wouldn't involve police] they should just be adults who want to protect students." Black student

"Our kids were terrified watching what was happening to George Floyd, and how he died. When you see the police this is what comes to mind." Somali parent

"Even if we aren't criminals there are police that will be prejudiced against us and harm people of colour like what happened with George and Brianna. I think that's why we worry when we see the police." Black student

"What is the real reason for the Board having police in schools? Police make students of colour not feel safe at school. Why have them there in the first place?" Racialized student

"They try to make students feel safe. There is a disconnect between policy and reality. Someone carrying a weapon can use it." Black student

"When a police officer makes his presence known, the atmosphere amongst the students completely shifts." Racialized student

"I know that some of my friends get really anxious and don't feel welcome at school when they see uniformed officers." Indigenous student

"Police are good for solving problems like threats inside the schools but those problems will rarely happen. When the police are just on standby, people and especially fellow people of colour, won't feel safe because of the history with police (specifically their power abuse) and massive distrust." Black student

"If you feel unsafe because of the police it will hinder your learning." Student

"I don't want police in my school. Fights happen in all schools. Even without their uniforms or guns. Take them out so everyone can feel safe ... Other schools have teachers talking to students. Administrators should build relationships with students so they will talk to them. Police are making students feel more scared." Indigenous student

"Police vehicles and police in uniform are traumatizing for the average black adult ... why would their presence in schools make children feel safe?" Somali community member

"I agree with everyone else. I don't agree with having police in schools. Having police in the schools shows that schools are unsafe. That they are violent. Having police in the neighbourhood and the schools terrifies students. It puts fear into the hearts of the students. The way they walk. The way they react. I am totally against it. It is not their place. We are terrifying students." Somali community member

"The children, when we come here and go to school, came from war torn countries where war is still raging. The perception of the police is not good. The police are in the neighbourhood and they are in the school and that creates anxiety and a lot of feelings for those students. They don't feel safe in the schools or the neighbourhood because of the police and if the kids aren't feeling safe, then parents aren't feeling safe. The perception is different between newcomers and those born here. For ones who have just arrived the fear level is much higher and having police in school will make them hate their school environment." Somali parent

Perpetuates over-policing of Indigenous, Black and racialized students. Participants in the discussions also noted that the presence of police in schools perpetuates the over-policing of Indigenous, Black and racialized people. They noted that the communities they live in are already over policed, with police watching their children from the moment they leave their home; watching them while they play ball at the park and then watching them again at school. There is no place they can go where their actions are not being policed. They referenced racial profiling in the police force and the specific targeting of Indigenous, Black and racialized populations. A member of the Somali community explained that in their culture the relationship between the home and the school is a partnership. School should feel safe, like home. But when police are brought into the space it is impossible for children to feel safe in the space and the trust and feeling of safety is lost.

"Sometimes when I see police, I wonder if they think I did something wrong. They take things to the extreme. The teacher says at least we are not in America. I feel annoyed when people say things like that. Do we really all have the same rights? We have issues in Ottawa but they don't talk about that." Black student

"I am also very aware of the disproportionate impact of police responses to some racialized communities and First Nations people... There is also a bias about the kids that attend [Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools], where they live, where they come from." Indigenous student

"Get cops out and stop telling our kids to trust cops when they're being held at gunpoint in the community." Racialized parent

"I am Chinese. My family members may not be targeted by SROs but they see it happen to their friends because people from different backgrounds are treated differently. It is very clear to us who gets singled out." Racialized parent

"I have friends at Cairine Wilson and they don't have police at their school. They don't need one. There is a higher police presence in racialized communities. They don't have police at schools in Russell." White student

"There is an obvious difference [at our school compared to schools without a high police presence]. Gloucester High School and Ridgemont High School are predominantly people of colour and low income. They never give a clear answer as to why there are no police at other schools." Black student

"There is over-policing. Kids are new; don't speak the language; don't understand the culture and before you know it the kids do something both in the neighbourhood and school. We all know that certain neighbourhoods are over-policed and before you know it the child is known to the police." Somali parent

"There are concerns regarding certain neighbourhoods. They are considered as tougher neighborhoods. Police presence in those neighbourhoods is very high and students who live there see police on every corner. They develop fear. At school they should feel home, learning, peace but they are terrified. Everywhere they go makes them feel terrified." Somali community member

Perpetuates criminalization of Indigenous, Black and racialized children. Participants in the discussions also expressed that the presence of police officers in schools perpetuates the criminalization of Indigenous, Black and racialized children. Unfortunately, the OCDSB does not collect data or analyze data on how it is involving police in schools or when the police are called to respond to incidents so it is not possible to understand a quantifiable impact within the OCDSB. The OPS provided a general breakdown of the whole SRO program at a Board meeting in December 2020 which is attached as Appendix 4.¹¹⁰ A more detailed breakdown has been requested by OCDSB. If this is provided, it will be analyzed further in the final report.

Poignantly, participants highlighted the feeling that there was no room to make mistakes and be a child. They are concerned that proximity of the police to the school means that student names become known to the police over time and mistakes that might normally be dealt with by the school end up being dealt with by the police instead, exposing the child to the criminal justice process. Some participants identified the "*school to prison pipeline*" and linked their experiences of biased and prejudiced discipline practices towards Indigenous, Black and racialized students from the moment they enter school to the ultimate criminalization of Indigenous, Black and racialized students.

"Children are being robbed of childhood, of making mistakes and the ability to learn from mistakes organically. This is necessary for cognitive development. Negative police interactions induce trauma on young minds. Further, a child

¹¹⁰ Ottawa SRO Overview presented by OPS to the OCDSB Board of Trustees on December 15, 2021 and accessed on the OCDSB Board Website on May 3, 2021
<https://pub-ocdsb.escrimetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=9027>

shouldn't be labeled "bad" so long as an officer's memory exists or employment lasts... often into adulthood. Racialized children especially need to be allowed childhood." Racialized parent

"There isn't anything at our schools going on that is so serious that it requires police to sit and patrol there 24/7. I would feel safer if me and my peers weren't being treated like we are criminals meant to mess up." Indigenous student

"When we are saying we are uncomfortable about having children enter schools that have people with guns ... My heart beats and drops and I get scared and have anxiety and think they are coming for me every single time I see the police because of the traumatic experience I have with police. I didn't develop this because I became criminalized but because I knew it in my flesh and I have seen what police officers do to people who look like me and are darker than me - even when I was 15 or 16 I felt like this." Arabic parent and former student

"When we say it is a choice to call security or the police for anything, what does that say? Administrators are using the choice to call police on kids. Criminalization is a process and it begins from daycare - from my own experience it begins there. Black bodies, racialized bodies and Indigenous bodies, especially, are seen as a threat." Arabic parent

"My son is traumatized and feels unsafe in school. He's been harassed. He's had police point guns in his face. Labelled by police as a gang member but he's never been in conflict with the law. His only crime was being Somali, Black and male." Somali parent

"There was a disagreement with a teacher for a child who was new to the country and he was arrested and sent to jail. This is not the right result. The impact on the school culture was terrible. It affected him psychologically and he dropped out of school and went down a bad path and ended up in jail. Before calling the police the school administration needs to explain why they need to have the police in schools." Somali community member

Perpetuates experiences of racial discrimination against Indigenous, Black and racialized and minoritized students. The existence of systemic racism within both the OCDSB as well as the OPS is well documented. Recent suspension and expulsion data from the OCDSB found that in the context of race, disparities were greatest for Indigenous students (3.5), followed by Middle Eastern students (2.3) and Black students (1.9), with likelihood of suspension between 2 and 3.5 times higher than other students who responded to the Valuing Voices survey.¹¹¹ A recent report¹¹² on race-based data for traffic stops by the OPS found that Middle Eastern drivers were stopped 3.18 times more than what you would expect based on their segment of the driving population while Black drivers were stopped 2.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population. Many participants in the discussions expressed concerns about inbuilt

¹¹¹ OCDSB 2019-2020 Suspension Data webpage accessed on May 3, 2021

https://ocdsb.ca/news/ocdsb_2019-2020_suspension_data

¹¹² Traffic Stop Race Data Collection Project II, Progressing Towards Bias Free Policing: Five Years of Race Data on Traffic Stops in Ottawa, November 13, 2019 accessed on May 3, 2021

<https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/news-and-community/resources/EDI/OPS-TSRDCP-II-REPORT-Nov2019.pdf>

systematic racism and bias in the education system combined with systemic racism in the policing system resulting in over-exposure and involvement of Indigenous, Black and racialized students with the police at school.

"Police would roam around at lunch and only around the students of colour, particularly the boys. BIPOC students feel they are being labelled as criminals, we live in a world where POC are targeted by law enforcement more than white folks, to bring in officers to schools keeps that mindset that the only reason they are following you is because of your skin colour because of your actions or anything you have done in school, it is because you are a Black boy." Somali former student

"Teachers could use the police against students if they are always in the school. Police presence should be removed." Black student

"Even speaking Arabic is not seen well ... When BIPOC students are together it's seen as a threat when they form a group; If Arabic kids are together in a group speaking Arabic, someone will come and tell them to stop being together. They're viewed as a gang but when white kids are all together it's seen as normal. It's complex. It's not just based on language being spoken but also based on what they say. "Ya Allah" is a normal Arabic word but white people are scared when they hear Allah. It makes many white people uncomfortable and afraid." Arabic parent

"The perception is that the SROs are there because the students are immigrants and Black and new to the country and police and teachers are taking advantage of the children. This is what we feel as parents and as children. The administration and the police gang up on the children in those schools. Why are there more police there? The perception of the community is because they are immigrants and Black." Somali parent

"We already know we have higher suspension and expulsion rates for and adding police presence to that dynamic only makes things more difficult for our kids who are likely to come into contact with police in their communities and neighborhoods again...further traumatizing them as mentioned." Somali parent

"There's absolutely no reason for police to be in schools other than to further their agenda of building trust. One they can't even do in the community. Ottawa Police are facing all kinds of media about misconduct ... This makes me nervous for my children. How can we trust when Ottawa Police is in the news everyday? ... Ottawa Police were in the media for planting a gun and drugs. I'm afraid they will set up my son. We escaped our home country for a better life here ... if Ottawa Police cannot protect their own officers against abuse, how can we expect them to protect our children?" Somali parent

"When you combine the SROs in the schools with administrators who are racist, it is a problem". Racialized community member

"Someone at the school can call the police for anything - especially when we already know that the police will target BIPOC - How can we feel as parents knowing that it is a choice for the school to call or not the police? We know we

live in a society where racism exists and we know being a teacher or an educator doesn't protect against racism. Who's going to choose whether it's time to call the police on a kid or not? It's going to be based on stereotypes, racial bias, perceptions and research already shows us that there is profiling racial in school and BIPOC kids are going to be the ones who are targeted. Asking the question is kind of like having the obvious answers - schools are not the space for police." Arabic parent

"It's a lie if we are telling students that they can trust the police - that is not a true thing to be teaching right now - maybe in the future but not right now." Employee

Police presence in school creates a sense of safety for some students. A small number of people came forward during the discussions to express that police presence in the school created a sense of safety for some students. Two racialized students expressed the opinion that police were there to maintain safety and security for everyone, even those who mistrust them. They also saw the value of having police in schools in case a fight happened. However, these same students were surprised to learn that not all schools had the same level of police presence as their own schools. They also questioned why someone would feel unsafe if the police were around if they were not doing something bad.

"My opinion is that police is not just a good something, but it is an important something since sometimes problems or fights may happen, and also police officers would maintain safety, and not scariness" Racialized student

"Why would someone feel unsafe and unsecure if the police are around? I think that if you are not doing something bad why should I feel uncomfortable?" Racialized student

Another student noted the benefit of having someone you can report concerns about safety to when they arise.

"I am white and feel fine with the police in the school. They are someone that they can report issues to. For example, I heard girls in the washroom who were talking about having knives." White student

However, the larger number of Indigenous, Black and racialized voices heard in this process did not support this position and instead described the creation of an environment that was unsafe, rather than safe.

"Some students may be comfortable but who are we prioritizing - the kids who are ok with it or the ones who fear everything when they see a cop? What does that say?" Arabic parent and former student

"Who is it emotionally reassuring in the school for? It's not for this community. We need to reimagine what safety looks like. For our communities it doesn't protect our children; it doesn't make us feel safe. We don't need police officers to teach us about education and safety because they are the main reason we feel unsafe. Police need to repair the harm outside of the school, not inside the school. If it's about trying to promote positive messages in schools you are asking these children to accept a distorted view of what police officers are like which is different to what they experience in the community. He's been harassed and

criminalized in the school even though he has no criminal record. We're asking people to examine white supremacy. Our children do not need to be policed or labeled by teachers." Somali parent

Recommendations. It is clear from the experiences shared by Indigenous, Black and racialized students, families and community members that the presence of SROs in school is having an adverse impact on some Indigenous, Black and racialized students. This impact is disproportionately negative on these students and it is negatively affecting their school experience. It is important to remember that the OCDSB's primary obligation is to help every student equally access their right to education, *without discrimination*. It is clear the Urban Priority SRO program is having an unintended impact on these students. This is not about the intention of the program, but rather about its impact. OCDSB's first priority must be to the wellness and educational success of its students. Centring the best interests of the Indigenous, Black and racialized students negatively impacted by this program, it is clear that changes to OCDSB practices and priorities must be made to help eliminate the barriers they are encountering and address the discrimination..

The following recommendations relate to the Urban Priority SRO Program at Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools and their associated elementary schools.

"I also want to say that the main priority should be the reconciliation efforts that we are boasting to do, but it's different to actively work towards that in society. After all the tragedies we see in the media and the buzzwords, it's different to act on them. When we do this, it acts on Indigenous leadership and sovereignty, that should be centered in the conversation." Racialized Parent and Former Student

"I don't believe the Board will listen to me. I still wanted to come because it is really important and it matters." Indigenous Student

"I want the board to take a step back, reflect and put themselves in our shoes, maybe then they'll understand what some students feel." Black Student

Recommendation 1: That the OCDSB funding to the Urban Priority SRO Program be discontinued for 2021/2022 and the MOU not be renewed.

"The police are a very hurtful topic for us. We don't need extra. Police should be there when it's bad. School should be a place of learning, Books, blackboards. Not the police." Somali Parent

"I agree with everyone else. I don't agree with having police in schools. Having police in the schools shows that schools are unsafe. That they are violent. Having police in the neighbourhood and the schools terrifies students. It puts fear into the hearts of the students. The way they walk. The way they react. I am totally against it. It is not their place. We are terrifying students." Somali Community Member

Recommendation 2: That the funding currently allocated to the Urban Priority SRO Program be reinvested in culturally-relevant support to the student success through additional support such as mental health, counselling, community liaison support. community based workers, counsellors, or culturally responsive therapists.

"I would like to see the school board hire members of the community to be school-based safety monitors rather than police officers in uniforms placed in schools that have more racialized students" Somali Community Member

"Police aren't there to be a resource to students. We have a lot of resources that are culturally aligned and responsive to students. Bring in community resources that impact social and emotional skills and bring in more racialized mental health professionals." Somali Parent

"The resources used to hire the SRO can be used to help students have better learning experiences and fund programs that will help students especially those who are facing barriers." Employee

"The money could be going elsewhere to directly help the communities who need it the most." Racialized Parent

"I hope we are going to finally invest in things that work and divert from using police officers to do things they're not equipped to do". Racialized Parent

"I want to affirm that these funds should be re-allocated to school programs. Many youths are struggling. It is heartbreaking how many youth cannot engage in sports, arts because they can't afford it." Racialized Parent and Former Student

"Please refund it back to the students - community based workers, counsellors, culturally responsive therapists. Invest in what we know works that actually contributes to wellbeing." Racialized Community Member

"Mental health professionals, school meal programs, funding school sports, and art programs, buying textbooks that are up to date. Trauma informed physicians. Addictions counsellors." Parent

We need more BIPOC community mental health professionals that are external. OCDSB social workers or working for the school board can be harmful. Racialized Community Member

"Consult Indigenous leaders. This is our land. Traditional ways work and have worked long before colonial criminalization." Indigenous Parent

"At GHS there are a lot of kids who don't have enough money to eat or access technology or housing. That would be a better use of money." Indigenous Student

"I hope it is also clear that some perspectives ARE more important than others when this report is made because I am concerned about some of the comments shared from the other session. Students who are scared and hurt by police should be prioritized, even if some students, white students, may have good experiences sometimes. No one should be intimidated or unsafe at school. No amount of harm is acceptable." Racialized Community Member

"Part of the objective about having SROs in schools is to build good relationships with the police but he thinks that could be done by introducing programs that would make them enlightened in that field. Money used for police and policing should be used to develop civic engagement and engaging with students" Somali community member

"Money could be used in different ways to make the school an inclusive environment. Culturally sensitive mental health and addiction services, student and parent advocacy, civic engagement, homework help, hiring more racialized staff. There is some improvement in terms of teachers but not with administration. Students need to see themselves reflected in the people in charge." Somali community member

"There is a need to have alternative programs other than policing to be part of education to increase knowledge social skills and problems solving skills" Somali community member

"Is there anything that people from other backgrounds with more extensive training could do just as well, if not better?" Employee

Annex A: Summary of Information Sources

GHS and RHS Focused Group Discussions			
Description	Stakeholder Group	Date	Participants
Not identity based	Students	March 25, 2021	12
Not identity based	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	March 31, 2021	15
Somali-speaking	Parents/Guardians and Community Members	March 23, 2021	36
RHS and GHS Key Informant Interviews			
Stakeholder		Number of People Interviewed	
Employees		7	
Parent		1	
Student		1	
RHS and GHS Written Submissions			
Identity Group	Stakeholder	Date	
Racialized	Parent	August 21, 2021	
Person of Colour	Not identified	August 24, 2021	
Arabic speaking Newcomers	Parents	March 29, 2021	
Not identified	Employee	April 26, 2021	

Appendix 12 - Summary of pre-service and in-service training for SROs

Training Subject	Training Department or Organization
Pre-service Training for SROs	
<i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i> and extrajudicial measures	
Diversion and the use of youth level service/case management inventory tool	
Introduction to the Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools and Use of Lockdowns/Secure School/Shelter in Place	
In-Service Training for SROs	
Violent Threat Risk Assessment	North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response
Introduction to community resources	
Childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences	
Social media trends with youth	Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)
Sexual assault response and interviewing children	OPS Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit (SACA);
Sexual exploitation and Project Arachnid	Canadian Centre for Child Protection (CCCP)
Hate crimes, countering violent extremism and radicalization	OPS Hate Crime Unit
Substance abuse	Rideauwood and Ottawa Public Health
LGBTQT	Centretown Community Health Centre (Centretown CHC)
On-Point gang prevention and intervention program	John Howard Society and Youturn Youth Support Services
Annual Summer Training	
Refreshers on mandatory pre-service training	
Meetings with 4 District Safe Schools Principals and SROs to identify trends and issues	

Appendix 13 - Summary of recent administrator calls for police service

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents	Mandatory or Discretionary Notification	Involving Children Under 12 Years of Age	SRO Responded (Not Patrol)
Accident Report	1	N/A	0	1
Advice	9	N/A	2	9
Assault	5	Mandatory	0	3
Bullying	1	Discretionary	1	1
Child Exploitation	1	Mandatory	0	1
Community Concern	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Custody - Parent Conflict	2	Discretionary	2	1
Cyber Concerns	3	Discretionary	3	3
Cyberbullying	7	Discretionary	2	7
Drug Use by Strangers (School Property)	2	Discretionary	0	2
Dysregulated Behaviour	25	Discretionary	14	11
Elopement (Leaving School or Home Without Permission)	25	Discretionary	16	14
Extortion	1	Mandatory	0	1
Fight	17	Discretionary	1	13
Harassment (Criminal)	1	Mandatory	0	1
Harassment	1	Discretionary	0	1
Intimate Image Sharing Without Consent	4	Mandatory	0	4
Misuse of Technology	1	Discretionary	0	1
Physical Safety Concerns	8	Mandatory	3	2
Police Report Filed by	3	N/A	2	3

Parent (Assault, Fight, Stranger)				
Referral - Witness - Community Service	1	Discretionary	1	1
Restricted Substance	2	Mandatory	1	2
Sexual Assault	10	Mandatory	1	10
Sexual Harassment	6	Discretionary	1	6
Theft	1	Discretionary	1	1
Threat	20	Discretionary Mandatory (with weapon) (4)	2	16
Traffic Safety	4	Discretionary	0	4
Trespass	12	Discretionary	2	7
Vandalism	4	Discretionary	0	3
Vaping	1	Discretionary	0	1
Weapon Possession (one was replica)	2	Mandatory (1 only)	1	2
Wellness Check	9	Discretionary	2	6
TOTAL	190	37 Mandatory	58	138

Appendix 14 - Summary HWDSB literature review findings

The literature review highlighted the following observations. This is taken directly from the report found here on p. 9.

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Standing-Committee-Agenda-1622755995.pdf> :

Canadian literature:

- The roles of the SRO are generally unclear, conflict, with little police training on schools
- Monitoring and supervision of SROs is inconsistent
- The role of the SRO should be limited to supporting schools with serious criminal behaviours and crisis and emergency planning
- Having police officers in schools does not give a causal or definitive answer as to whether the program meets its goals nor whether it has an impact on reducing misbehaviour or safety issues in schools
- There are mixed student perceptions of the program:
 - Some students feel safer and secure with a police officer in school
 - Indigenous, Black, racialized and students with disabilities feel targeted by police officers in schools although some sought help from SROs for being a victim of crime, for mental health concerns, addictions or needing employment coaching

American literature review:

- SRO programs were found to not reduce rates of crime in schools and, in some states, there is an increase in student offences
- Police officers in studies felt students perceived the police negatively due to TV and media portrayals of the police. They therefore spent time dispelling these perceptions by talking to students, engaging families and building rapport which they also believed reduced chances of student misbehaviour
- Prior to SROs, schools supported disadvantaged students and managed subsequent behaviours due to disadvantage; SROs were then given power within schools to deal with behaviour issues which lead to a greater number of arrests and further disadvantaged students
- Although the intent of having an SRO in school is to create a safer school environment, it results in an increase of negative interactions between youth and police which leads to more youth being referred to the juvenile justice system for assault, weapons, and drug offenses. Students of colour and those with disabilities are most adversely affected by such discipline
- Having an SRO in school increases the number of students entering the juvenile justice system which results in dire consequences to the youth's rupture with regard to continuing education, finding employment and accessing housing
- Students who are removed from the classroom and suspended for behavioural issues were found to be **10 times** more likely to drop out of school
- Neither school administrators nor SROs involved in the studies were satisfied with the SRO program in school
- Schools should not involve SROs in implementing school rules and limit their involvement to dealing with criminal behaviours only
- Police officers working in schools must be reflective of their practice and understand the consequences of positive discrimination (extra attention on racialized students to build relationships)

Appendix 15 - Recommended revisions to Ottawa Protocol and OCDSB policies and procedures

Document	Section	Proposed Revision
P.043.SCO		Revise entire policy and related procedures to limit police involvement in schools to responding to issues that require mandatory notification of the police unless it is a last resort.
Ottawa Protocol	8	Remove from mandatory notification list incidents that are not serious crimes and that are not included in the Provincial Protocol. Specifically, remove child pornography and threats of serious physical injury. Remove list of all discretionary incidents.
PR.533.SCO	2.1, 2.2	Remove threat of serious physical injury; giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor; bullying; vandalism causing extensive damage to school or property located on the school premises from the definition of critical incidents that must be reported to the police. Add in exceptions from the mandatory requirement to report to police for children under 12 and children with special education needs.
PR.528.SCO	2.6	Remove threat of serious physical injury; giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor; bullying; vandalism causing extensive damage to school or property located on the school premises from the definition of critical incidents that must be reported to the police
Ottawa Protocol	8, 16	Adjust language to remove the mandatory requirement for principals to notify the police clarify that notification of the police for incidents involving children under 12 is always discretionary as is reporting incidents that involve children with special education needs.
P.026.SCO	3.38	Revise to allow for administrator discretion in reporting incidents to the police that involve children under 12 or children with special education needs.
PR.525.SCO	4.1	Revise to clarify that police notification is mandatory for weapons, in line with the Provincial Protocol.
PR.544.SCO		Revise to include criminal harassment and indicate that police notification is mandatory for criminal harassment
Ottawa Protocol	13	Revise to reflect the legal requirement to have parents present if a police officer is interviewing a child under 12 or a child with special education needs. Revise to reflect that a parent or a third party adult <i>of the child's choice</i> must be present for interviews of children between 12 and 17.

<u>P.026.SCO</u>	3.38	Revise language to reflect that only violent incidents (not critical incidents) must be reported to the police (not all critical incidents). <u>PPM 120</u> defines violent incidents as possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm; physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention; sexual assault; robbery; using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person; extortion and hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences only and that reporting to the police is discretionary for children under 12 or children with special education needs.
<u>PR.521.SCO</u>	2.1, 4.26, 4.30	<p>Remove threat of serious physical injury; giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor; bullying; vandalism causing extensive damage to school or property located on the school premises from the definition of critical incident that must be reported to the police. Add in exceptions from the mandatory requirement to report to police for children under 12 and children with special education needs. This aligns the definition with PR.533.SCO and PR.528.SCO.</p> <p>Adjust 4.26 to recognize that reporting incidents to the police for children under 12 or for children with special education needs is discretionary.</p> <p>Remove reference to the SROs involvement in lockdown drills.</p>
<u>PR.534.SCO</u>	4.4	Revise the language in 4.4 so that police are only permitted to conduct a search of a student's locker with a warrant. A request from an administrator is insufficient. Revise language throughout to clarify that the principal cannot designate their authority to conduct a search to the police.



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
Report No. 21-046

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Examination of Elementary and Secondary Program Pathways and Achievement Outcomes

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PURPOSE:

1. To present a report that examines enrollment distribution in elementary and secondary programs and student achievement outcomes in relation to demographic data collected through the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* conducted in 2019-2020. The information presented seeks to address the following questions:
 - What is the representation of students across elementary programs (English with core French, early French immersion, middle French immersion) and secondary pathways (academic, applied, locally developed)?
 - How well is the system doing to support students in meeting high expectations in French, Language, and mathematics (elementary panel) and English, math, and science (secondary panel)?

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. The OCDSB Strategic Plan 2019-2023 has three main objectives designed to drive a cultural shift to build and promote a culture of innovation, caring and social responsibility. This report is directly linked to goals that focus on the system's responsibility to foster positive learning conditions for students and allow them to reach their full potential, including:
 - Championing high expectations for all students in all programs;
 - Prioritizing the dignity and well-being of students in inclusive and caring classrooms; and
 - Removing barriers to equity of access, opportunities and outcomes.

Specifically, the disaggregation of program enrolment data by student demographics provides insight into who is being served within each program. Where there are differences in student demographics across programs, barriers to student access must be identified and removed. Similarly, setting high expectations for all students requires a mindset that all students are capable of achieving high standards with the proper infrastructure and supports. Examining student achievement data through the lens of the provincial standard (equivalent to a mark of 70%) reinforces this goal. When this standard is not met, it is important to determine what barriers or biases exist within our system that could be preventing them from doing so, and work towards dismantling these oppressive practices.

CONTEXT:

3. In 2012, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported that “streaming” practices such as those employed in Ontario secondary schools have significant negative and long-term impacts on students. One of the recommendations emerging from this report was for school systems to eliminate streaming for students who are younger than 15 years of age. Over the past decade, streaming practices in Ontario secondary schools have come under heavy criticism, pointing to issues of systemic racism and bias (Bush, 2017; Brown & Tam, 2017; People for Education, 2019; Pichette et al., 2020). Critics have also argued that streaming occurs long before students get to secondary school, citing such practices as program choice (e.g., French immersion vs. English) or grouping students into classes based on real or perceived ability (e.g., special education).
4. In the OCDSB, there are multiple programs available to students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. In the elementary panel, for example, families have access to four programs: English/core French (grades 1-8), alternative program (also English with core French, grades 1-8), early French immersion (grades 1-8), and middle French immersion (grades 4-8). While French immersion and core French continue to be available in the secondary panel, beginning in grade 9 students must choose between academic, applied, and locally developed courses. Not all secondary courses are necessarily taken at the same level. For example, a student may be enrolled in an academic English course, but an applied level math course. In grade 11, course designations change to University (U), College/University (sometimes referred to as Mixed, M), College (C), and Workplace (E).

Although not the focus of this report, students identified with an exceptionality may also be placed in specialized special education classes, depending upon the severity of their needs – this occurs in both the elementary and secondary panels. There are also several district-level programs at secondary (e.g., Adaptive, Alternate, Arts, High Performance Athlete, International Baccalaureate) offering even more choice for students and parents.

5. Effective September 2021, school districts in Ontario will begin the process of “destreaming”, beginning with Grade 9 mathematics. The Ontario Ministry of Education will require school districts to undertake comprehensive monitoring of program enrolment and outcomes, particularly for students who have historically been underserved by the system. A key component of this work will be the establishment of baseline measures of disproportionality and disparity against which progress can be evaluated.
6. Annually, as part of the *Annual Student Achievement Report (ASAR)*, the OCDSB analyzes provincial assessment data (grades 3 and 6 reading, writing, and mathematics; grade 9 applied and academic mathematics; OSSLT), as well as report card data for grades 9 and 10 compulsory courses. For several years, this data has been disaggregated for specific groups of students including English Language Learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous (INDG), students with special education needs (SPED), students residing in lower-income neighbourhoods (SES), and by gender.

Given the absence of provincial assessment data for 2019-2020, report card data for the subjects that are most closely aligned with the provincial assessments has been used to measure achievement outcomes in this report. Disaggregation of data by student group has been undertaken for the full population of students, as well as for the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* conducted in the 2019. Reporting this data in alignment with the requirements under the *Anti-Racism Act* and accompanying *Data Standards* allows for a deeper analysis of additional groups of students based on self-reported Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability from the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey*.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

Collection, Analysis and Reporting of Identity Based Data

7. The OCDSB has a commitment to improving equity of access and opportunity for all students. The collection of identity-based data that resulted from this commitment serves the following purposes:
 - (i) to gather demographic information about the unique and diverse characteristics of the OCDSB’s student population;
 - (ii) to identify and respond to barriers to student learning and well-being; and
 - (iii) to enhance the District’s capacity to serve its increasingly diverse student population and client communities.

This is the third in a series of reports that begins to look at barriers to student achievement and well-being with a view to effecting change that will result in greater support and more equitable outcomes for students who have been minoritized.

8. Data collection, analysis and reporting of identity data is governed by the *Ontario Anti-Racism Act* (2017), and the [Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of System Racism](#) (2018).
9. Ongoing discussions with the OCDSB Technical Advisory Group over the course of this year have helped guide our approach to analysis and reporting. In order to make the information more accessible to a broader audience, reporting has shifted to simplify the language and presentation of information for the reader, and include calculations of disproportionality and disparity in tables at the end of the document for reference.

Bringing Together the Data Sets

10. A QuantCrit framework (Gillborn, Warmington & Demack, 2018) has continued to guide the approach to the analysis and reporting of this data. Despite the multidimensional nature of identity, this initial phase of reporting focuses only on single aspects of identity – Indigenous, race, gender, and disability – and does not yet take into account intersectionality (e.g., race x gender).
11. Three years of data (2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020) have been examined. In order to allow for the establishment of a baseline to support district monitoring of efforts to dismantle the structures and practices associated with streaming students into grade 9 applied, academic, and locally developed mathematics. Results are primarily discussed in relation to 2019-2020 (the most recent full year of data currently available).

Calculating Disproportionality and/or Disparity Indices

12. This phase of reporting requires the calculation of disproportionality and/or disparity indices for each unit of analysis (Standard 29). In an attempt to create greater distinction between these two terms, only one measure has been calculated, depending upon the data being examined. Specifically, in the case of program enrolment, disproportionality indices have been calculated to reinforce that the focus is on over/underrepresentation of a particular group in a program, service, or function relative to their representation in the overall population. Language has been simplified in this section of the report referring to whether there are “higher” or “lower” proportions of specific groups of students enrolled in a particular program.

In the case of achievement, where the focus is on measuring group differences in outcomes, disparity indices have been calculated. To reinforce responsibility is on the system to support students in meeting high expectations, language has been simplified in this section of the report to indicate which subjects (elementary) tend to yield higher outcomes and for which groups of students, and at secondary which program pathways and subjects do so.

Meaningful interpretation of both disproportionality and disparity requires the selection of appropriate benchmarks and reference groups, respectively (Standards 30 and 31), as well as the establishment of thresholds (Standard 32)

to support monitoring of progress over time.

Measuring Equity: Overview of Findings

13. For the benefit of the reader, Appendix A presents more detailed results and explains some of the more detailed technical/methodological elements of analysis that are required under the provincial *Data Standards*. Highlights of District-level results for 2019-2020 are as follows:

Program Enrolment

Elementary:

- Early French Immersion (EFI) continues to be the most popular program amongst families, with 53% of students enrolled. 37% of students are enrolled in English with Core French, and 6 % of students are enrolled in Middle French Immersion (MFI - grades 4-8 only).
- The Early French Immersion program had 1.5 to 2.8 times lower proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous (INDG), males, those with special education needs (SpED), and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods (Low-SES), relative to their representation in the overall student population.
- The English with core French program had 1.5 to 2 times higher proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous (INDG), males, those with special education needs (SpED), and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods (Low-SES), relative to their representation in the overall student population.
- The MFI program had higher proportions of ELLs and females.
- Specific groups of students identified through the *Valuing Voices* survey were disproportionately represented in the Early French Immersion program. The following groups had at least 1.5 times the proportion of students enrolled relative to their representation in the population: First Nations, Inuit, Middle Eastern, Trans Boy or Man, Two-Spirit and students identifying with the following disabilities - addiction, Autism, Blind or Low Vision, Developmental, Learning, Mobility, and Speech Impairment.
- Many groups of students identified through the *Valuing Voices* survey were disproportionately represented in the English with core French program. The following groups had at least 1.5 times the proportion of students enrolled relative to their representation in the population: First Nations, Inuit, Middle Eastern, Trans Boy or Man, Two-Spirit, Gender Fluid and students identifying with the following disabilities - addiction, Autism, and Mobility.
- The disproportionate representation in the MFI program was most pronounced for students who identified as East Asian, Non-Binary, Trans Boy or Man, Two Spirit, and Blind or Low Vision who had at least 1.5 times higher proportion relative to their representation in the population.

Secondary:

- The vast majority of students in the OCDSB are enrolled in academic level courses in grades 9 and 10, ranging from 72% in mathematics to 83% in English.
- Applied and locally developed courses had higher proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous, those with special education needs, and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods. This disproportionate representation was most pronounced in locally developed courses where the proportions of these students were 1.5 to 4.5 times higher relative to their representation in the population.
- For the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* survey, academic level courses (English, math, and science) had higher proportions of students who self-identified: as non-Indigenous, White, South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, Girl/Woman, and those reporting no disability. In contrast, the proportions of students in applied and locally developed English, math, and science courses from the following groups were at least 1.5 times higher than their representation in the population: First Nation, Metis, Inuit, Black, Indigenous, Gender Fluid, and those reporting the following disabilities - addiction, Autism, learning, mental, physical, speech impairment, undisclosed, and another disability not listed.
- The program pathway students choose in Grade 9 is the pathway they are most likely to continue in as they progress through secondary school.

Achievement Outcomes***Elementary:***

- The percentage of all students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard ranged from 77% in French (Reading and Writing) to 86% in Mathematics (a composite of all strands). The English with core French program tended to yield lower achievement outcomes, and immersion programs yielded higher ones.
- Differences in outcomes (disparities) were evident for ELLs, students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, males, and students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, however, they were most pronounced for students with special education needs (excluding gifted) who were between 0.76 times as likely to meet the provincial standard in French (Writing) and 0.84 times as likely to meet the standard in Language (Writing) compared to students who did not have special education needs.
- All five subjects-strands yielded higher outcomes for students who self-identified as East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, White, and

Girl or Woman on the *Valuing Voices* survey compared to other students (disparities ranged from 1.02 to 1.15). In contrast, students who identified as First Nation, Inuit, Black, Indigenous, Latino, Middle Eastern, another race not listed, Boy or Man, Gender Fluid, Trans Boy or Man, a gender identity not listed, or any disability (other than addiction, chronic pain and undisclosed) were found to have lower outcomes compared to other students across all five subjects-strands. Differences in outcomes were most pronounced for students identifying as Trans Boy or Man in Language (Reading) where 55% of students met standard compared to 85% of all survey respondents (disparity of 0.65).

Secondary (Grades 9 and 10 English, Math, and Science):

- The percentage of all students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard ranged from 69% in Mathematics to 75% in English. Academic level courses yielded the highest percentages of students meeting/exceeding the provincial standard compared to applied and locally developed.
- Outcomes in academic, applied, and locally developed English, math, and science tended to be lower for males, ELLs, students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, students identifying as Indigenous, and students with special education needs (excluding gifted). The largest differences in outcomes (disparities) were observed for: students identifying as Indigenous in locally developed English (where 18% met the standard; disparity of 0.64) and locally developed science (where 36% met the standard; disparity of 0.68); and, students with special education needs (excluding gifted) in academic math (where 57% met the standard; disparity of 0.75).
- Outcomes for students who self-identified as First Nation, Metis or Inuit on the *Valuing Voices* survey were lower in all program pathways (academic, applied, and locally developed) and across all three subjects, compared to non-Indigenous students. Outcomes for students identifying as First Nations were higher than other students in locally developed math; higher outcomes were also observed in the Inuit population, where numbers were relatively small.
- Trends across programs and pathways were less consistent for race, gender identity and disability. Specifically,
 - in English, outcomes were higher in all three program pathways for students identifying as South Asian (60-89% of students meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.09 to 1.79), White (40-85% meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.05 to 1.57), and Questioning (58-100% meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.04 to 2.65) when compared to all other students.

- in math, only two of these groups, South Asian and Questioning, exhibited higher outcomes in all three program pathways (67-100% of students meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.08 to 1.81); those identifying as Girl or Woman also had higher outcomes in this subject area (disparity ranging from 1.02 to 1.07).
- in science, outcomes in academic, applied, and locally developed courses were higher for students identifying as East Asian (64-91% meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.13 to 1.46).

In sum, the data confirms what other jurisdictions have reported - that there is disproportionate representation of some groups of students, particularly those who are racialized or have been minoritized, in certain programs which can limit opportunities as they transition from secondary to post secondary pathways. Similarly, these same groups of students tend to experience lower achievement outcomes regardless of the program/pathway in which they are enrolled. Together, these results are a call to action to address systemic barriers and biases that continue to oppress these individuals. The OCDSB *Strategic Plan 2019-2023* and the [Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap](#) express the District's commitment to equity and dismantling systemic barriers and bias.

Current Initiatives and Next Steps

15. The OCDSB has a number of key initiatives underway which are intended to narrow achievement gaps for specific groups of students and remove systemic barriers to their success. Many of these are detailed in the [Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap](#) which provides a framework for work that is actively underway and/or planned. The following is an overview of some of the current key initiatives.

Equity:

- Creation of a core Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) team with the first year of implementation completed.
- The introduction of Indigenous and Black Students Graduation coaches which is showing early signs of a positive impact on student success (through increased credit accumulation) and overall well-being.
- Partnership with Inuuqattigiit education hubs for Inuit students
- Implementation of Indigenous Speakers Series, Rainbow Youth Forum, Black Student Forum.
- Expansion of Indigenous Education Team to include two additional graduation coaches.
- Hiring of Gender Diverse and Trans Student Support Coordinator.
- Expansion of reach ahead and summer courses to support Indigenous, Black and English Language Learners

Innovation and Adolescent Learning:

- Winning Attitudes is a full-time cooperative education program, supported by two teachers, for underserved youth who are at risk of disengaging from school. To-date this year 72 students have been re-engaged and 260 credits have been earned;
- Project True North which is designed to engage OCDSB students in primary document research focussing on the forgotten, and ignored, stories of Canadian history. The project's first focus has been the Black Canadian soldiers of the No 2 Construction Battalion from WWI; the research is being integrated into grade 10 History classes and aligns with the Equity Roadmap;
- Implementation of the Authentic Student Learning Experience (ASLE) Tool which is designed to support credit rescue and credit recovery that take into account student interests and pathways. The tool is being used by Student Success Teachers across the district to re-engage students by starting with their areas of interest and pathways and linking it to curricular expectations in order to earn credits and get back on track towards graduation. There are currently approximately 114 ASLEs currently in use, aimed at saving 190 credits;
- The development of a professional learning community in eight secondary schools (G8) to focus on the needs of students who are falling behind in credit accumulation through a learner focused experience. Schools have been using student voice, data, and ongoing monitoring to re-think and re-shape learning experiences for underserved students in order to better meet their needs. For example, schools have been creating multi-credit packages for ELD/ESL students which allow them to build deeper relationships with students while connecting their learning to their pathway goals.
- The new School Within a College (SWAC), run in partnership with Algonquin College, and established in September 2020, has produced 22 high school graduates. All of these students had left school and were re-engaged through the SWAC program, where they attend full time, in order to get them to the finish line with their diplomas. Programming for the students is highly individualized in order to meet their pathway goals. While earning their high school diplomas, these students also earned 18 college credits. In September 2021, 8 are going to college, 5 are connected with apprenticeships and 8 are working and exploring future options.
- The district's Dual Credit program with Algonquin (in this model students are still attending their high schools but take a single course with the college). This provides students the opportunity to explore post secondary opportunities while earning a college and a high school credit simultaneously. Students have earned 200 college credits this school year.
- Experiential Learning is being supported throughout the district to engage students in innovative learning, while connecting schools with community partners. For examples of some of the work from this year, please visit <https://ocdsbxi.com/>.
- Innovation and Adolescent Learning, in response to the 16x16 data from the previous report, is working closely with the Indigenous team to create

new program offerings and content to support Indigenous students to improve their outcomes. For example, working on a multi-credit package which will include land-based and language learning, with the opportunity for students to earn more than 4 credits in a semester in order to get them back on track towards graduation.

- IAL has also been working with Indigenous, Equity and ESL to support new Canadians who come into the district via the Family Reception Centre to enhance the consistency and provision of credits to students whose education to-date has happened outside of Canada. For example, offering students credits for their first languages in order to support graduation requirements.

Learning Support Services

- Working collaboratively with several departments, Learning Support Services (LSS) is working to support the implementation of The Third Path - A Relationship-Based Approach to Student Well-being and Achievement. This work will help to reinforce setting the conditions for learning by creating intentional and responsive relationships across several key areas (e.g., identity, safety, belonging, etc.);
- A cross-departmental, multi-disciplinary team continues to explore the use of a Universal Screener to assist educators in identifying emerging student needs and determining appropriate instructional strategies to support students;
- The online resource "Learning Support for Students with Special Education Needs" will help to revisit the development of quality Individual Education Plans (IEPs) including a focus on the reason for developing an IEP, high yield strategies to support student learning, and articulate the key elements of quality special education programming in schools; and
- Mental health promotion and prevention is essential in building social emotional learning skills (e.g., identifying and managing emotions, healthy relationships, coping skills and problem solving skills) which helps reduce the likelihood of mental health problems developing or reduces the intensity of pre-existing mental health difficulties.

Program and Learning:

- The Student Achievement Through Inquiry (S.A.T.E) project which uses factors known to contribute to successful schools to bring children, families and communities together into the educational environment as participants and partners in the learning process, with the school becoming the "Heart of the Community." This particular project involves 14 OCDSB schools (elementary and secondary) and focuses on the following factors: achievement and standards; leadership and management; teaching and learning; innovative curriculum; targeted intervention and support; inclusion; parental engagement; use of data; effective use of pupil's voice; and celebration of cultural diversity.
- The Intensive Reading Intervention program is a new cross departmental Summer Learning Program which is available to support students in kindergarten to Grade 9 to address identified gaps in reading. Schools

involved have been identified based on multiple sources of data including raise index, student achievement and credit accumulation at the secondary level.

- The literacy assessment field test project is currently underway. Over 150 educators from across the district in kindergarten, Grade 1,2, 5, 7, 8, and 9 are testing a variety of new literacy assessment tools. The focus of this project is on early intervention, planning for learning, and gap filling.
- A detailed Scope and Sequence in all curricular areas in grades 1-8 has been developed cross-departmentally and is currently being employed across the system. Key instructional supports for both in-person and remote learning, diagnostic assessments, parent supports (Building Bridges) etc. have been embedded. Further considerations for CRRP, differentiation, and assessment continue to be added.
- A district de-streaming cross departmental team has been established including all departments to lead the work in de-streaming. Elementary and secondary school teams have been involved in a series of professional learning sessions focussed on the impacts of streaming and the disproportionate negative impact on specific groups of students through the streaming process. In addition to mathematics in grade 9, PAL is supporting schools who are focussing on de-streaming other compulsory courses including English, Science, Geography and Science in the 2021/2022 school year. This will involve cross-departmental support as well as cross-school learning re. key strategies, practices and supports that best address the needs of all learners through the lens of CRRP, universal design for learning and differentiation. All parents of grade 8 students registered in a locally developed or applied level course in grade 9 have been contacted and key information has been shared to ensure that parents are fully aware of the pathway options based on their present course selections, as well as graduation rates based on course pathway etc. These phone calls have resulted in an increase enrolment in Academic level courses at the grade 9 level.

Identity-based Data

16. This marks the first year in which identity data has been analyzed in conjunction with other information about student experiences (i.e., suspension/discipline, program representation) and achievement outcomes. A measured approach to this work was taken to allow for important conversations to take place with community representatives and to integrate their perspectives into reporting. In so doing, some aspects of identity have yet to be examined, as does intersections between different dimensions of identity.

In the fall of 2021, a report that examines sense of belonging and experiences of students in our school system will be shared. A schedule for additional reports is yet to be determined, however, it is clear that the establishment of thresholds will be necessary in order to facilitate interpretation of the differences being observed and monitoring over time. Establishment of data sharing protocols with First Nations communities and development of an open data policy also remain priorities for the READ team.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

17. Over the past three years, the District has received \$223,000 in one-time funding through Transfer Payment Agreements to support this work up to August 2021. These funds were used to hire research staff and consultant services for the facilitation of focus groups and community partner meetings. An additional \$200,000 was allocated through the annual budget process for the 2020-2021 school year to support the governance work (e.g., establishment of data sharing agreements with First Nations communities, development of an open data policy) and extension of contract staff in the *Research, Evaluation and Analytics Division*.
18. The District receives annual funding from the Ministry of Education to support student success. Much of the funding is targeted for staffing (i.e., Student Success Lead, Student Success Teachers in each secondary school, and intermediate Student Success Teachers in sites offering grades 7 and 8), however, a portion of the funds is distributed to schools. The initiative involves ongoing monitoring of student achievement and progress towards successful completion of high school (e.g., pass rates in key subject areas and courses, credit accumulation, and completion of the compulsory community service hours and literacy requirements).
19. A Technical Advisory Group has been established to support ongoing work on reporting with identity based data to ensure alignment with the Data Standards. TAG has met four times over the course of this year, providing a forum for engaging community organizations in ongoing input/dialogue regarding research methodology and statistical analysis of identity data. These opportunities have been instrumental in helping to shape our thinking and shift our approaches to reporting to meet the needs of the diverse community we serve. TAG will continue to guide our work through the 2020-2021 school year.
20. A full day of professional learning in applying a data equity framework to project planning and implementation took place through We All Count in January/February 2021. Twenty OCDSB staff, including the READ team, Communications, LSS, PAL, and HR participated in one of two sessions offered. The READ team, strategic business analysts, and evaluator from Learning Support Services have benefitted from participating in four 1.5 hour follow-up discussion sessions with the founder, allowing us to go deeper in our understanding and application of the work; two sessions remain and will be completed before the end of June. Costs associated with this portion of the work were approximately \$8,000 and were absorbed by the operating budget.
21. Ongoing communication about the use of the survey data to the community, particularly to participants, is a vital part of the process. Sharing the process and results, both in report format, infographic and through an open data set for public use, increases credibility, usability and impact. It is important for participants to

see how the data is treated, how their responses are being used, and the impact that their participation has on the future work of the organization.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

The following questions are provided for discussion purposes:

- What stands out for you in the data/information that is presented?
- What questions does the data/information raise?
- Will the key initiatives lead to the dismantling of systemic barriers and bias?
- What actions, next steps and/or resources should be considered?

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Appendix A-Elementary and Secondary Program Streaming and Achievement Outcomes

Appendix A to Report 21-046

Elementary and Secondary Program Streaming and Achievement Outcomes

Background

As part of its commitment to identify and eliminate systemic barriers to students' learning and well-being, the OCDSB has developed several reports since June 2020 that look at particular outcomes with an identity based data lens. These reports include: a [summary report](#) of the [Valuing Voices-Identity Matters! Student Survey](#), the [Student Suspension Report](#), and a [Grade 10 Credit Accumulation Report](#). Findings from these reports shine a light on some of the inequities that exist in our system in relation to disciplinary practices and secondary student achievement outcomes.

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) annually produces student achievement reports that include data from provincial EQAO assessments and local sources (e.g., report card marks, credit accumulation, graduation rate) to help identify where there are achievement gaps for specific groups of students (i.e., females/males, English language learners, students with special education needs, students who have self-identified as Indigenous (INDG), and students residing in lower-income neighbourhoods (Low-SES), and whether or not these gaps are narrowing over time. At the secondary level, this has included the analysis of outcomes in grades 9 and 10 compulsory courses in academic, applied, and locally developed pathways.

This is the first year that this data analysis includes the identity data collected in 2019-2020 through the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey*. Reporting this data in alignment with the requirements under the [Anti-Racism Act](#) and accompanying [Data Standards](#) allows for a deeper analysis of additional groups of students based on self-identified Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability, and supports the OCDSB's strategic priorities to identify and eliminate disproportionate representation in programs and differences in achievement outcomes between groups of students (disparity).

Why Examine Program Streams and Achievement

In 1999¹, the Ministry of Education introduced the current secondary program structure which includes applied, academic, and locally developed courses. The program structure was designed to provide a different pedagogical approach to learning for students beginning in grade 9. The program structure is often criticized as a vehicle for streaming students and Ontario is the only province in Canada that continues to use a secondary model that streams students into academic, applied, and locally developed courses at such a young age.

¹ The Ministry of Education in Ontario introduced the policy OSS:99 to provide more alternatives and flexibility for students in Grades 9 and 10, before they chose pathways in Grades 11 and 12.

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Streaming practices in Ontario have received heavy criticism from stakeholders, community partner organizations, parents, and students. National and international studies have repeatedly shown that streaming negatively impacts students, particularly those who have been racialized, marginalized, and those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development argues that these impacts are both significant and long-term (2012).

- The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) found students who are Black, Indigenous, racialized, from low-income neighbourhoods, and those with special needs are more likely to be enrolled in applied or locally developed courses, and are also less likely to graduate from high school compared to students in academic courses (Brown & Tam, 2017).
- Another study that tracked a cohort of students from 2010 to 2016 as they transitioned from high school to post-secondary found that only 33% of students who took applied math and language courses in Grade 9 attended post-secondary directly after graduation, compared to 73% of students who took academic courses (Pichette, Deller, & Colyar, 2020).
- Similarly, the latest available data from the Ministry of Education (2021), shows that only 59% of students in Ontario who took the Grade 9 Applied mathematics course in 2011-2012 transitioned into post-secondary education (college or university) within 7 years, compared to 88% of students who took the Academic course. Analyses conducted by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO, 2012) demonstrated that students with similar scores on the Grade 6 provincial assessments, even if they were poor, were far more likely to do better in an academic than applied courses.

Arguably, streaming does not start in high school. In 2014, Clandfield et al. published a report that detailed the discriminatory practices associated with streaming that are still taking place in elementary and secondary schools that have resulted in the most severe consequences being deferred to post-secondary, where students who have been minoritized are at greater risk of dropping out before completion of a degree or program. The authors argue there are several forms of streaming that occur in public education, including the presence of different types of schools, different programs within schools, and treating students differently within classrooms. One example in Ontario is the availability of French immersion or extended French program options in English-language school districts. In the OCDSB, in addition to the English with core French program, students may enrol in an elementary alternative program (which is also offered as an English with core French program), an early French immersion (EFI) program beginning in Grade 1, or in middle French immersion (MFI) beginning in Grade 4. Some students may also be placed in a specialized special education class based on an identified exceptionality and specific needs.

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While there has been a plethora of research over the past several decades that indicates French immersion is a viable option for all students, including those with special education needs and those for whom English is not their first language, there is a tendency for these students to be underrepresented in these programs (OCDSB, 2007). Following a comprehensive review of French as a Second Language (FSL) programs in the OCDSB, marginal increases in the percentage of English language learners and students with special education needs enrolling in an immersion program in elementary school began to take hold (OCDSB, 2013). By 2015, 36% of English language learners, and 23% of students with special education needs, in the elementary panel were enrolled in French immersion (up from 22% and 12% in 2007, respectively; OCDSB, 2015). In September 2016, the OCDSB introduced a 50/50 bilingual kindergarten program with the intention of providing a universal opportunity for all students to learn in both official languages before needing to make a decision to enrol in a particular program in Grade 1. In the first year of implementation (2017-2018), overall enrolment in kindergarten and in the primary division remained stable, and interest in EFI continued to grow (OCDSB, 2017). Projected enrollment numbers for 2019-2022 indicates that the percentage of students choosing EFI and MFI programs will continue to grow (OCDSB, 2019).

By the spring of 2019, there was increasing concern about declining enrolment in the English/core French program and a desire to better understand how program delivery options (e.g., single-track, dual track, etc) and student demographics intersect, and how these may influence choice of program when students transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9. An examination of enrolment patterns showed higher proportions of students with special education needs, English language learners, and students who reside in lower income neighbourhoods enrolled in an English with core French program in a single-track school as compared to EFI centres. Further, when faced with a choice between academic and applied level programs in Grade 9, students enrolled in an English with core French program in Grade 8 were less likely than their peers in French immersion to select an academic pathway for either English or mathematics (OCDSB, 2019).

In addition to these more quantitative examinations of enrolment distribution, researchers have also pointed to differences in the learning environment and experiences for students. For example, students in applied programs are more likely to experience lower teacher expectations and a poorer quality of education (Bush, 2019; People for Education, 2019, p.9).

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What We Heard

During the consultation and focus group sessions held with community partner organizations, parents, and students in 2019, participants expressed concerns about the negative impact of streaming practices on students at the OCDSB. The following quotes capture their voices and are very much aligned with the research in this area:

“Streaming process in schools are ill-structured. We have to find better ways without being directly told what to do.”

“Assumptions around poverty-that kids can’t think/they can’t achieve-judging is dangerous. It is limiting. If a child is not performing well-assumptions are made about home life, domestic abuse etc.”

“Students are being contained between high achievers and low achievers. Unique value of each individual student is not being recognized. Students who do not fit into the norm are being tracked off.”

“Bi-racial student not held to the same rules-not pushed academically, not asked to hand in work.”

“French immersion has elitist trajectory-son asked to move out, not pushed, held to high standard which parent suspects is due to his identity.”

“Teachers, guidance telling kids that they can’t do certain things, i.e. Black-can’t go to university. French Immersion-also creates elitist system.”

“Depends on teacher and administrator, one child so strong in identity, he has been able to navigate. Other child experienced racial bullying-asked to leave French immersion, low expectations which has impacted self-esteem and in academics”

“Low expectations. Being streamed out of French Immersion. Streaming out of Academic into Applied.”

What We Know

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2012) recommended that school systems eliminate streaming for students who are younger than 15 years of age to ensure that options are kept open for students until they have enough experience to make decisions about their future.

In light of the research and ongoing analysis of data collected through OnSIS, the Ontario Ministry of Education has recently announced an end to streaming beginning with Grade 9 mathematics in September 2021. The intent behind this initiative is to address systemic discrimination and help break down barriers for Indigenous, Black,

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and other racialized students, students who live in low-income households, and those with disabilities and other special education needs. The initiative aims to keep future pathways open for all students, so that all students have equal opportunities to succeed.

Purpose and Structure of this Report

In recognition of the OCDSB's commitment to providing equal opportunities to all students, this report aims to examine the degree to which there is disproportionate representation of specific groups of students in various OCDSB programs and to measure how well the system is doing to support all students in meeting high expectations. This can be measured by comparing the percentage of students meeting/exceeding the provincial standard (equivalent to a mark of 70% or B-) in select programs and subjects. This information will also be used to help establish baseline measures of disproportionality in program representation and disparity (differences) in outcomes to facilitate progress monitoring in support of mathematics destreaming, Board improvement planning for student achievement and well-being, and equity accountability. In each case, data is presented for the full population of students (based on information available through the student information system) and for the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices - Identity Matters! Student Survey*.

The report has been organized into two main sections intended to address the following questions:

1. Enrolment Composition - Elementary and Secondary

- What is the demographic composition of students in each of the following programs in elementary (English with core French, EFI, MFI) and secondary (academic, applied, locally developed) programs?
- How likely is it that students will change program pathways as they progress through secondary school?

2. Achievement Outcomes - Elementary and Secondary

- How well are students being served in the OCDSB?

Data analysis continues to be guided by the *Anti-Racism Act* (2017), *Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism* (2018), and the QuantCrit Framework (Gilborn et al., 2018). Alignment of this work to the *OCDSB Strategic Plan 2019-2023*, the *Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap* (2020), and Ministry expectations for monitoring grade 9 math destreaming, have also been taken into account. Input from the Technical Advisory Group also continues to shape our thinking as to how information is presented and the language that is used to convey our findings.

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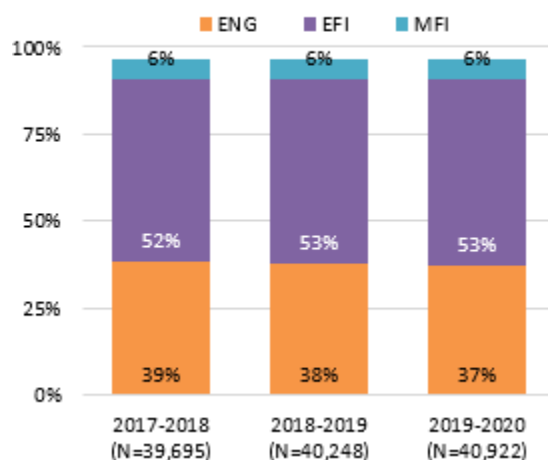
Elementary and Secondary Program Enrolment

Part 1: Overall Population Trends in Enrolment

Elementary Enrolment - Grades 1 to 8. In this section of the report, elementary enrolment data has been combined for students in grades 1 through 8, with a focus on the English with core French (ENG)², early French immersion (EFI), and middle French immersion (MFI) programs³. Percentages within each stacked bar reflect the enrolment distribution for each identity (group) across these three programs, respectively, and do not add to 100% as they are exclusive of enrolment in Specialized Special Education Programs (approximately 2% of the population), as well as students whose program could not be confirmed at the time of the June report card (approximately 1% of the population).

A three year trend (2017 to 2020⁴) has been provided in Figure 1, showing that the proportion of students enrolled in each of the three elementary programs has remained relatively stable over this time period, with EFI accounting for more than half of the elementary enrolment.

Figure 1. Elementary Program Enrolment, 2017 to 2020



² English Programs include those programs that follow the English curriculum, which include offering English/Core French and Alternative Programs.

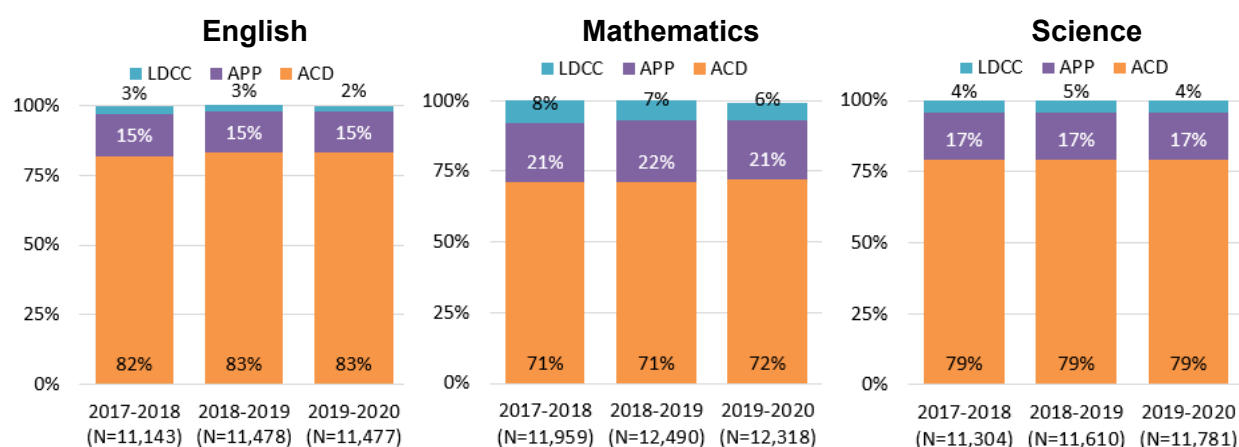
³ The MFI Program is offered starting in Grade 4, therefore only reflects students in Gr.4-8.

⁴ Enrolment numbers are based on the number of students in grades 1 through 8 with at least one available Final (June) Elementary report card mark, within each academic year, respectively. They are closely aligned with our [October 31st official enrolment statistics](#).

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Secondary Enrolment - Grade 9 and 10 Courses. Enrolment data has been aggregated for students enrolled in academic, applied, and locally developed courses in grades 9 and 10; analyses have been conducted separately for English, mathematics, and science⁵. A three year trend (2017 to 2020) has been provided in Figure 2, showing that the proportion of students enrolled in these compulsory courses has remained relatively stable over this time period, with academic level courses accounting for the majority of enrolment. Across three years, the proportion of students enrolled in applied level mathematics courses was higher compared to English and science courses.

Figure 2. Secondary Program Enrolment, 2017 to 2020



Part 2: Program Enrolment: Representation of Student Demographics/Identities, 2019-2020

In order to understand who is being served in each of these programs, an analysis of program enrolment by demographic characteristics has been conducted. Examination of the data in this way allows us to focus our attention on where there may be systemic barriers or biases that preclude some groups of students from accessing particular programs or services. Specifically, where there are higher or lower proportions of students who identify in a particular way enrolled in a specific program relative to their composition in the overall student population, the onus must first be placed on the system to identify the structures, policies and practices that may be contributing to this finding. In so doing, the dismantling of these barriers can begin to take place, and strategies and supports can be implemented to ensure that each program is equipped to meet the diverse needs of the students it is intended to serve.

⁵ These subjects were chosen to align with requirements to monitor the destreaming of Grade 9 mathematics. Disaggregation by subject at the secondary level was important, given that students may choose different program streams for each subject. Stacked bars add up to 100% as they reflect all available program options for English, Mathematics and Science courses in grades 9 and 10.

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It is important to note that in the sections that follow, the presentation of results has been streamlined to help simplify information for the reader. Specifically, the graphical presentation is consistent with the presentation of District-level enrolment trends, the following section makes use of stacked bar graphs to illustrate the enrolment distribution for each respective group of students across programs. A cross-hatched "All Students" bar provides a District-level reference, reflecting the enrolment distribution across programs at a population-level, while "All Respondents" similarly reflects the enrolment distribution for the subset of students who answered the question on the Valuing Voices survey pertaining to each dimension of identity being reported. This serves as a benchmark for the expected enrolment distribution across all reporting groups, under the assumption that all groups of students/identities would be proportionately represented relative to the population. Where there are higher or lower percentages of students who identify in a particular way enrolled in a specific program relative to the full population, this indicates a disproportionate representation of this group within that program. In accordance with the Anti-Racism Data Standards, additional language has been embedded in the descriptive summary to provide relative magnitude of the disproportionality (i.e., values closer to 1.0 indicate equal representation, values less than 1.0 suggest underrepresentation, and values greater than 1.0 suggest overrepresentation). Additional details can be found in Tables 4 and 5 (pages 56 through 59) in the Technical Considerations section of the report.

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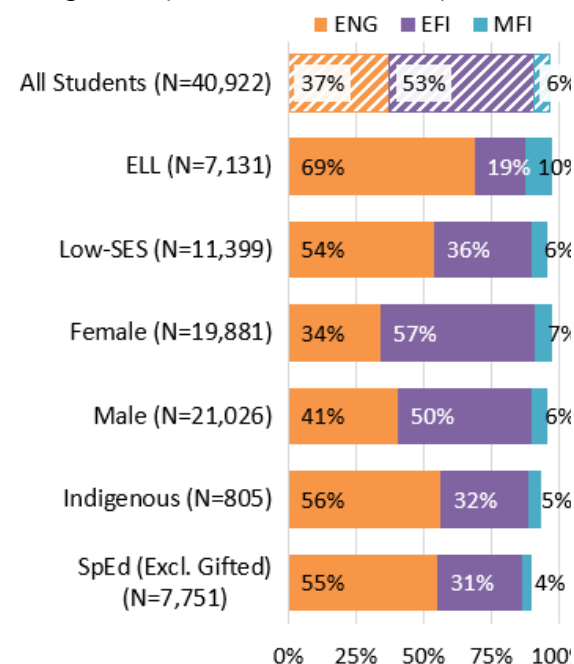
Elementary Enrolment (Grades 1 to 8; District - Population).

Figure 3 reflects 2019-2020 program enrolment for specific groups of students based on data from the Trillium Student Information System.

The English with core French program had higher proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous, males, those with special education needs, and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods, relative to their respective proportions in the overall student population. These groups were between 1.5 and 2 times as likely to be enrolled in the English with core French program. In contrast, there were smaller proportions of these students in the EFI program.

The MFI program had higher proportions of ELLs and females, and lower proportions of students from the remaining groups. In the case of ELLs, some of this may be linked to parental choice. Specifically, at the time of the OCDSB's FSL review in 2007, parents of ELLs indicated a preference for MFI over EFI in order to provide time for learning English before introducing another language.

Figure 3. Representation of Specific Groups of Students across Elementary Programs (District, 2019-2020)



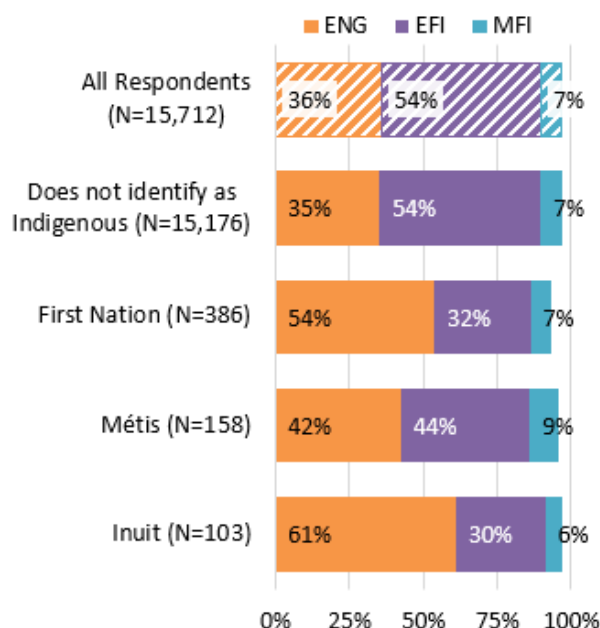
"All Students" reflects District-level Elementary (Gr. 1-8) enrolment in 2019-2020.

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Elementary Enrolment (Grades 1 to 8; Valuing Voices - Indigenous Identity).

The English with core French program had a higher proportion of students who self-identified as Indigenous relative to their proportion in the student population; this was especially true for First Nation and Inuit students, who were 1.5 and 1.7 times as likely to be enrolled in this program, respectively. Conversely, the EFI program had a lower percentage of First Nation and Inuit students and a higher percentage of Metis students compared to their proportion in the overall student population.

Figure 4. Representation of Students with Indigenous Identities across Elementary Programs (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



"All Respondents" reflects 38% of District-level Elementary (Gr. 1-8) enrolment in 2019-2020.

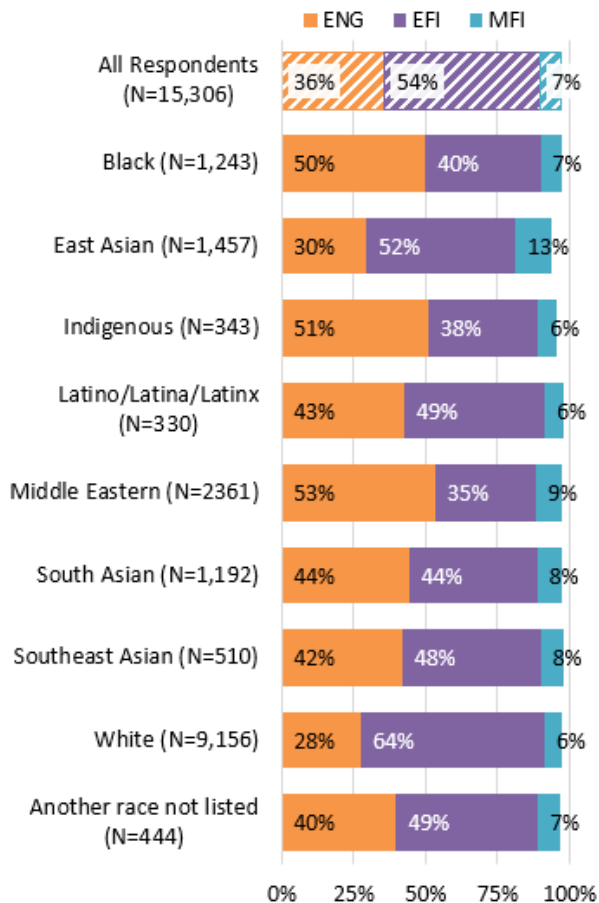
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Elementary Enrolment (Grades 1 to 8; Valuing Voices - Race).

Disaggregation of program enrolment by racial identity shows evidence of disproportionate representation of traditionally marginalized groups in each program. Specifically, the English with core French program had higher proportions of students who identify as Black, Indigenous, Latino, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and South East Asian, and lower proportions of students who identify as East Asian and/or White. The inverse was true for the early French immersion program. In fact, English with core French programs had 1.5 times as many Middle Eastern, Black, and Indigenous students enrolled relative to their representation in the population.

For some groups of students, the MFI program offers an alternative entry point for access in grade 4 and shows higher proportions of East Asian, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Southeast Asian students enrolled relative to their representation in the population, with East Asian students being twice as likely to be enrolled in the MFI program.

Figure 5. Representation of Student Racial Identities across Elementary Programs (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



"All Respondents" reflects 38% of District-level Elementary (Gr.1-8) enrolment in 2019-2020.

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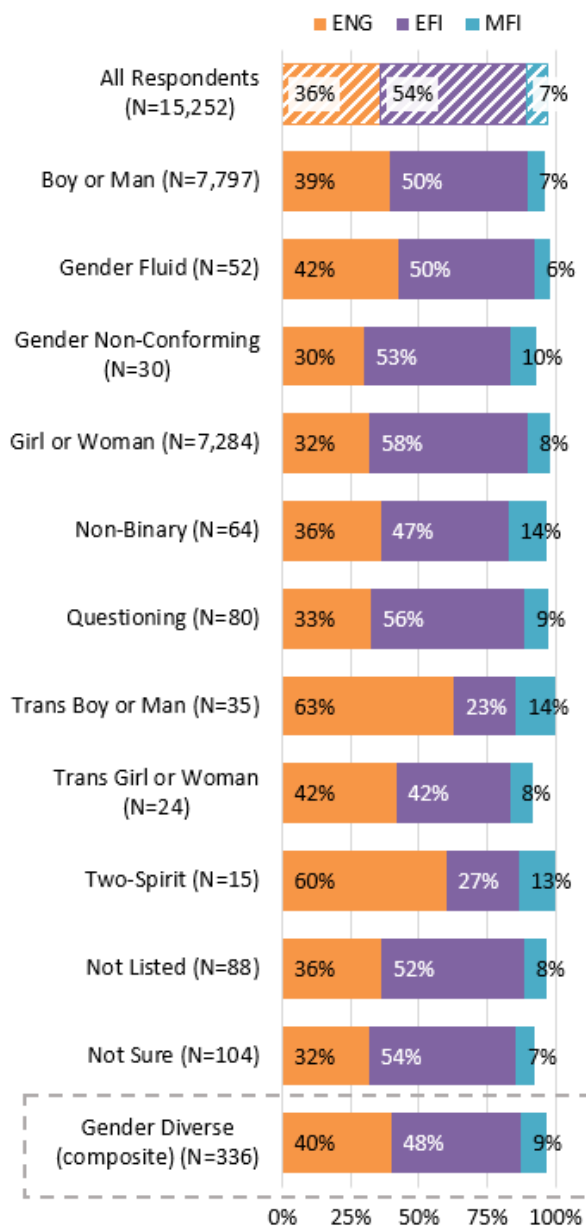
Elementary Enrolment (Grades 1 to 8; Valuing Voices - Gender Identity).

Consistent with full District-level data, the English with core French program had a higher proportion of students who self-identified as a boy and a lower proportion of those who identified as a girl. This program also had higher proportions of students who self-identified as Trans, Two-Spirit, and Gender-Fluid.

The middle French immersion program had higher proportions of students who identified as Non-Binary, Trans-Boy and Two-Spirit, each making up almost 2 times what would be expected given their representation in the population.

Given the small number of students in some of the gender identity reporting groups, a “Gender Diverse”⁶ grouping was created in an attempt to provide a more stable estimate of program representation over time. Results suggest that the English with core French and MFI programs had higher proportions of gender diverse students, whereas EFI had lower proportions.

Figure 6. Representation of Student Gender Identities across Elementary (Gr.1-8) Programs (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



“All Respondents” reflects 38% of District-level Elementary (Gr. 1-8) enrolment in 2019-2020.

⁶ “Gender Diverse” is a composite group that includes students who self-identified as at least one of the following (8) gender identities: Gender Fluid, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, Questioning, Trans Boy or Man, Trans Girl or Woman, Two-Spirit, and Not Listed/Another gender identity.

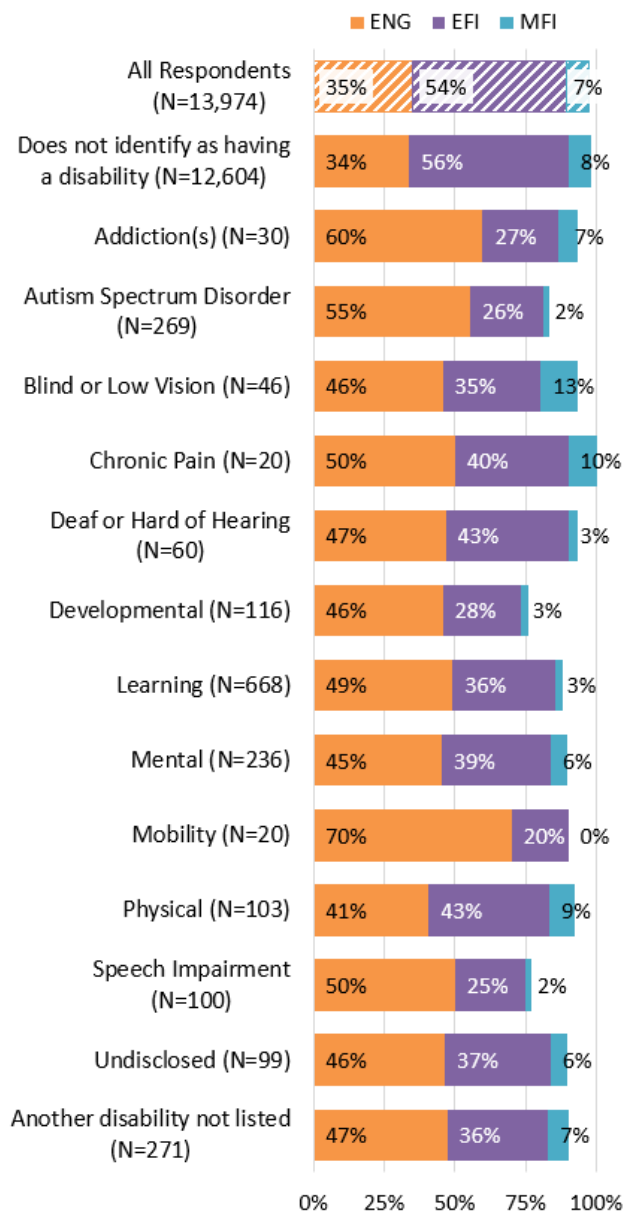
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Elementary Enrolment (Grades 1 to 8; Valuing Voices - Disability).

As seen in Figure 7, the English with core French program contained higher proportions of students who reported having each of the disabilities listed on the Valuing Voices survey, as compared to all survey respondents. This disproportionate representation was most pronounced for students identifying with the following disabilities: Mobility (2x), Addiction(s) (1.7x), and Autism Spectrum Disorder (1.6x). Inverse trends were observed in the early French immersion program.

The MFI program had higher proportions of students who identified as Blind or Low Vision, with Chronic Pain, and a Physical disability, with rates being 1.8, 1.3, and 1.2 times higher than their representation in the population, respectively.

Figure 7. Representation of Students with Self-Identified Disability(ies) across Elementary Programs (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



"All Respondents" reflects 34% of District-level Elementary (Gr. 1-8) enrolment in 2019-2020.

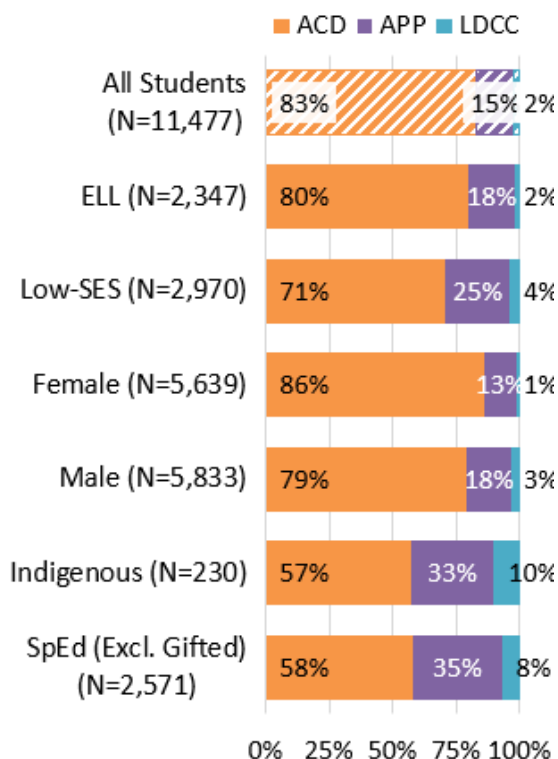
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Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; District - Population).

Program enrolment information for 2019-2020 was further disaggregated for specific groups of students for three compulsory courses based on data from the Trillium Student Information System (see Figure 8-A, 8-B, and 8-C). Applied and locally developed English, mathematics, and science courses had higher proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous, those with special education needs, and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods. In contrast, there were smaller proportions of these students in the academic level courses with the exception of male students in academic mathematics courses.

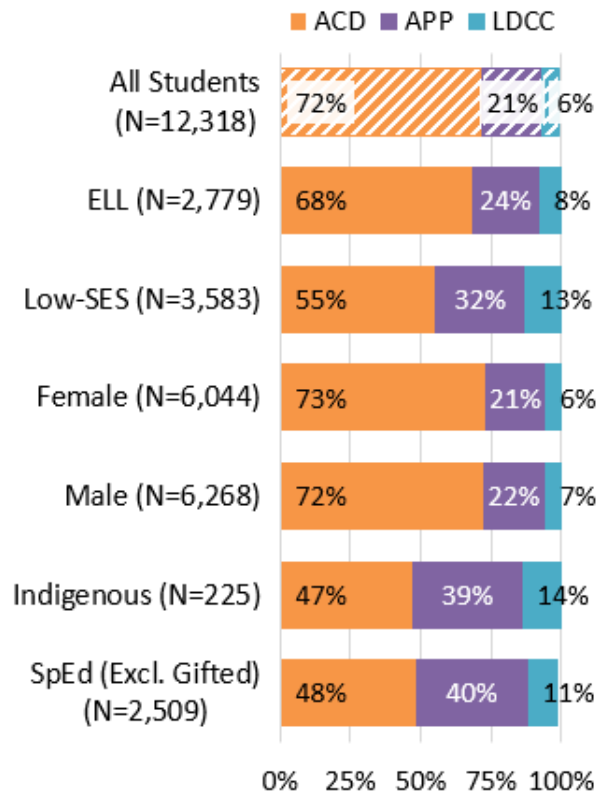
The disproportionate representation of students in locally developed courses was more pronounced for students who self-identified as Indigenous, students with special education needs, and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods who were between 1.54 and 4.46 times as likely to be enrolled.

Figure 8-A. Representation of Specific Groups of Students in Secondary English Courses (District, 2019-2020)

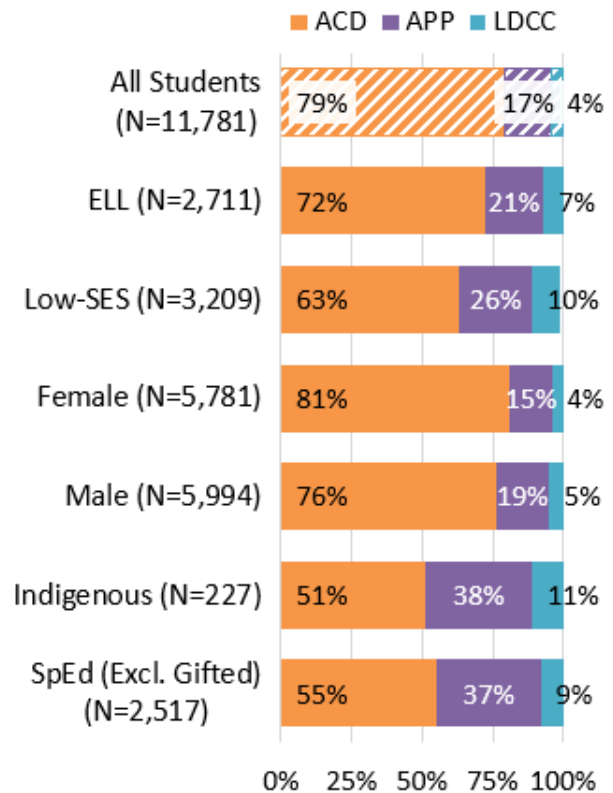


"All Students" reflects full District-level enrolment across Grade 9 and 10 English courses in 2019-2020.

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Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Population).**Figure 8-B.** Representation of Specific Groups of Students in Secondary Mathematics Courses (District, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects full District-level enrolment across Grade 9 and 10 Mathematics courses in 2019-2020.

Figure 8-C. Representation of Specific Groups of Students in Secondary Science Courses (District, 2019-2020)

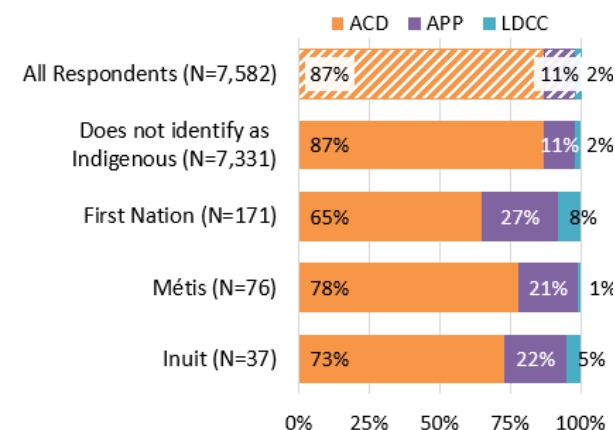
"All Students" reflects full District-level enrolment across Grade 9 and 10 Science courses in 2019-2020.

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Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Valuing Voices - Indigenous Identity).

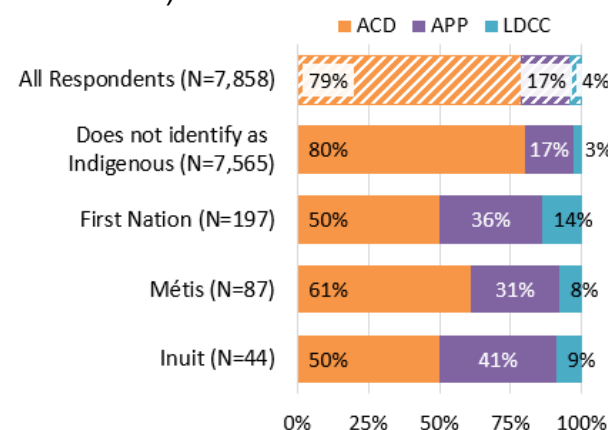
As seen in Figures 9-A, 9-B, and 9-C, grades 9 and 10 academic level English, mathematics, and science courses had lower proportions of students who self-identified as Indigenous, while applied and locally developed level courses had higher proportions. This disproportionate representation was more pronounced for First Nation students who were 3.9 to 4.7 times as likely to be enrolled in a locally developed course and for Inuit students who were 2.5 to 4.8 times as likely to be enrolled in these same courses.

Figure 9-A. Representation of Students with Indigenous Identities in Secondary English Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



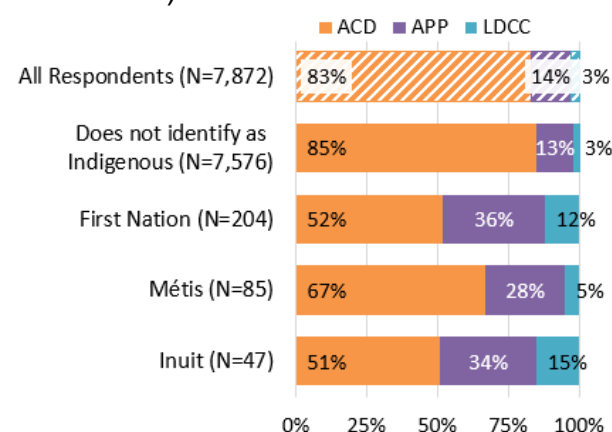
"All Respondents" reflects 66% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 English courses in 2019-2020.

Figure 9-B. Representation of Students with Indigenous Identities in Secondary Mathematics Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



"All Respondents" reflects 64% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Mathematics courses in 2019-2020.

Figure 9-C. Representation of Students with Indigenous Identities in Secondary Science Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



"All Respondents" reflects 67% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Science courses in 2019-2020.

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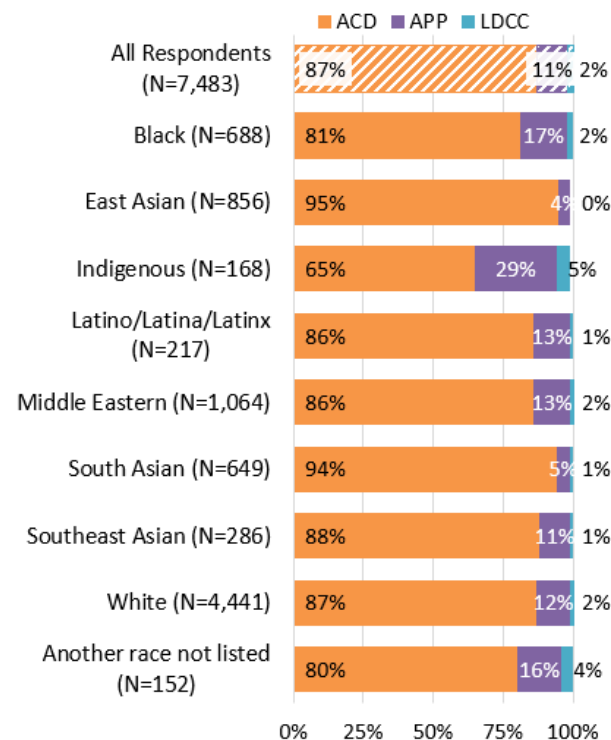
Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Valuing Voices - Race).

Figure 10-A, 10-B, and 10-C show the distribution of students enrolled in grades 9 and 10 English, mathematics, and science courses disaggregated by race.

Across all academic courses, there were lower proportions of students who self-identified as Black, Indigenous, Latino, and Middle Eastern. This disproportionate representation was most pronounced for students who identified as Indigenous who were 0.66 to 0.75 times as likely to be enrolled in this level of course.

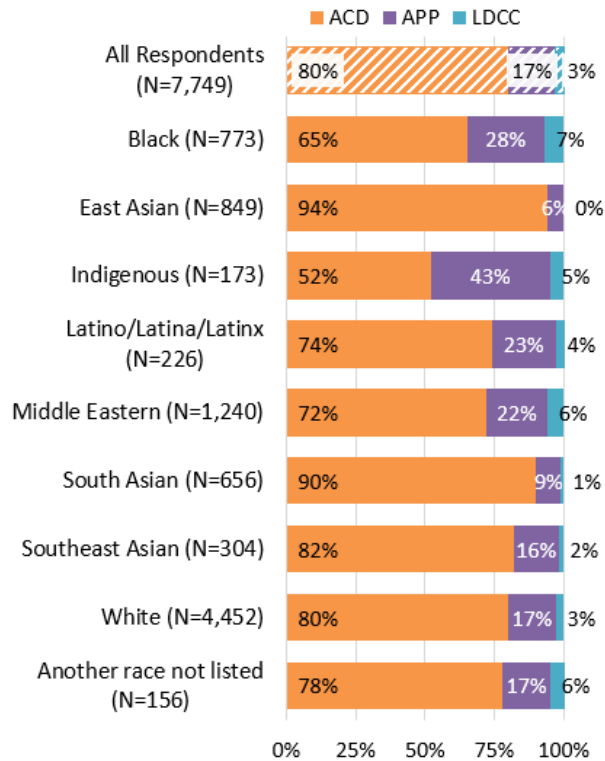
In contrast, applied and locally developed courses had higher proportions of these same groups of students. Relative to their representation in the population, students who self-identified as Indigenous were at least 2.5 times as likely to be enrolled in an applied or locally developed courses. Similarly, students who identified as Black were approximately 1.5 times as likely to be enrolled in applied level courses and twice as likely to be enrolled in a locally developed math or science course.

Figure 10-A. Representation of Student Racial Identities in Secondary English Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

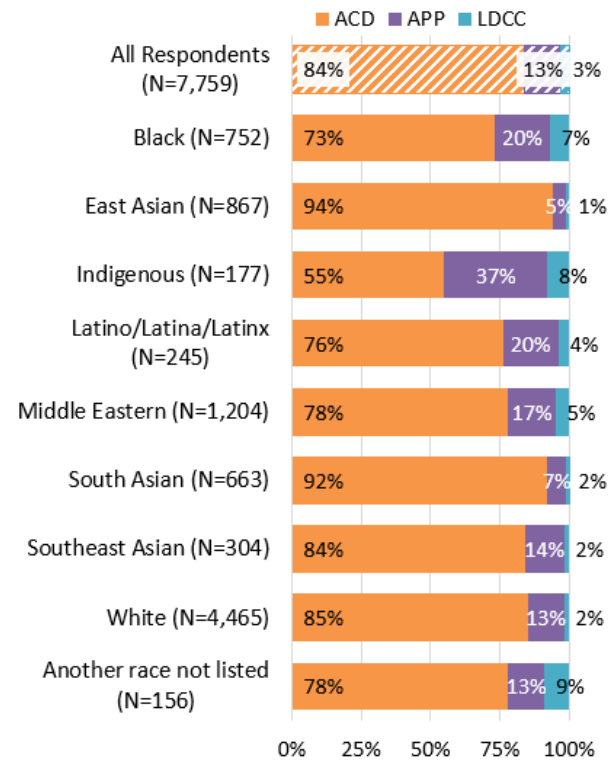


"All Respondents" reflects 65% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 English courses in 2019-2020.

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Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Valuing Voices - Race).**Figure 10-B.** Representation of Student Racial Identities in Secondary Mathematics Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects 63% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Mathematics courses in 2019-2020.

Figure 10-C. Representation of Student Racial Identities in Secondary Science Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects 66% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Science courses in 2019-2020.

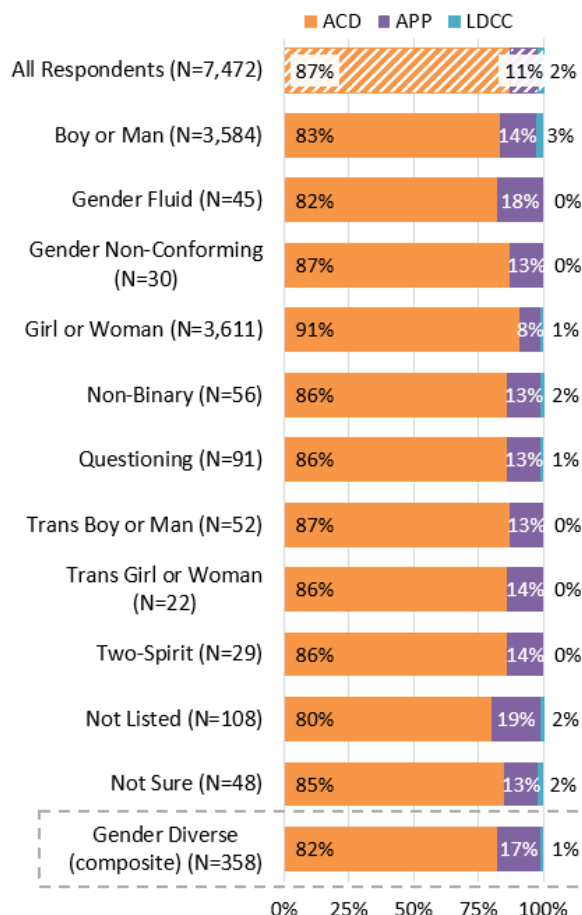
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Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Valuing Voices - Gender Identity).

Consistent with full District-level reporting, grades 9 and 10 applied level English, mathematics, and science courses had higher proportions of students who self-identified as Boy or Man, Gender Fluid, Gender Non-Confirming, Non-Binary, Questioning, Trans Boy or Man, and Trans Girl or Women relative to their proportion in the overall student population. In contrast, there were lower proportions of students who self-identified as Boy or Man, Gender Fluid, Non-Binary, Trans Girl or Women, and Two Spirit in academic English, mathematics, and science courses.

Due to the small number of students in some of these groups, and their subsequent smaller counts within each course pathway, disproportionality calculations for these groups are less reliable. In an attempt to provide a more stable estimate to measure representation, a “Gender Diverse⁷” grouping was created. The results for this composite reflect students identifying as “Gender Diverse” are between 1.3 and 1.5 times as likely to be enrolled in applied level courses relative to their representation in the population.

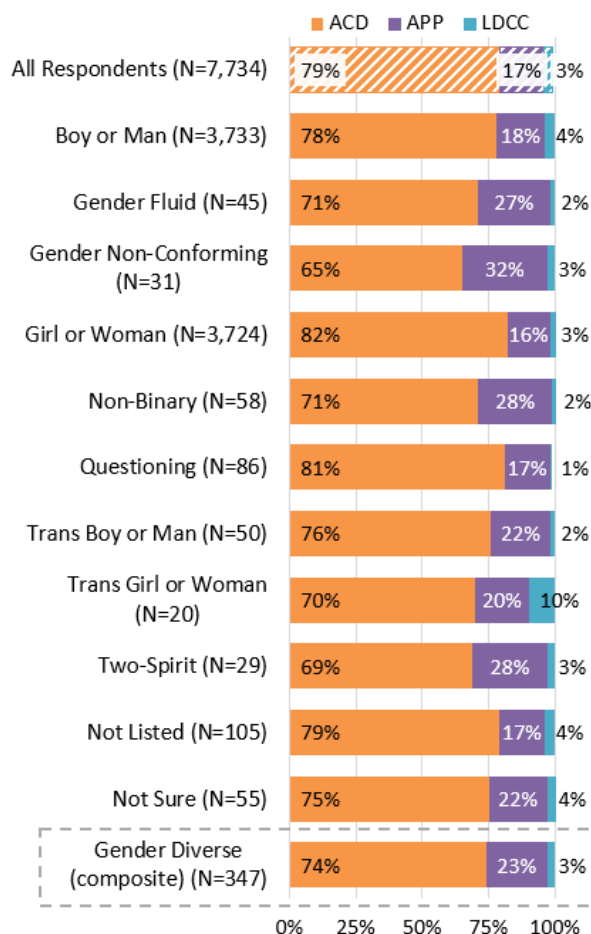
Figure 11-A. Representation of Student Gender Identities in Secondary English Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)



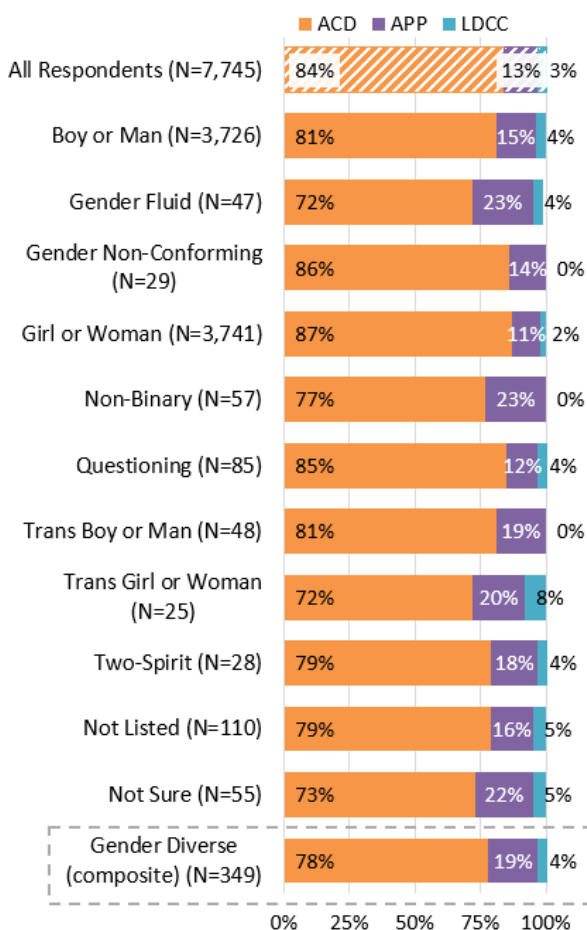
“All Respondents” reflects 65% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 English courses in 2019-2020.

⁷ “Gender Diverse” is a composite group that includes students who self-identified as at least one of the following (8) gender identities: Gender Fluid, Gender Non-Confirming, Non-Binary, Questioning, Trans Boy or Man, Trans Girl or Woman, Two-Spirit, and Not Listed/Another gender identity.

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Secondary Enrolment (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Valuing Voices - Gender Identity⁸).**Figure 11-B.** Representation of Student Gender Identities in Secondary Mathematics Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects 63% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Mathematics courses in 2019-2020.

Figure 11-C. Representation of Student Gender Identities in Secondary Science Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects 66% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Science courses in 2019-2020.

⁸ "Gender Diverse" is a composite group that includes students who self-identified as at least one of the following (8) gender identities: Gender Fluid, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, Questioning, Trans Boy or Man, Trans Girl or Woman, Two-Spirit, and Not Listed/Another gender identity.

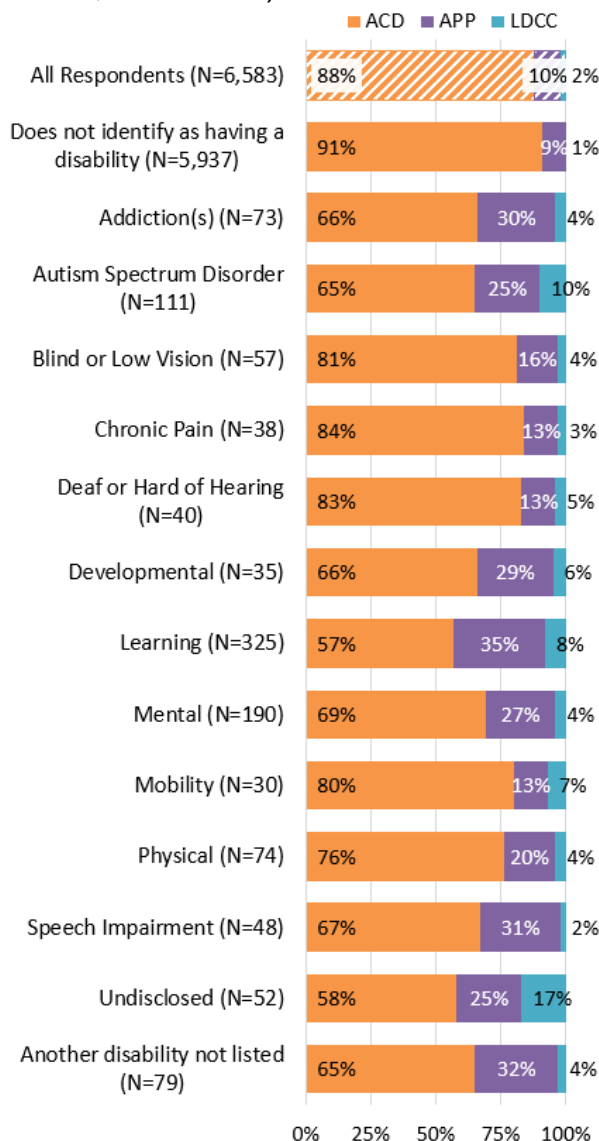
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Secondary Enrolment (Grades 9 and 10; Valuing Voices - Disability).

As seen in Figures 12-A, 12-B, and 12-C, applied and locally developed English, mathematics, and science courses had higher proportions of students who self-identified as having a disability on the Valuing Voices survey.

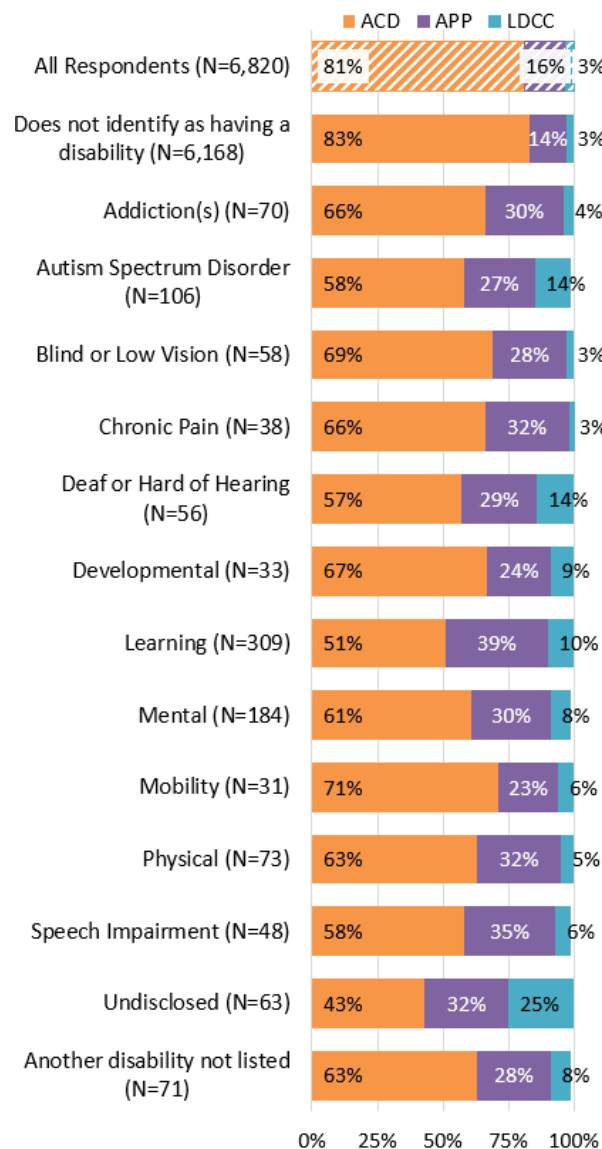
This disproportionate representation in applied level English courses was most pronounced for students identifying with the following disabilities: Learning, Speech Impairment, Addictions, Developmental, Mental, and Autism Spectrum Disorder (i.e., where these groups were between 2.6 and 3.5 times as likely to be enrolled in applied level courses relative to their representation in the population). Similar trends were observed in the applied and locally developed mathematics and science courses.

Figure 12-A. Representation of Students with Self-Identified Disability(ies) in Secondary English Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

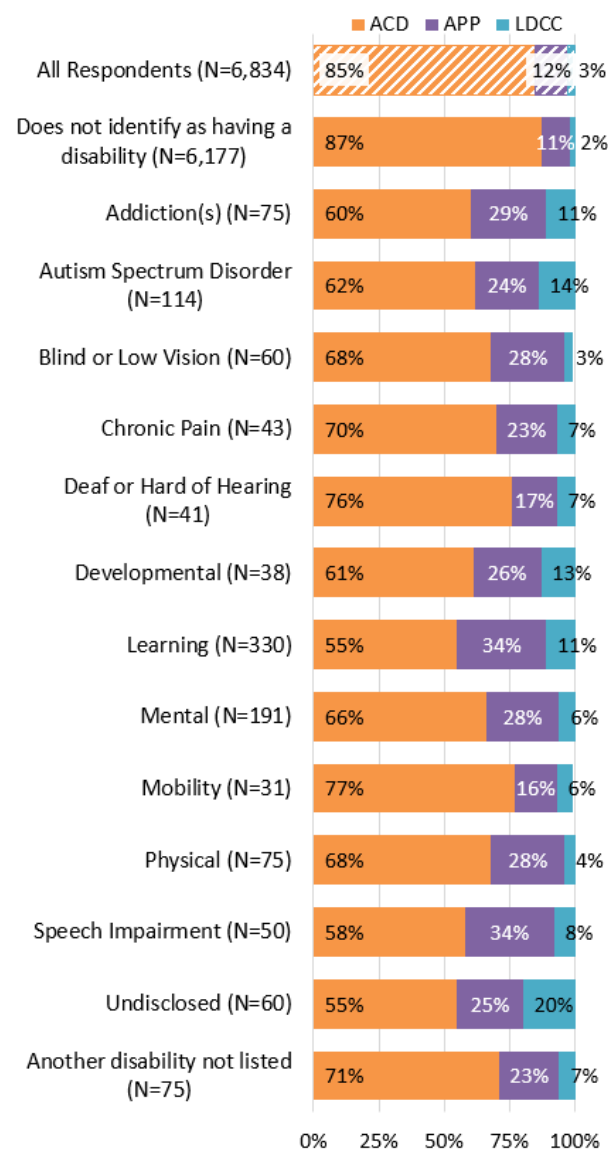


"All Respondents" reflects 57% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 English courses in 2019-2020.

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Secondary Enrolment (Grades 9 and 10; Valuing Voices - Disability).**Figure 12-B.** Representation of Students with Self-Identified Disability(ies) in Secondary Mathematics Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects 55% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Mathematics courses in 2019-2020.

Figure 12-C. Representation of Students with Self-Identified Disability(ies) in Secondary Science Courses (*Valuing Voices*, 2019-2020)

"All Students" reflects 58% of District-level enrolment in Grade 9 and 10 Science courses in 2019-2020.

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Secondary Enrolment (Grades 9 and 10; Population).

Digging Deeper: Secondary Program Pathways Cohort Tracking - Mathematics

Why it matters: The impact of students' pathway decisions on later postsecondary education, health, and life outcomes are well-established. As system efforts are made to remove barriers and improve outcomes for more students, we must look beyond “destreaming” grades 9 and 10 compulsory courses and consider whether opportunities exist for students to change their trajectory once it has been chosen. Specifically, “How likely is it for a student to ‘change pathways’ over the course of their secondary education?”

What we are seeing: Figure 13 examines the pathways of a single cohort of 5,775 students from Grade 9 (2017-2018) through Grade 11 (up to end of June 2020), using their enrolment in mathematics courses as an indicator of program pathway mobility/retention. The data shows that the majority of students enrolled in an academic level course in Grade 9 were enrolled in a Grade 11 university level course two years later. Similarly, students enrolled in an applied level course in Grade 9 were most likely to be enrolled in a college level math course in Grade 11, and those in locally developed followed a workplace pathway. While the data shows there is the potential for movement across program streams, it is not common.

Figure 13. Tracking Grade 9 Cohort Enrolment from 2017-2018 to 2019-2020

Mathematics	Grade 9 Cohort 2017-2018 (N=5775)	University	College/University	College	Workplace	Missing (N=1187)
	Academic (N=4308) 75%	(N=2721) 63%	(N=625) 14%	(N=316) 7%	(N=19) >1%	(N=627) 14%
	Applied (N=1130) 19%	(N=29) 3%	(N=107) 9%	(N=521) 46%	(N=114) 10%	(N=359) 32%
	Locally Developed (N=337) 6%	(N=3) 1%	(N=2) 1%	(N=20) 6%	(N=111) 33%	(N=201) 60%

• Missing indicates no data available in 2019-2020 (reasons for missing could be due to summer school, student transfer to another board or entered in grade 11)

To think about: The descriptive cohort analysis above indicates that once a pathway has been chosen, students are likely to remain in it for the duration of their secondary education. How might we create bridges to facilitate students' pathway changes, and provide resources to help mitigate transitional barriers?

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Achievement Trends - Elementary and Secondary

Part 1: Overall Achievement Trends

In order to understand how well the system is doing to support all students in meeting high expectations, analysis of achievement data in this section focuses on the percentages of students meeting/exceeding the provincial standard (equivalent to a minimum mark of B- or 70%) in select subjects and strands. Examination of the data in this way allows us to focus attention on where there may be systemic barriers or biases that may be an indication of lower expectations for some students or where learning opportunities and experiences may be lacking. Specifically, where specific groups of students are not meeting the provincial standard at the same rate as other students, the focus must first be on the system to identify the structures, policies and practices that may be contributing to these outcomes, so that corrective action can be taken to foster more inclusive learning environments and experiences for students where they can thrive and have the opportunity to demonstrate high levels of academic achievement.

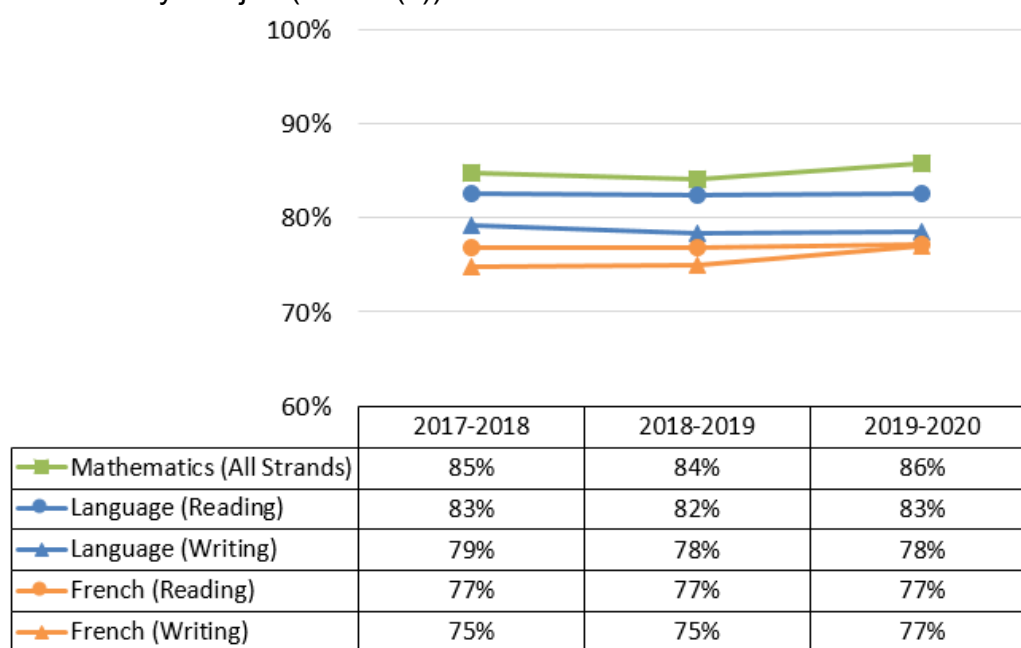
It is important to note that in the sections that follow, the presentation of results has been streamlined to help simplify information for the reader (e.g., presentation of data in graphs with percentages rounded to a whole number; use of simplified language to reflect the concept of group differences in outcomes (i.e., disparity) while also reframing the language to put the onus on the system (tables with more detailed information, including disparity calculations, can be found in the Technical Considerations section of the report). In so doing, some of the nuanced differences that are present may be hidden, particularly where there are small numbers of students who identify in a particular way and, therefore, comprise a relatively small portion of the population. While the strategies and initiatives to support these smaller groups of students are likely to be different from those that are needed to serve a larger portion of the population, the decisions we make as a system and as individuals must always take into account the impact it may have on even the smallest groups. In accordance with the Anti-Racism Data Standards, additional language has been embedded in the descriptive summary to provide relative magnitude of the disparity in achievement outcomes (i.e., values closer to 1.0 indicate no difference or equal likelihood, values less than 1.0 suggest lower likelihood, and values greater than 1.0 suggest greater likelihood). Additional details can be found in Tables 6 and 7 (pages 60 through 63) in the Technical Considerations section of the report.

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Elementary Achievement - Grades 1 to 8. Elementary report card data for 2019-2020 has been aggregated for students in grades 1 through 8, with a focus on the following subjects and strands - French (Reading and Writing), Language (Reading and Writing)⁹, and Mathematics (combination of all strands)¹⁰ to align with curricular areas assessed by the provincial assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics.

Figure 14 displays the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard in each subject/strand over a three year period (2017 to 2020¹¹). Achievement for each of these subjects and strands has remained fairly stable over the last three years, with Mathematics (All Strands) showing the greatest success rate, followed by Language, and French.

Figure 14. Elementary Achievement Trends: % of Students Meeting the Provincial Standard by Subject(Strand(s))



⁹ For students in EFI, Language is introduced in Grade 2.

¹⁰ Up to the end of the 2019-2020 school year, mathematics was reported by strand and not a single mark. In order to create a composite math score, all available marks across all math strands were retained, meaning that each student could contribute to this measure up to 5 times. This methodology is consistent with the approach taken by the Ministry of Education's methodology. More details can be found in the Technical Considerations at the end of this document.

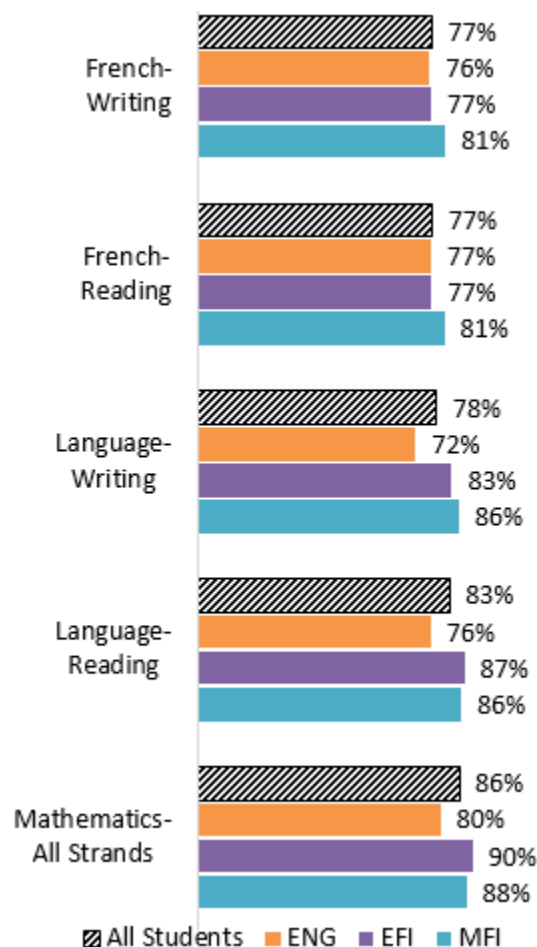
¹¹ Based on available Final (June) Elementary report card marks each academic year; where final marks were missing, interim marks were substituted. The total number of students in Grades 1-8 for whom at least one final report card mark varied across three years. Details can be found in the Technical Considerations portion of the appendix.

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Elementary Achievement - Grades 1 to 8.

Figure 15 shows the percentage of students meeting/exceeding the provincial standard in each of the three programs by subject/strand for the 2019-2020 school year. For the District as a whole, more than three-quarters of all students reached this standard in each of the five subjects/strands examined. Nevertheless, the data shows differences in outcomes linked to program enrolment, with the English with core French program tending to yield lower outcomes and immersion programs yielding higher ones.

Figure 15. % of Elementary Students Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Subject-Strand (District, 2019-2020)¹²



"All Students" reflects District-level Elementary (Gr.1-8) achievement outcomes in 2019-2020.

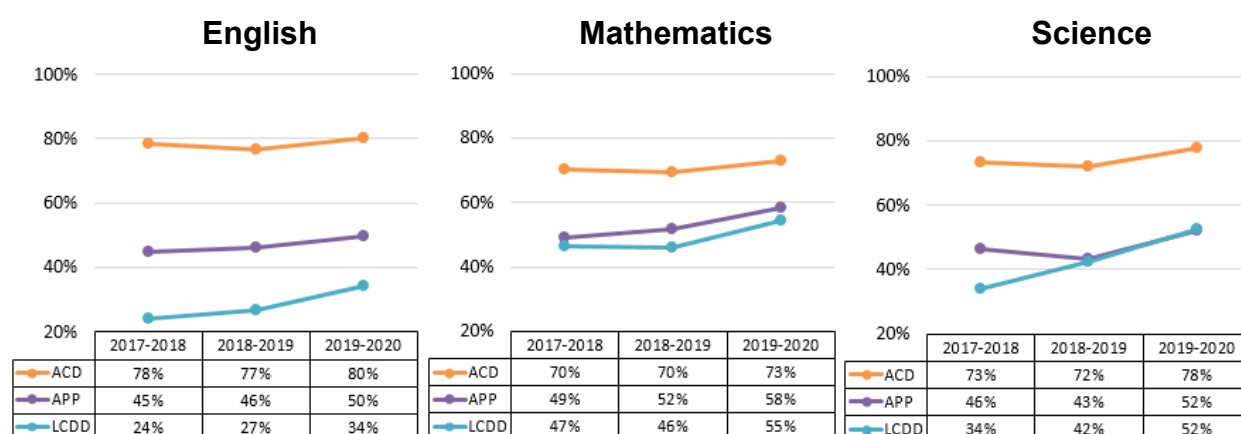
¹² Mathematics is a composite of all (5) math strands. See technical considerations for more details.

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Secondary Achievement - Grade 9 and 10 Courses. Secondary report card data from grades 9 and 10 compulsory courses in three subjects (English, Mathematics, and Science) were examined, and achievement outcomes compared across academic, applied, and locally developed courses¹³. Figure 16 shows the proportions of students meeting the provincial standard in each of these courses over a three year period (2017 to 2020¹⁴). As was the case in elementary, there are differences in secondary achievement outcomes linked to program enrolment, with outcomes being higher in academic level courses compared to applied and locally developed mathematics courses.

Achievement outcomes in Mathematics and English have remained fairly stable over the three-year period, whereas outcomes in applied level science courses have fluctuated.

Figure 16. Secondary Achievement Trends: % of Students Meeting the Provincial Standard by Subject and Program



¹³ These subjects were chosen to align with requirements to monitor the destreaming of Grade 9 mathematics. Disaggregation by subject at the secondary level was important, given that students may choose different program streams for each subject.

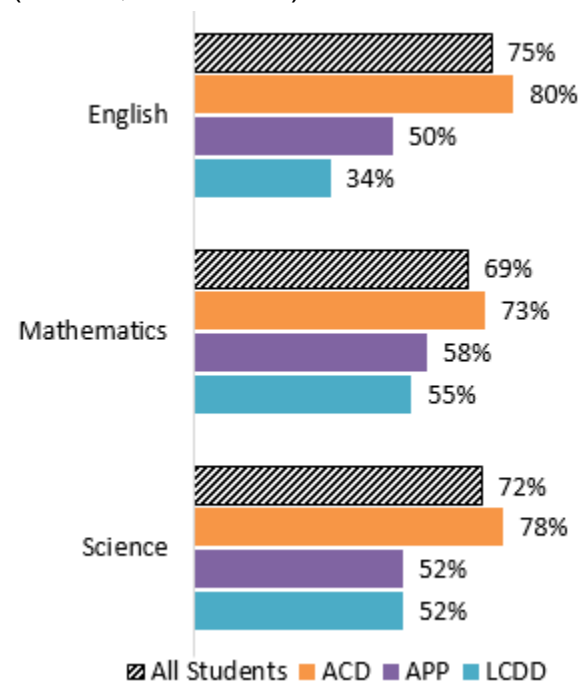
¹⁴ Based on available Final (June) Elementary report card marks each academic year; where final marks were missing, interim marks were substituted. The total number of students in Grades 1-8 for whom at least one final report card mark varied across three years. Details can be found in the Technical Considerations portion of the document.

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Secondary Achievement - Grade 9 and 10 Courses.

Figure 17 shows the percentage of students meeting/exceeding the provincial standard in each subject and program for the 2019-2020 school year. For the District as a whole, between 69% and 75% of all students reached this standard. As noted previously, academic level courses (ACD) tend to yield higher proportions of students meeting the provincial standard compared to applied (APP) and locally developed (LCDD) courses. While school Districts work to dismantle the practice of streaming students into applied and academic level courses over the next few years, it will be important to pay close attention to what is happening in locally developed courses where barely half the students met the provincial standard in mathematics and science, and only one-third did so in English.

Figure 17. % of Students Meeting the Provincial Standard in Secondary Courses (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level Gr.9+10 Course achievement outcomes in 2019-2020.

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Part 2: Achievement Trends for Specific Groups of Students, 2019-2020

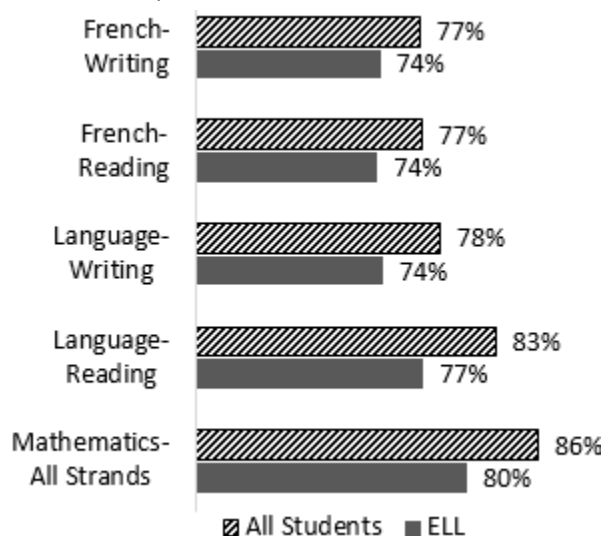
Information in this section of the report is presented by demographic characteristics/identity, beginning with data for the full population (based on data in the Student Information System; elementary followed by secondary). Where similar data was collected through the *Valuing Voices Student Survey*, a spotlight on key results for the subset of students for whom both survey results and final report card marks were available in the subjects/strands under investigation, immediately follows. Using the provincial standard as a benchmark, this section of the report encourages the reader to reflect on how well our District is doing to support students in meeting high achievement expectations.

English Language Learners

Elementary Achievement (Grades 1 to 8; Population).

At least three-quarters of ELLs met the provincial standard in French (Reading and Writing), Language (Reading and Writing), and mathematics in 2019-2020. Differences in achievement outcomes between ELLs and all students ranged from 3% in French (Reading and Writing) to 6% in Language (Reading) and Mathematics, reflecting disparities of between 0.92 and 0.95.

Figure 18. % of Elementary English Language Learners Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Subject-Strand (District, 2019-2020)¹⁵



“All Students” reflects District-level Elementary (Gr. 1-8) achievement outcomes in 2019-2020.

¹⁵ Mathematics is a composite of all (5) math strands. See technical considerations for more details.

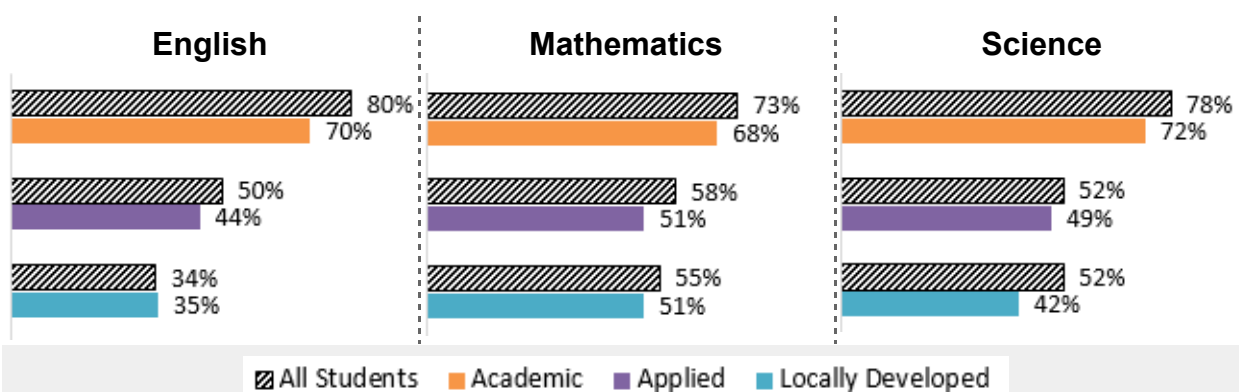
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English Language Learners

Secondary Achievement (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Population). Figure 19 shows that academic level courses tended to yield higher achievement outcomes for ELLs as compared to applied and locally-developed. Specifically, at least two-thirds of ELLs met the provincial standard in academic level English, mathematics, and science, whereas no more than 51% of ELLs achieved this standard in applied and locally developed courses.

With the exception of locally developed English, all subjects and course pathways examined yielded lower outcomes for ELLs relative to all students, with differences ranging from 3% in applied level science to 10% in academic English and locally developed science (disparities ranging from 0.72 to 0.92).

Figure 19: % of Secondary English Language Learners Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Course (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level achievement outcomes in Grade 9 and 10 courses for each course and program, respectively, in 2019-2020.

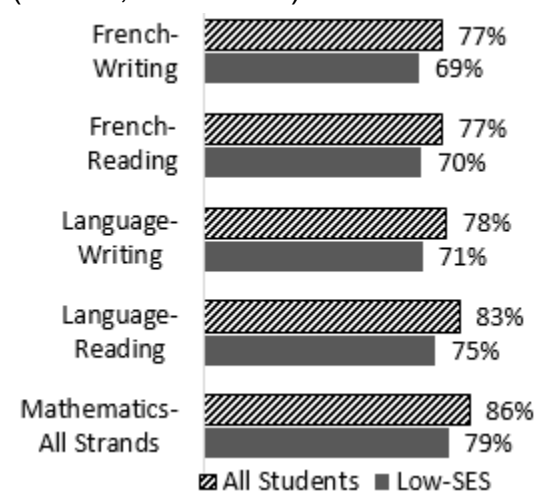
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Students Residing in Lower Income Neighbourhoods (Low-SES)

Elementary Achievement (Grades 1 to 8; Population).

As seen in Figure 20, all subjects/strands examined tended to yield lower achievement rates for those students residing in lower income neighbourhoods. Mathematics yielded the highest outcomes for this group of students, while French yielded the lowest. However, when compared to the District, disparities were evident, as outcomes for this group were lower by 7 to 8 percentage points across the five subject-strands examined: French (Reading; Writing), Language (Reading; Writing), and Mathematics (All Strands)¹⁶ (disparities ranging from 0.86 to 0.89).

Figure 20. % of Elementary Students Residing in Lower-Income Neighbourhoods Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Subject-Strand (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level Elementary (Gr. 1-8) achievement outcomes in 2019-2020

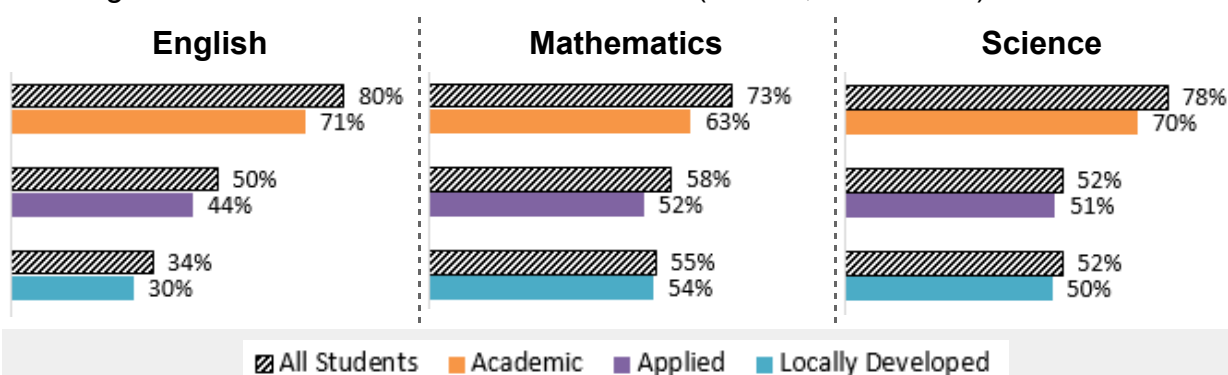
¹⁶ Mathematics is a composite of all (5) math strands. See technical considerations for more details.

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Secondary Achievement (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Population). Figure 21 shows that academic level courses tended to yield the highest outcomes for students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, where 63% of these students met the standard in math, 70% in science, and 71% in English. Applied and locally developed courses yielded the lowest outcomes, with only about half meeting the standard in math and science, and less than half in English.

Outcomes for these students were consistently lower compared to all students where, on average, they were approximately 0.80 times as likely to meet the provincial standard in academic mathematics, English and science.

Figure 21. % of Secondary Students Residing in Lower-Income Neighbourhoods Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Course (District, 2019-2020)



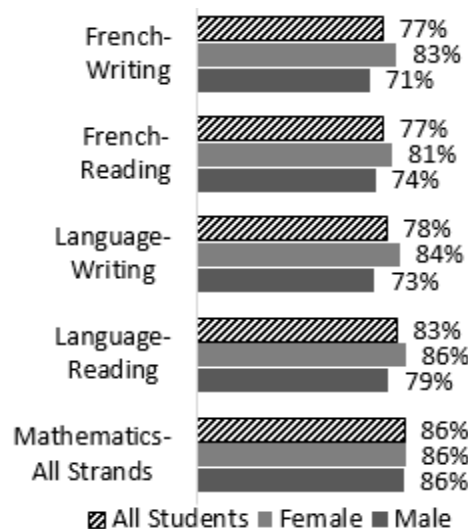
"All Students" reflects District-level achievement outcomes in Grade 9 and 10 courses for each course and program, respectively, in 2019-2020.

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Gender Identity

Elementary Achievement (Grades 1 to 8; Population). Figure 22 shows that French and Language (Reading and Writing) yielded lower outcomes for male students and higher ones for females. No noticeable difference between these two groups was observed in the area of mathematics. Achievement gaps were largest in Writing, with a difference of 12% in French and 11% in Language (disparities ranging from 1.01 to 1.14).

Figure 22. % of Female and Male Elementary Students Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Subject-Strand (District, 2019-2020)¹⁷



"All Students" reflects District-level Elementary (Gr.1-8) achievement outcomes in 2019-2020

Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Gender Identity. The following trends in elementary¹⁸ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 60):

- ★ Outcomes in Language-Writing showed the least variability across reported gender identities (79-89% met standard; disparities 0.90 to 1.11) while Language-Reading showed the most variability (55-90% met standard; disparities 0.65 to 1.10).
- ★ Trends for students who identified as Boy/Man or Girl/Woman were similar to those for the District's elementary population as a whole, with higher proportions of Girls/Women meeting the provincial standard across all outcomes.
- ★ Patterns of strength/challenge differed across gender identity. For example, for students who identified as Non-Binary or Two-Spirit, outcomes were highest in French-Writing, and exceeded those of the overall population.
- ★ French-Reading, French-Writing, Language-Reading, and Mathematics tended to produce lower outcomes for gender diverse¹⁹ students compared to all other students (disparity ranging from 0.89-0.95).

¹⁷ Mathematics is a composite of all (5) math strands. See technical considerations for more details.

¹⁸ Results are based on the respective Subject-Strand subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark from 2019-2020 are available. For VV-Gender Identity, coverage varied between 35-37% of the District's Gr.1-8 population.

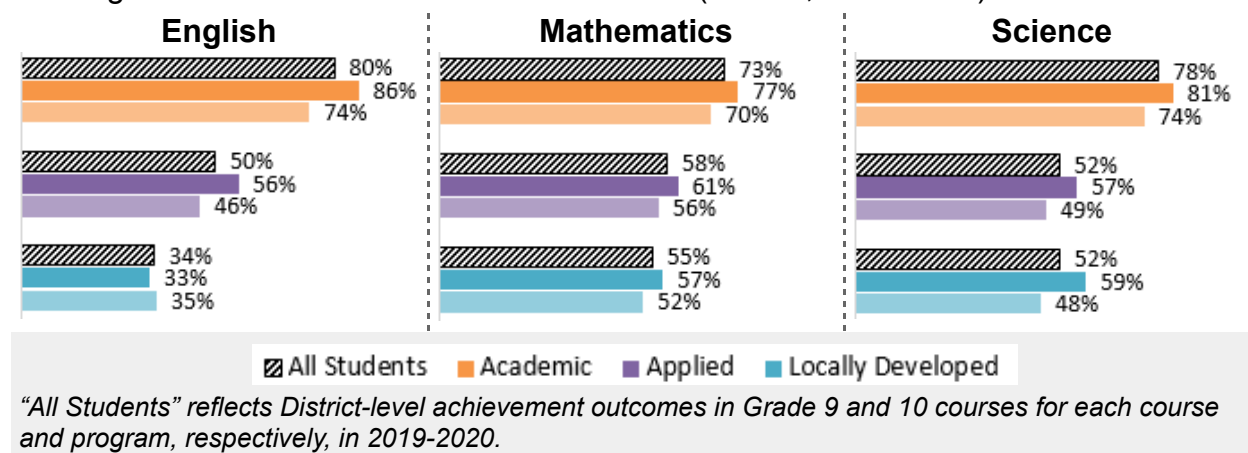
¹⁹ "Gender Diverse" is a composite group that includes students who self-identified as at least one of the following (8) gender identities: Gender Fluid, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, Questioning, Trans Boy or Man, Trans Girl or Woman, Two-Spirit, and Not Listed/Another gender identity.

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Gender Identity

Secondary Achievement (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Population). Secondary achievement outcomes (Figure 23) disaggregated by gender show a similar pattern as those seen at the elementary panel. With the exception of locally-developed mathematics, larger proportions of female students met the provincial standard in all three subjects and program pathways, compared to all other students. On average, male students were approximately 0.85 times as likely to meet the provincial standard in academic mathematics, English, and science compared to female students.

Figure 23. % of Female (dark shading) and Male (light shading) Secondary Students Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Course (District, 2019-2020)



Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Gender Identity. The following trends in **secondary**²⁰ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg.61-63):

- ★ Trends for students who identified as Boy/Man or Girl/Woman were similar to those for the District's Elementary population as a whole.
- ★ Achievement outcomes were highest in academic mathematics for students who self-identified as Questioning, Gender Non-confirming, or Gender Fluid (81-85% met standard; disparity ranged from 1.08-1.12);
- ★ Outcomes for students identifying as gender diverse, as a whole, ranged from 46% in locally developed science to 80% in academic English (reflecting disparities of 0.90 and 0.96, respectively). Applied level science and math courses yielded higher outcomes for gender diverse students compared to all others, with 68-70% meeting the standard, respectively (disparity of 1.12 and 1.17).

²⁰ Results are based on the respective Course-Program subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark in 2019-2020 are available. For VV-Gender Identity, coverage varied between 35-70% of the District's enrolment across Gr.9 and 10 English, Mathematics, and Science courses.

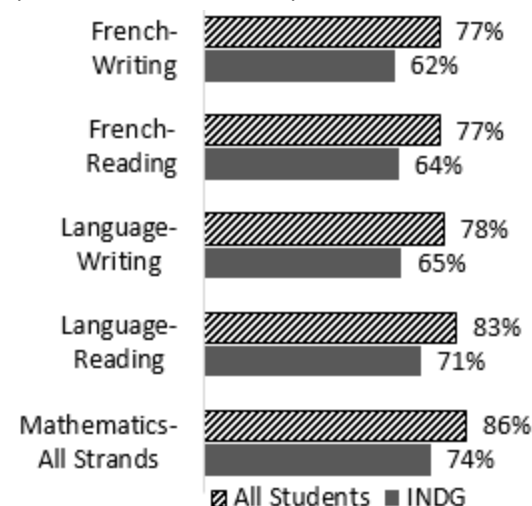
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Indigenous Identity

Elementary Achievement (Grades 1 to 8; Population).

Figure 24 shows that all subjects/strands examined tended to yield outcomes that were 12-15% lower for students who self-identified as Indigenous compared to the District as a whole. Compared to their non-Indigenous peers, Indigenous students were approximately 0.8 times as likely to meet the provincial standard in French (Reading; Writing), Language (Reading; Writing), and Mathematics (All Strands)²¹.

Figure 24. % of Elementary Students who Self-Identify as Indigenous Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Subject-Strand (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level Elementary (Gr.1-8) achievement outcomes in 2019-2020

Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Indigenous Identity. The following trends in elementary²² achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 60):

- ★ Consistent with District results, across all subjects-strands, there were lower proportions of students who self-identified as Indigenous who met the provincial standard, compared to their non-Indigenous peers (disparity range 0.84 [French-Reading] to 0.92 [Language-Reading]).
- ★ Language-Writing outcomes showed the least variability (7.7%) while differences in outcomes for French-Writing varied by up to 21%.
- ★ Among indigenous identities, a larger proportion of Métis students met the provincial standard across all subjects-strands (73% in French-Reading to 87% in Language-Reading).
- ★ A larger proportion of First Nation students met the provincial standard in French (Reading & Writing) and Math compared to Métis students, while the reverse was true for Language (Reading & Writing).

²¹ Mathematics is a composite of all (5) math strands. See technical considerations for more details.

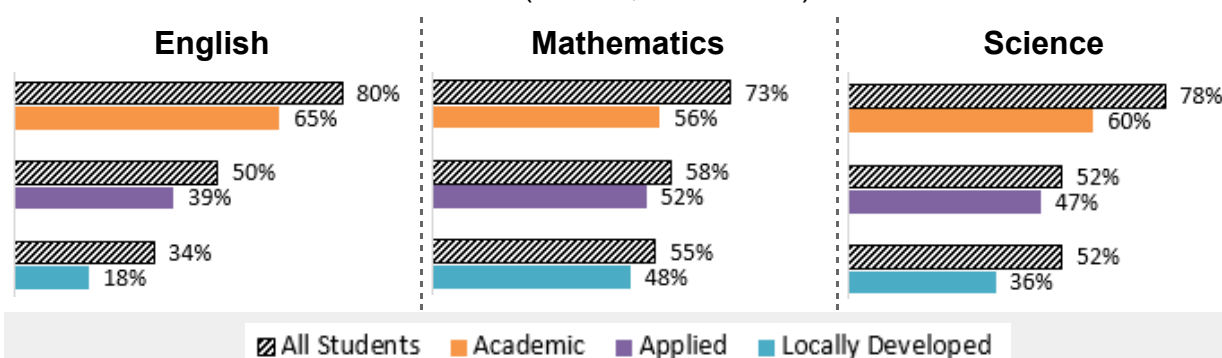
²² Results are based on the respective Subject-Strand subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark are available. For *VV-Indigenous Identity*, coverage varied between 37-39% of the District's Gr.1-8 population.

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Indigenous Identity

Secondary Achievement (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Population). Figure 25 shows that achievement outcomes for students who self-identified as Indigenous and were enrolled in grades 9 and 10 academic, applied, and locally developed English, mathematics, and science courses were consistently lower (by 6-18%) than the District, where they were approximately 0.75 times as likely to meet the provincial standard compared to their non-Indigenous peers.

Figure 25. % of Secondary Students who Self-Identified as Indigenous Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Course (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level achievement outcomes in Grade 9 and 10 courses for each course and program, respectively, in 2019-2020.

Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Indigenous Identity. The following trends in secondary²³ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 61-63):

- ★ Consistent with District results, courses at the academic level tended to yield lower outcomes for students who self-identified as Indigenous compared to their non-Indigenous peers; academic math being an exception where 77% of Inuit students met the provincial standard (disparity of 1.02).
- ★ Among Indigenous identities, the Inuit community had the largest proportion of students who met the provincial standard in academic mathematics (77%), while Métis had the largest proportion of students who met the provincial standard in academic science (70%), and First Nations had the largest proportion of students who met the provincial standard in locally-developed mathematics courses (63%).
- ★ Mathematics was the only subject in which there were higher proportions of students who identified as Indigenous meeting the standard compared to their non-Indigenous peers - this occurred for Inuit students in academic and locally developed courses, and for First Nations students in locally developed.

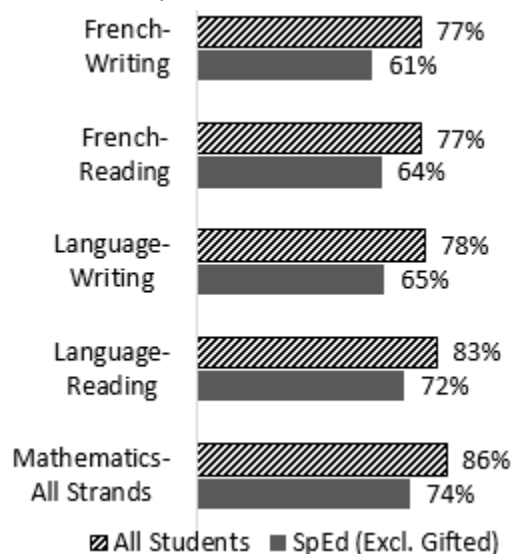
²³ Results are based on the respective Course-Program subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark in 2019-2020 are available. For *VV-Indigenous Identity*, coverage varied between 36-71% of the District's enrolment across Gr.9 and 10 English, Mathematics, and Science courses.

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Students with Special Education Needs

Elementary Achievement (Grades 1 to 8; Population). Figure 26 shows that all subjects-strands examined yielded achievement outcomes for students with special education needs (excluding gifted) that were 11-16% lower than the District as whole across all subjects/strands examined (disparities of approximately 0.8 in French (Reading; Writing), Language (Reading; Writing), and Mathematics (All Strands))²⁴.

Figure 26. % of Elementary Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted) Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Subject-Strand (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level Elementary (Gr.1-8) achievement outcomes in 2019-2020

Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Self-identified Disability. The following trends in elementary²⁵ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 60):

- ★ Almost all subjects-strands yielded lower outcomes for students identifying with a disability compared to those who did not.
- ★ Disparities in achievement were most pronounced for students who self-identified as having a developmental disability, learning disability, or speech impairment; disparities were less pronounced for those who self-identified with chronic pain, or deaf or hard of hearing.
- ★ The greatest variability in outcomes was observed in Language-Writing (34% difference for students reporting a developmental disability; disparity of 0.71), and the least in French-Reading (21% difference for students reporting addiction; disparity of 0.75).

²⁴ Mathematics is a composite of all (5) math strands. See technical considerations for more details.

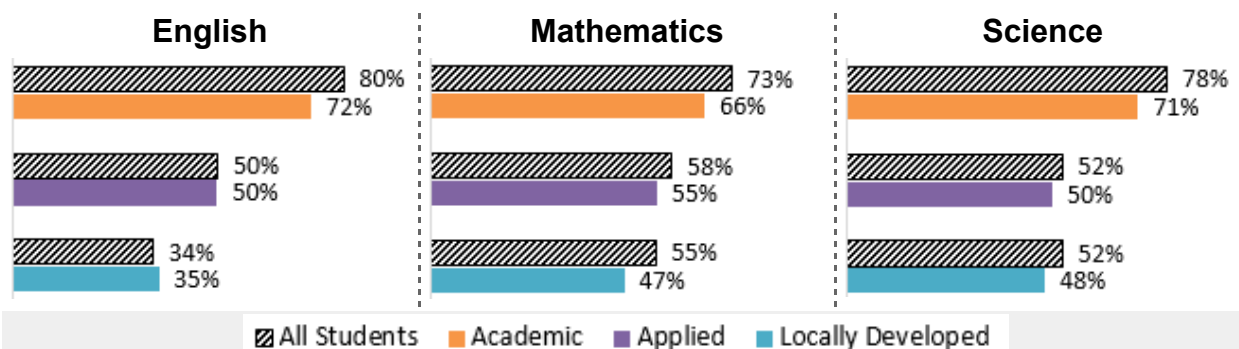
²⁵ Results are based on the respective Subject-Strand subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark are available. For *VV-Disability*, coverage varied between 33-35% of the District's Gr.1-8 population.

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Students with Special Education Needs

Secondary Achievement (Grade 9 and 10 Courses; Population). Academic level courses yielded outcomes for students with special education needs (excluding gifted) that were 7-8% lower than the District as a whole (disparity of 0.90). Differences in outcomes in the applied and locally developed pathways were much less pronounced, ranging from 2% in applied level science to 8% in locally developed math. In English, outcomes were the same as all students in the applied program and 1% higher in locally developed.

Figure 27. % of Secondary Students with Special Education Needs (Excluding Gifted) Meeting the Provincial Standard in each Course (District, 2019-2020)



"All Students" reflects District-level achievement outcomes in Grade 9 and 10 courses for each course and program, respectively, in 2019-2020.

Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Self-identified Disability. The following trends in secondary²⁶ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 61-63):

- ★ In nearly all program and courses examined, outcomes were lower for students who self-identified as having a disability(ies); differences in outcomes were most pronounced in academic courses (disparity ranging from 0.59 in English for students identifying as Blind/Low Vision to 0.98, also in English, for students reporting a mobility disability).
- ★ Locally Developed English and science courses, and applied level math, tended to yield higher outcomes for students who self-identified with a disability(ies) compared to those who did not.
- ★ Disparities in achievement outcomes varied across both subject and program, but appeared more prominent for groups of students who self-identified as having an addiction(s), a blind or low vision disability, mobility disability, speech impairment, developmental disability, or another disability not listed.

²⁶ Results are based on the respective Course-Program subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark in 2019-2020 are available. For *VV-Disability*, coverage varied between 29-63% of the District's enrolment across Gr.9 and 10 English, Mathematics, and Science courses.

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Elementary and Secondary Achievement.

Spotlight on *Valuing Voices*: Racial Identity

The following trends in **elementary**²⁷ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 60):

- ★ Across all subjects and strands examined, outcomes were higher for students who identified as East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian and White relative to all other students (disparity values ranged from 1.02-1.08).
- ★ Differences in outcomes were most pronounced for students who identified as Indigenous, who met the standard across all subject-strands at a rate that was 8-13% lower than the full population (disparities ranging from 0.83-0.91).
- ★ Disparities across all achievement outcomes were also present for Middle Eastern students (range 0.90-0.93), Black students (range 0.89-0.94), and Latino/Latina/Latinx students (range 0.94-0.99).

The following trends in **secondary**²⁸ achievement were observed (more details can be found on pg. 61-63):

- ★ Compared to others, there were higher proportions of East Asian students who met the provincial standard in grades 9 and 10 English, mathematics and science, regardless of whether it was the academic, applied, or locally developed program pathway (disparity values range 1.00-1.79). Outcomes for White and South Asian students showed a similar pattern.
- ★ Conversely, outcomes for students identifying as Middle Eastern were consistently lower than all other students across all subjects and program pathways (disparity values range 0.65-0.92). Outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and Latino/Latina/Latinx students showed a similar pattern.

²⁷ Results are based on the respective Subject-Strand subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark are available. For *VV-Race*, coverage varied between 36-38% of the District's Gr.1-8 population.

²⁸ Results are based on the respective Course-Program subsets of students for whom both identity information and a final report card mark in 2019-2020 are available. For *VV-Race*, coverage varied between 34-70% of the District's enrolment across Gr.9 and 10 English, Mathematics, and Science courses.

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SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

It has been more than a decade since the Organisation for Cooperation and Economic Development recommended the discontinuation of streaming practices that adversely impact racialized and minoritized students. Since that time, researchers have continued to report reduced opportunities for minoritized students as they transition through the education system (K-12) and on to post-secondary, as well as different educational experiences (e.g., lower expectations, poor educational quality) that lead to lower achievement outcomes. The analysis of program enrolment and achievement outcomes in connection with identity based data from 2018-2019 confirms that the experiences of students in the OCDSB are not substantively different than those in other areas of the province and that academic outcomes are being adversely impacted. A high level summary of results from 2019-2020 presented in this report include the following:

Program Enrolment

Elementary. Early French Immersion (EFI) continues to be the most popular program amongst families, with 53% of students enrolled in 2019-2020. The English with core French program had 1.5 to 2 times higher proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous (INDG), males, those with special education needs (SpED), and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods (Low-SES), relative to their representation in the overall student population. In contrast, there were smaller proportions of these students in the EFI program.

The MFI program has higher proportions of ELLs and females, and lower proportions of students from the remaining groups. In the case of ELLs, some of this may be linked to parental choice. Specifically, at the time of the OCDSB's FSL review in 2007, parents of ELLs indicated a preference for MFI over EFI in order to provide time for learning English before introducing another language.

For the subset of elementary students who participated in the Valuing Voices survey, results indicated that many groups were disproportionately represented in the English with core French program, with the following groups having at least 1.5 times the proportion of students enrolled relative to their representation in the population: First Nations, Inuit, Middle Eastern, Trans Boy or Man, Two-Spirit, Gender Fluid and students identifying with the following disabilities - addiction, Autism, and Mobility. Conversely, French immersion programs (EFI and MFI) have higher proportions of students who reported having no disability, those who did not self-identify as Indigenous, and those who self-identified as Girl or Woman, White and/or East Asian. Of the two programs, disproportionate representation was most pronounced in MFI where the proportions of students who identified as East Asian, Non-Binary, Trans Boy or Man, Two Spirit, and

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Blind or Low Vision were at least 1.5 times higher relative to their representation in the population.

Secondary. The vast majority of students in the OCDSB are enrolled in academic level courses in grades 9 and 10, ranging from 72% in mathematics to 83% in English. Applied and locally developed courses had higher proportions of English language learners (ELLs), students who identify as Indigenous, those with special education needs, and those residing in lower income neighbourhoods. This disproportionate representation was most pronounced in locally developed courses where the proportions of these students were 1.5 to 4.5 times higher relative to their representation in the population.

For the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* survey, academic level courses (English, math, and science) were found to have higher proportions of students who self-identified: as non-Indigenous, White, South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, Girl/Woman, and those reporting no disability. In contrast, the proportions of students in applied and locally developed English, math, and science courses from the following groups were at least 1.5 times higher than their representation in the population: First Nation, Metis, Inuit, Black, Indigenous, Gender Fluid, and those reporting the following disabilities - addiction, Autism, learning, mental, physical, speech impairment, undisclosed, and another disability not listed.

Finally, a cohort analysis of students enrolled in a Grade 9 math course in 2017-2018 that tracked them to the end of June 2020, showed that the majority of students continue along the same pathway they start when they enter Grade 9. That is, most students enrolled in academic level math in Grade 9 pursued a Grade 11 university level course, those enrolled in applied mathematics pursued a Grade 11 college level courses, and those in locally developed pursued workplace courses.

Achievement Outcomes

Elementary. The percentage of all students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard ranged from 77% in French (Reading and Writing) to 86% in Mathematics (a composite of all strands). Differences in outcomes for each program were evident, however, with the English with core French program yielding lower achievement outcomes, and immersion programs yielding higher ones.

When population data was disaggregated for specific groups of students, the proportions of ELLs, students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, boys, students identifying as Indigenous, and students with special education needs (excluding gifted) were all lower compared to other students. Differences in outcomes (disparities) were most pronounced for students with special education needs who were between 0.76

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times as likely to meet the provincial standard in French (Writing) and 0.84 times as likely to meet the standard in Language (Writing) compared to students who did not have special education needs.

For the subset of students participating in the *Valuing Voices* survey, all five subjects-strands yielded higher outcomes for students who self-identified East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, White, and Girl or Woman compared to other students (disparities ranged from 1.02 to 1.15). In contrast, students who identified as First Nation, Inuit, Black, Indigenous, Latino, Middle Eastern, another race not listed, Boy or Man, Gender Fluid, Trans Boy or Man, a gender identity not listed, or any disability (other than addiction, chronic pain and undisclosed) were found to have lower outcomes compared to other students across all five subjects-strands. Differences in outcomes were most pronounced for students identifying as Trans Boy or Man in Language (Reading) where 55% of students met standard compared to 85% of all survey respondents (disparity of 0.65).

Secondary (Grades 9 and 10 English, Math, and Science). The percentage of all students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard ranged from 69% in Mathematics to 75% in English. Academic level courses yielded the highest percentages of students meeting/exceeding the provincial standard compared to applied and locally developed.

Achievement gaps were apparent for all groups of students that have historically been tracked in the ASAR. Specifically, outcomes in academic, applied, and locally developed English, math, and science tended to be lower for males, ELLs, students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, students identifying as Indigenous, and students with special education needs (excluding gifted). The largest differences in outcomes (disparities) were observed for: students identifying as Indigenous in locally developed English (where 18% met the standard; disparity of 0.64) and locally developed science (where 36% met the standard; disparity of 0.68); and, students with special education needs (excluding gifted) in academic math (where 57% met the standard; disparity of 0.75).

For the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* survey, outcomes for students who self-identified as First Nation, Metis or Inuit were lower in all program pathways (academic, applied, and locally developed) and across all three subjects, compared to non-Indigenous students. Outcomes for students identifying as First Nations were higher than other students in locally developed math; higher outcomes were also observed in the Inuit population, where numbers were relatively small. Trends across programs and pathways were less consistent for race, gender identity and disability. In the case of English, for example, outcomes were higher in all three program

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pathways for students identifying as South Asian (60-89% of students meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.09 to 1.79), White (40-85% meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.05 to 1.57), and Questioning (58-100% meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.04 to 2.65) when compared to all other students. Only two of these groups, South Asian and Questioning, also exhibited higher outcomes in all three program pathways in mathematics (67-100% of students meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.08 to 1.81); those identifying as Girl or Woman also had higher outcomes in this subject area (disparity ranging from 1.02 to 1.07). Outcomes in academic, applied, and locally developed science were higher for students identifying as East Asian (64-91% meeting standard; disparity ranging from 1.13 to 1.46).

In sum, the data confirms what other jurisdictions have reported - that there is disproportionate representation of some groups of students (particularly those who are racialized or have been minoritized by the system) in certain programs which can limit opportunities as they transition from secondary to post secondary pathways. Similarly, these same groups of students tend to experience lower achievement outcomes regardless of the program/pathway in which they are enrolled. Together, these results should be a call to action to dismantle the systemic barriers and biases that continue to oppress these individuals.

Dismantling Systemic Barriers to Learning

The Ontario Ministry of Education has announced that, effective September 2021, streaming practices will begin to be phased out, beginning with grade 9 mathematics. This is an important first step in removing systemic barriers for students who continue to be underserved. This alone, however, is not enough. In order to improve outcomes for students, changes must also be made to enhance the learning environment and overall student experience, including: having high expectations for all students; ensuring that students see themselves reflected in the curriculum; providing opportunities for students to learn about their identity and that of others; and, creating welcoming school and classroom environments where students feel a sense of belonging and freedom to express their identity. These areas will be the focus for the next report to be released in the fall of 2021.

Creating Optimal Conditions for Learning

The OCDSB *Strategic Plan 2019-2023* and the [*Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap*](#) express the District's commitment to equity and dismantling systemic barriers and bias. Several current OCDSB initiatives are underway to target narrowing gaps for specific groups of students and removing systemic barriers to their success. Some examples include:

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Equity:

- Creation of a core Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) team with the first year of implementation completed.
- The introduction of Indigenous and Black Students Graduation coaches which is showing early signs of a positive impact on student success (through increased credit accumulation) and overall well-being.
- Partnership with Inuuqattigiit education hubs for Inuit students
- Implementation of Indigenous Speakers Series, Rainbow Youth Forum, Black Student Forum.
- Expansion of Indigenous Education Team to include two additional graduation coaches.
- Hiring of Gender Diverse and Trans Student Support Coordinator.
- Expansion of reach ahead and summer courses to support Indigenous, Black and English Language Learners

Innovation and Adolescent Learning:

- Winning Attitudes is a full-time cooperative education program, supported by two teachers, for underserved youth who are at risk of disengaging from school. To-date this year 72 students have been re-engaged and 260 credits have been earned;
- Project True North which is designed to engage OCDSB students in primary document research focussing on the forgotten, and ignored, stories of Canadian history. The project's first focus has been the Black Canadian soldiers of the No 2 Construction Battalion from WWI; the research is being integrated into grade 10 History classes and aligns with the Equity Roadmap;
- Implementation of the Authentic Student Learning Experience (ASLE) Tool which is designed to support credit rescue and credit recovery that take into account student interests and pathways. The tool is being used by Student Success Teachers across the district to re-engage students by starting with their areas of interest and pathways and linking it to curricular expectations in order to earn credits and get back on track towards graduation. There are currently approximately 114 ASLEs currently in use, aimed at saving 190 credits;
- The development of a professional learning community in eight secondary schools (G8) to focus on the needs of students who are falling behind in credit accumulation through a learner focused experience. Schools have been using student voice, data, and ongoing monitoring to re-think and re-shape learning experiences for underserved students in order to better meet their needs. For example, schools have been creating multi-credit packages for ELD/ESL students which allow them to build deeper relationships with students while connecting their learning to their pathway goals.
- The new School Within a College (SWAC), run in partnership with Algonquin College, and established in September 2020, has produced 22 high school graduates. All of these students had left school and were

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re-engaged through the SWAC program, where they attend full time, in order to get them to the finish line with their diplomas. Programming for the students is highly individualized in order to meet their pathway goals. While earning their high school diplomas, these students also earned 18 college credits. In September 2021, 8 are going to college, 5 are connected with apprenticeships and 8 are working and exploring future options.

- The district's Dual Credit program with Algonquin (in this model students are still attending their high schools but take a single course with the college). This provides students the opportunity to explore post secondary opportunities while earning a college and a high school credit simultaneously. Students have earned 200 college credits this school year.
- Experiential Learning is being supported throughout the district to engage students in innovative learning, while connecting schools with community partners. For examples of some of the work from this year, please visit <https://ocdsbxi.com/>.
- Innovation and Adolescent Learning, in response to the 16x16 data from the previous report, is working closely with the Indigenous team to create new program offerings and content to support Indigenous students to improve their outcomes. For example, working on a multi-credit package which will include land-based and language learning, with the opportunity for students to earn more than 4 credits in a semester in order to get them back on track towards graduation.
- IAL has also been working with Indigenous, Equity and ESL to support new Canadians who come into the district via the Family Reception Centre to enhance the consistency and provision of credits to students whose education to-date has happened outside of Canada. For example, offering students credits for their first languages in order to support graduation requirements.

Learning Support Services

- Winning Attitudes is a full-time cooperative education program, supported by two teachers, for underserved youth who are at risk of disengaging from school. To-date this year 72 students have been re-engaged and 260 credits have been earned;
- Project True North which is designed to engage OCDSB students in primary document research focussing on the forgotten, and ignored, stories of Canadian history. The project's first focus has been the Black Canadian soldiers of the No 2 Construction Battalion from WWI; the research is being integrated into grade 10 History classes and aligns with the Equity Roadmap;
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Learning Support Services

- Working collaboratively with several departments, Learning Support Services (LSS) is working to support the implementation of The Third Path - A Relationship-Based Approach to Student Well-being and Achievement.

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This work will help to reinforce setting the conditions for learning by creating intentional and responsive relationships across several key areas (e.g., identity, safety, belonging, etc.);

- A cross-departmental, multi-disciplinary team continues to explore the use of a Universal Screener to assist educators in identifying emerging student needs and determining appropriate instructional strategies to support students;
- The online resource “Learning Support for Students with Special Education Needs” will help to revisit the development of quality Individual Education Plans (IEPs) including a focus on the reason for developing an IEP, high yield strategies to support student learning, and articulate the key elements of quality special education programming in schools; and
- Mental health promotion and prevention is essential in building social emotional learning skills (e.g., identifying and managing emotions, healthy relationships, coping skills and problem solving skills) which helps reduce the likelihood of mental health problems developing or reduces the intensity of pre-existing mental health difficulties.

Program and Learning:

- The Student Achievement Through Inquiry (S.A.T.E) project which uses factors known to contribute to successful schools to bring children, families and communities together into the educational environment as participants and partners in the learning process, with the school becoming the "Heart of the Community." This particular project involves 14 OCDSB schools (elementary and secondary) and focuses on the following factors: achievement and standards; leadership and management; teaching and learning; innovative curriculum; targeted intervention and support; inclusion; parental engagement; use of data; effective use of pupil's voice; and celebration of cultural diversity.
- The Intensive Reading Intervention program is a new cross departmental Summer Learning Program which is available to support students in kindergarten to Grade 9 to address identified gaps in reading. Schools involved have been identified based on multiple sources of data including raise index, student achievement and credit accumulation at the secondary level.
- The literacy assessment field test project is currently underway. Over 150 educators from across the district in kindergarten, Grade 1,2, 5, 7, 8, and 9 are testing a variety of new literacy assessment tools. The focus of this project is on early intervention, planning for learning, and gap filling.
- A detailed Scope and Sequence in all curricular areas in grades 1-8 has been developed cross-departmentally and is currently being employed across the system. Key instructional supports for both in-person and remote learning, diagnostic assessments, parent supports (Building Bridges) etc. have been embedded. Further considerations for CRRP, differentiation, and assessment continue to be added.

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- A district de-streaming cross departmental team has been established including all departments to lead the work in de-streaming. Elementary and secondary school teams have been involved in a series of professional learning sessions focussed on the impacts of streaming and the disproportionate negative impact on specific groups of students through the streaming process. In addition to mathematics in grade 9, PAL is supporting schools who are focussing on de-streaming other compulsory courses including English, Science, Geography and Science in the 2021/2022 school year. This will involve cross-departmental support as well as cross-school learning re. key strategies, practices and supports that best address the needs of all learners through the lens of CRRP, universal design for learning and differentiation. All parents of grade 8 students registered in a locally developed or applied level course in grade 9 have been contacted and key information has been shared to ensure that parents are fully aware of the pathway options based on their present course selections, as well as graduation rates based on course pathway etc. These phone calls have resulted in an increase enrolment in Academic level courses at the grade 9 level.

The analyses undertaken in this report reinforce that inequities prevail for certain groups of students, but more importantly provide a baseline measure on key indicators against which progress can be monitored to better understand the impact of current and future interventions. This is critical not only to comply with Ministry expectations to support math destreaming, but also support the District's commitment to the community to remove systemic barriers and biases that exist for Indigenous, Black and minoritized students, including 2SLGBTQ+ and students with disabilities. In this regard, the Annual Equity Accountability Report will play an important role in documenting this progress over time.

Data Analysis and Reporting

This year marks the first opportunity to collect and explore reporting of identity-based data using the Ministry's Data Standards. With each report that has been generated, and through ongoing discussions with the Technical Advisory Group, we continue to learn and grow through this process and adapt our approach to analysis and reporting.

Future reports will need to explore program enrolment and achievement outcomes for other dimensions of identity collected through the *Valuing Voices* survey (i.e., language, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and status in Canada). Intersectionality across different aspects of identity also require further investigation. Deeper analyses that incorporate student perceptions as they relate to issues of school safety, engagement, and sense of belonging will also be an important consideration. Such analyses not only contribute to a more holistic understanding of our students' self-perceptions and

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experiences, but also help tease apart the unique contributions of various underlying factors linked to outcomes, as well as distinguish pathways and underlying root-causes.

It is also important to recognize limitations to our understanding. Although the *Valuing Voices* survey collected information on students, it was not feasible to capture the larger context/environment in which they exist/live (i.e., within circles of family, school, community). The complexity of this work, and our District's positioning as one of the first to pursue it with the IDB data/leads in Ontario, along with our interest in continuing a dialogue/responding to the interests/needs of our various voices/ stakeholders/ community partners, makes this work ongoing.

While Disproportionality and Disparity offer us two ways of *measuring* relative group differences (versus All and versus Another group, respectively), these indices do not indicate whether observed differences are *meaningful*, nor do they tell us what *movement* might be reasonable to expect over time. To better contextualize these indices and make them useful, cut-points referred to as *thresholds* must be established in consultation with community partners and other stakeholders. This will be an essential step for the District in order to identify reasonable targets and monitor progress towards addressing existing inequities. This will form part of the core work of the OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data Standards in 2021-2022.

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TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This phase of reporting requires the calculation of a racial disproportionality and/or racial disparity index for each unit of analysis (Standard 29). In this report, disproportionality indices have been calculated for program enrolment to understand the degree to which groups of students are over or underrepresented, whereas disparity indices have been calculated to look at differences in achievement outcomes between groups of students. Meaningful interpretation of disproportionality and disparity requires the selection of appropriate benchmarks and reference groups, respectively (Standards 30 and 31), as well as the establishment of thresholds (Standard 32) to support monitoring of progress over time. The following sections provide an overview of the considerations that were taken into account.

Units of Analysis. Most survey questions allowed for the selection of multiple responses, honouring the multidimensionality of identity. From an analysis and reporting perspective, this adds complexity. Analysis must be sensitive to commonalities and differences in experience and treatment among persons reporting multiple responses. For example, Standard 27 (Primary Unit of Analysis) of the Data Standards describes the following considerations in terms of multiple race categories:

“In some cases, it may make sense to count persons who report White and some other race according to the other race category selected. In other circumstances, it may be necessary and appropriate to aggregate or construct socially meaningful mixed-race categories. For example, a generic mixed-race category may be appropriate if there are insufficient or small numbers of individuals (fewer than 15) who select multiple race categories. If a generic mixed-race category might obscure significant differences, and sample sizes are sufficient, consider using specific combinations of race categories.”

Based on ongoing conversations with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), reporting is based on **inclusive groups** – all groups overlap with one another (e.g., the black category includes respondents who selected black either as a single response or in combination with at least one other race category).

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Elementary Achievement Reporting.

District Coverage. Both elementary program enrolment and achievement analyses are based on the same 2019-2020 cohort of students (single dataset). This dataset consists of all students in grades 1 through 8 for whom at least one final (June) report card mark was available (N=40,922), and reflects over 99% of the student population in 2019-2020 based on October 31st enrolment counts (N=41,093 students in Grades 1-8).

Achievement reporting coverage. Availability of report card marks for 2019-2020 varied across subjects and strands, and was lower than the previous two years due to the fall labour disruption. When compared to the three-year trend (2017-2019) using the same methodology, however, overall achievement results were similar.

The table below provides an overview of the availability of marks for each subject-strand for the last three academic years, respectively, as well as summarizes what proportion of the total Elementary reporting population in 2019-2020 (N=40,922) was included in each of the subject-strand achievement analyses.

Table 1. Availability of Final Report Card Marks for Elementary (Gr.1-8) Students by Academic Year (District population).

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2019-2020 Coverage (% All Students)
All Students (District, Gr.1-8)	39,695	40,248	40,922	
Elementary Subject-Strand(s)	# marks	# marks	# marks	
French-Reading	37,826	38,277	32,335	79%
French-Writing	37,755	38,089	33,210	81%
Language-Reading	36,240	36,777	35,666	87%
Language-Writing	36,215	36,743	33,342	82%
Mathematics-All Strands ²⁹	196,810	199,551	103,095	50%

²⁹ As until recently Mathematics has been reported out on 5 individual strands, students may contribute to this composite (based on all available strand marks) up to 5 times. Due to this, "% Available" is based on the total number of students multiplied by 5 (i.e., 40,922 x 5 = 204,610). Note that not all strands had the same level of representation/mark availability therefore they are not equally weighted in the "Math-All Strands" total. Numeracy by far was the strand that had the most coverage in 2019-20.

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Analysis of *Valuing Voices* Survey Information: Reporting Coverage.

This is the first year that the analysis of achievement and enrolment data includes the identity data collected in 2019-2020 through the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey*. While this report provides alignment between the academic reporting year and the survey collection year, it is important to remember that information collected through the *Valuing Voices* Survey reflects only a subset of our population. Therefore, while it allows for a deeper analysis of additional groups of students at a District-level based on several self-identified dimensions of identity that have not been previously examined, we must be cautious with the degree to which we generalize to individual students based on a survey sample, particularly where there are small numbers of students that can result in relatively large changes in the calculation of percentages and disproportionality/disparity index values³⁰.

Tables 2 and 3 provide an overview of reporting coverage for elementary (Gr.1-8) and secondary (grades 9 and 10 courses), respectively, where “All Students” reflects the number of students included in the program enrolment analysis, and subsequent rows present the number of students included in each respective achievement outcome analysis. Percentages reflect the proportion of students, relative to the full District enrolment, who were included in each of the respective analyses.

Table 2. *Valuing Voices* Representation in Elementary (Gr.1-8) Analyses (2019-2020)

Subject-Strand(s)		District ³¹	Indigenous Identity	Race	Gender	Disability
All Students (Gr.1-8 enrolment)	N	40,922	15,712	15,306	15,252	13,974
	% All Students	100%	38%	37%	37%	34%
French-Reading	N	32,335	12,196	11,862	11,812	10,923
	% All Students	79%	38%	37%	37%	34%
French-Writing	N	33,210	12,720	12,382	12,322	11,363
	% All Students	81%	38%	37%	37%	34%
Language-Reading	N	35,666	13,865	13,504	13,479	12,339
	% All Students	87%	39%	38%	38%	35%
Language-Writing	N	33,342	12,204	11,893	11,836	10,926
	% All Students	82%	37%	36%	35%	33%
Mathematics	N	103,095	39,261	38,211	38,047	35,084

³⁰ Additional supplemental tables containing student and response counts are also appended here for reference.

³¹ Due to including all students with at least one available final report card mark across ALL subjects-strands in the overall elementary (Gr.1-8) District population, the availability of marks for the subset of outcomes reported here is less than 100%.

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(All Strands)³²	% All Strand Marks	50%	38%	37%	37%	34%
Coverage Range	Min	50%	37%	36%	35%	33%
	Max	87%	39%	38%	38%	35%

Table 3. Valuing Voices Representation in Secondary (Gr.9-10 Courses) Analyses (2019-2020)

Course and Program ³³		All Students (Gr.9 and 10 course enrolment)	Indigenous Identity		Race		Gender		Disability	
			N	% All	N	% All	N	% All	N	% All
English	ACD	9,475	6,578	69%	6,514	69%	6,497	69%	5,791	61%
	APP	1,756	870	50%	841	48%	841	48%	688	39%
	LDCC	246	134	54%	128	52%	134	54%	104	42%
Mathematics	ACD	8,903	6,217	70%	6,161	69%	6,141	69%	5,506	62%
	APP	2,637	1,362	52%	1,320	50%	1,323	50%	1,088	41%
	LDCC	778	279	36%	268	34%	270	35%	226	29%
Science	ACD	9,267	6,561	71%	6,499	70%	6,481	70%	5,803	63%
	APP	1,991	1,070	54%	1,026	52%	1,028	52%	843	42%
	LDCC	523	241	46%	234	45%	236	45%	188	36%
Coverage Range ³⁴	Min	100%		36%		34%		35%		29%
	Max	100%		71%		70%		70%		63%

³² As until recently Mathematics has been reported out on 5 individual strands, students may contribute to this composite (based on all available strand marks) up to 5 times. Due to this, “% Available” is based on the total number of students multiplied by 5 (i.e., 40,922 x 5 = 204,610). Note that not all strands had the same level of representation/mark availability therefore they are not equally weighted in the “Math-All Strands” total. The Numeracy strand had the most coverage in 2019-2020.

³³ Secondary courses are reported for academic (ACD), applied (APP), and locally developed (LDCC) programs, respectively.

³⁴ Due to the decision to restrict reporting at a Course-Subject level to only those who were enrolled in the course and had a final report card mark available, coverage at the District-level is 100%.

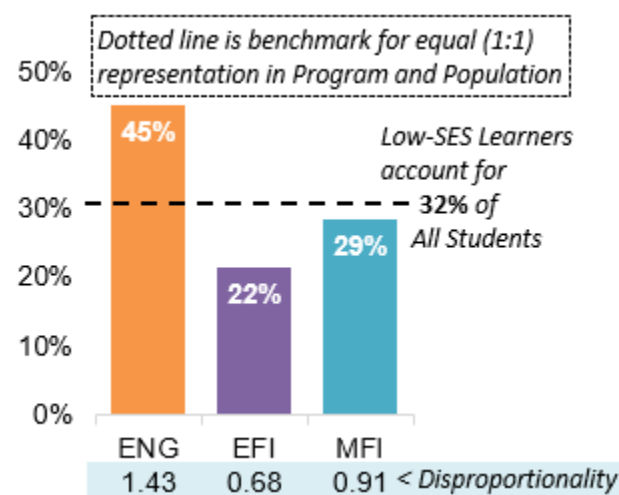
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Key Concepts: Disproportionality and Disparity.

Disproportionality. To identify where there may be structural or systemic inequities, disaggregation of program enrolment by student demographics is critical in helping to understand *the degree to which specific groups of students are over or underrepresented in a program relative to their representation in the population (disproportionality)*. A value of 1.0 reflects no disproportionality, a value greater than 1.0 reflects *overrepresentation*, and a value less than 1.0 reflects *underrepresentation*.

Figure 28 helps demonstrate this concept by showing that although students who reside in lower income neighbourhoods account for 32% of elementary students (grades 1 to 8), they account for 45% of students enrolled in an English with core French program, and are thus *overrepresented*. Put another way, Low-SES students account for a larger proportion of ENG program enrolment than would be expected, given their representation in the full population. Conversely, Low-SES students account for only 22% and 29% of enrolment in EFI and MFI programs, respectively, indicating *underrepresentation*. Or, Low-SES students account for a smaller proportion of EFI and MFI program enrolment than would be expected, given their representation in the full population.

Figure 28. Disproportionality: Representation of Students Residing in Lower-Income Neighbourhoods (Low-SES) in each Elementary (Gr. 1-8) Program vs. Population (2019-2020)



The **disproportionality index values** (noted below each program bar in Figure 28) are values resulting from ratios that assumes proportional representation relative to the population (1:1). They are calculated by dividing program representation (e.g., Low-SES represent 45% of ENG program enrolment) by representation in the *reference* population (i.e., Low-SES represent 32% of All Students). In the case of students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, they are 1.4 times as likely to be enrolled in English with core French programs, and between 0.7 and 0.9 times as likely to be enrolled in a French immersion program.

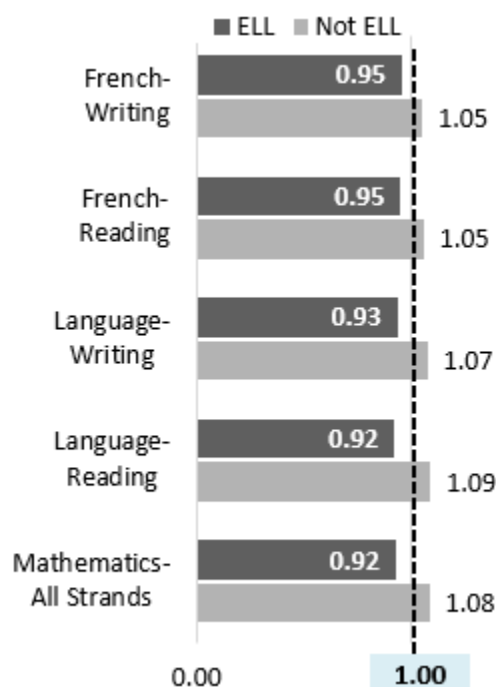
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Disparity. Disparity is a measure of group differences that compares an outcome for a specific group against that of another group which serves as a *benchmark*. For disparity calculations, the *benchmark group is comprised of* “all other” relevant respondents (i.e., any respondent not included in the target group for whom we have achievement data); exceptions to this rule include Indigenous identity and self-identified disability from the Valuing Voices survey, where students not identifying in these ways form the *benchmark* group for comparison. Also known as a risk ratio, or relative risk index, it indicates whether an outcome is *more likely* (reflected by a value >1.0), *less likely* (reflected by a value <1.0), or *the same* ($=1.0$) for a group of students compared to another group.

As a key indicator as to whether or not different groups of students have the same relative likelihood of meeting the provincial standard, examination of achievement data (i.e., final report card marks) through the calculation of disparity indices provides an opportunity to intervene and support these students as they progress through school.

Figure 29 helps demonstrate this concept, showing that English language learners are less likely to meet the provincial standard compared to their peers who are not ELL. The disparity index value (noted beside each subject/strand) is calculated by dividing the disproportionality index for ELLs by the disproportionality index for non-ELLs, and is thus also referred to as a relative risk ratio.

Figure 29. Disparities in Elementary (Gr.1-8) Achievement (2019-2020): English Language Learners.



Interpreting Disproportionality and Disparity. Calculations of disproportionality and disparity index values are significantly impacted by small numbers. A general rule-of-thumb is to have a minimum sample size of 10 and a population size of 30, otherwise estimates are not reliable.

In order to facilitate the interpretation and use of these values, District-level thresholds will need to be determined in consultation with community partners and other stakeholders. A **threshold** is an established cut-point used to identify meaningful disproportionality and disparity values. Together, these can be used to identify targets and monitor progress towards addressing existing inequities/inequalities. This will be a key outcome for the OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data.

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Supplemental Descriptive Tables. In the pages that follow, Tables 4 through 7 provide detailed information on the Student (District population) and Respondent (*Valuing Voices*) data that provided the foundation for the analyses in this report. This includes raw student/respondent counts, as well as program enrolment distributions (accompanied by disproportionality values) and achievement outcomes (accompanied by disparity values).

Unlike previous reports, **no suppression has been applied**. Percentages and index values (disproportionality, disparity) are displayed for all reporting groups, regardless of their size (number of students/respondents) or the size of their reference group (total District/Respondent count). As a result, it is strongly advised that these values are interpreted in the context of the student/response counts from which they are derived, as the weight of one student is much greater when reporting on small groups. Note that reporting at an aggregated level by Panel maintains student anonymity.

The following formatting standards have been applied to all tables:

- **Rounding.** Percentages are rounded to whole numbers, while index values (disproportionality, disparity) are rounded to two decimal points.
- **Empty cells.** Where a reporting group contains no students, it is expressed as ‘-’ in student count(s) and “n/a” is displayed in the corresponding index column.

- **Acronyms for programs:**

Elementary (Gr.1-8)		Secondary (Gr.9-10 courses)	
ENG	English with Core French (includes Alternative programs)	ACD	Academic
EFI	Early French Immersion	APP	Applied
MFI	Middle French Immersion	LDCC	Locally Developed

- A **colour scale** has been applied to cells containing index values:

Value	Program Enrolment: Disproportionality	Achievement Outcomes: Disparity
< 1.00 (orange fill)	<i>Underrepresentation.</i> Students from a particular group account for a <u>smaller proportion</u> of enrolment in a program, relative to their representation in the population.	<i>Less likely</i> that students from a specific group will achieve the provincial standard, compared to others.
= 1.00 (no fill)	<i>Proportionate representation</i> of a specific group of students in a program, relative to their representation in the population.	<i>Equal likelihood</i> for students from a specific group to achieve the provincial standard, compared to others.
> 1.00 (blue fill)	<i>Overrepresentation.</i> Students from a particular group account for a <u>larger proportion</u> of enrolment in a program, relative to their representation in the population.	<i>More likely</i> that students from a specific group will achieve the provincial standard, compared to others.

- **Gender Diverse** (composite) is a gender identity group reflecting: Gender Fluid, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, Questioning, Trans Boy or Man, Trans Girl or Woman, Two-Spirit, and Not Listed/Another gender identity.

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Table 4. Elementary (Gr.1-8) Program Enrolment, 2019-2020

Elementary (Gr.1-8) Program Enrolment, 2019-2020	Total Student Count	Student Count (distribution across programs)			Program Enrolment (within-group representation)			Disproportionality (relative representation in Program vs Population)		
		ENG	EPI	MFI	ENG	EPI	MFI	ENG	EPI	MFI
All Students (District)	40,922	15,291	21,781	2,497	37%	53%	6%			
ELL	7,131	4,901	1,334	890	69%	19%	10%	1.84	0.35	1.59
Low - SES	11,399	6,127	4,114	838	54%	36%	6%	1.43	0.88	0.91
Female	19,881	6,769	11,348	1,299	34%	57%	7%	0.91	1.07	1.07
Male	21,028	8,518	10,425	1,198	41%	50%	6%	1.08	0.93	0.93
Indigenous Identity	805	454	261	37	56%	32%	5%	1.51	0.81	0.75
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	7,751	4,279	2,407	287	55%	31%	4%	1.48	0.58	0.61
Valuing Voices Survey:										
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	15,712	5,650	8,447	1,145	36%	54%	7%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	15,178	5,368	8,258	1,110	35%	54%	7%	0.98	1.01	1.00
First Nation	388	208	125	28	54%	32%	7%	1.50	0.80	1.00
Métis	158	67	69	15	42%	44%	9%	1.18	0.81	1.30
Inuit	103	63	31	6	61%	30%	6%	1.70	0.56	0.80
Race - All Respondents	15,306	5,497	8,229	1,118	36%	54%	7%			
Black	1,243	623	495	92	50%	40%	7%	1.40	0.74	1.01
East Asian	1,457	432	754	185	30%	52%	13%	0.83	0.96	1.74
Indigenous	343	175	131	21	51%	38%	6%	1.42	0.71	0.84
Latino/Latina/Latinx	330	141	161	21	43%	49%	6%	1.19	0.91	0.87
Middle Eastern	2,361	1,262	826	208	53%	35%	9%	1.49	0.65	1.21
South Asian	1,192	529	530	99	44%	44%	8%	1.24	0.83	1.14
Southeast Asian	510	214	245	42	42%	46%	8%	1.17	0.89	1.13
White	9,158	2,528	5,840	545	28%	64%	6%	0.77	1.19	0.81
Another race not listed	444	177	219	33	40%	49%	7%	1.11	0.92	1.02
Gender Identity - All Respondents	15,252	5,490	8,197	1,108	36%	54%	7%			
Boy or Man	7,797	3,071	3,922	511	39%	50%	7%	1.09	0.94	0.90
Gender Fluid	52	22	26	3	42%	50%	6%	1.18	0.93	0.79
Gender Non-Conforming	30	9	16	3	30%	53%	10%	0.83	0.99	1.38
Girl or Woman	7,284	2,335	4,210	581	32%	58%	8%	0.89	1.08	1.10
Non-Binary	64	23	30	9	36%	47%	14%	1.00	0.87	1.94
Questioning	80	26	45	7	33%	56%	9%	0.90	1.05	1.20
Trans Boy or Man	35	22	8	5	63%	23%	14%	1.75	0.43	1.97
Trans Girl or Woman	24	10	10	2	42%	42%	8%	1.16	0.78	1.15
Two-Spirit	15	9	4	2	60%	27%	13%	1.67	0.50	1.84
Not Listed	88	32	46	7	36%	52%	8%	1.01	0.97	1.09
Not Sure	104	33	56	7	32%	54%	7%	0.88	1.00	0.93
Gender Diverse (composite)**	338	134	160	31	40%	48%	9%	1.11	0.89	1.27
Self-Identified Disability - All Respondents	13,974	4,924	7,609	1,040	35%	54%	7%			
Does not identify as having a disability	12,804	4,280	7,092	972	34%	56%	8%	0.96	1.03	1.04
Addiction(s)	30	18	8	2	60%	27%	7%	1.70	0.49	0.90
Autism Spectrum Disorder	269	149	69	6	55%	26%	2%	1.57	0.47	0.30
Blind or Low Vision	48	21	16	6	46%	35%	13%	1.30	0.64	1.75
Chronic Pain	20	10	8	2	50%	40%	10%	1.42	0.73	1.34
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	60	28	26	2	47%	43%	3%	1.32	0.80	0.45
Developmental	116	53	32	3	46%	28%	3%	1.30	0.51	0.35
Learning	668	329	241	19	49%	36%	3%	1.40	0.66	0.38
Mental	238	107	91	14	45%	39%	6%	1.29	0.71	0.80
Mobility	20	14	4	-	70%	20%	0%	1.99	0.37	0.00
Physical	103	42	44	9	41%	43%	9%	1.16	0.78	1.17
Speech Impairment	100	50	25	2	50%	25%	2%	1.42	0.46	0.27
Undisclosed	99	46	37	6	46%	37%	6%	1.34	0.66	0.99
Another disability not listed	271	128	97	20	47%	36%	7%	1.32	0.69	0.81

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Table 5-A. Secondary (Gr.9 and 10) ENGLISH Course Enrolment, 2019-2020

Secondary (Gr.9-10) English Course Enrolment, 2019-2020	Total Student Count	Student Count (distribution across programs)			Course Enrolment (within-group representation)			Disproportionality (relative representation in Programs vs)		
		ACD	APP	LDCC	ACD	APP	LDCC	ACD	APP	LDCC
All Students (District)	11,477	9,475	1,756	246	83%	15%	2%			
ELL	2,347	1,874	421	52	80%	18%	2%	0.97	1.17	1.03
Low - SES	2,970	2,112	753	105	71%	25%	4%	0.88	1.65	1.82
Female	5,639	4,853	716	70	88%	13%	1%	1.04	0.83	0.58
Male	5,833	4,618	1,039	176	79%	18%	3%	0.96	1.16	1.41
Indigenous Identity	230	131	77	22	57%	33%	10%	0.89	2.19	4.46
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	2,571	1,481	895	195	58%	35%	8%	0.70	2.28	3.54
Valuing Voices Survey:										
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	7,582	6,578	870	134	87%	11%	2%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	7,331	6,411	803	117	87%	11%	2%	1.01	0.96	0.91
First Nation	171	111	46	14	65%	27%	8%	0.75	2.35	4.65
Métis	76	59	16	1	78%	21%	1%	0.89	1.84	0.75
Inuit	37	27	8	2	73%	22%	5%	0.84	1.89	3.07
Race - All Respondents	7,483	6,514	841	128	87%	11%	2%			
Black	688	560	115	13	81%	17%	2%	0.94	1.47	1.13
East Asian	856	814	38	4	95%	4%	0%	1.09	0.39	0.28
Indigenous	168	110	49	9	65%	29%	5%	0.75	2.57	3.21
Latino/Latina/Latinx	217	187	28	2	88%	13%	1%	0.99	1.14	0.55
Middle Eastern	1,064	914	133	17	88%	13%	2%	0.99	1.10	0.96
South Asian	649	609	35	5	94%	5%	1%	1.08	0.48	0.46
Southeast Asian	286	252	32	2	88%	11%	1%	1.01	0.99	0.42
White	4,441	3,844	513	84	87%	12%	2%	1.00	1.02	1.14
Another race not listed	152	122	24	6	80%	16%	4%	0.92	1.39	2.37
Gender Identity - All Respondents	7,472	6,497	841	134	87%	11%	2%			
Boy or Man	3,584	2,990	500	94	83%	14%	3%	0.96	1.24	1.48
Gender Fluid	45	37	8	-	82%	18%	0%	0.94	1.58	n/a
Gender Non-Conforming	30	26	4	-	87%	13%	0%	1.00	1.19	n/a
Girl or Woman	3,611	3,284	290	37	91%	8%	1%	1.05	0.72	0.58
Non-Binary	56	48	7	1	86%	13%	2%	0.99	1.11	1.01
Questioning	91	78	12	1	86%	13%	1%	0.99	1.18	0.62
Trans Boy or Man	52	45	7	-	87%	13%	0%	0.99	1.20	n/a
Trans Girl or Woman	22	19	3	-	88%	14%	0%	0.99	1.22	n/a
Two-Spirit	29	25	4	-	88%	14%	0%	0.99	1.23	n/a
Not Listed	108	86	20	2	80%	19%	2%	0.92	1.65	1.05
Not Sure	48	41	6	1	85%	13%	2%	0.98	1.11	1.18
Gender Diverse (composite)**	358	292	62	4	82%	17%	1%	0.94	1.54	0.63
Self-Identified Disability - All Respondents	6,583	5,791	688	104	88%	10%	2%			
Does not identify as having a disability	5,937	5,373	506	58	91%	9%	1%	1.37	0.31	0.16
Addiction(s)	73	48	22	3	66%	30%	4%	0.76	2.64	2.27
Autism Spectrum Disorder	111	72	28	11	65%	25%	10%	0.75	2.21	5.81
Blind or Low Vision	57	46	9	2	81%	16%	4%	0.93	1.36	1.93
Chronic Pain	38	32	5	1	84%	13%	3%	0.97	1.13	1.44
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	40	33	5	2	83%	13%	5%	0.95	1.08	2.75
Developmental	35	23	10	2	66%	29%	6%	0.76	2.48	3.15
Learning	325	184	115	26	57%	35%	8%	0.64	3.38	5.20
Mental	190	131	52	7	69%	27%	4%	0.79	2.45	2.07
Mobility	30	24	4	2	80%	13%	7%	0.92	1.15	3.68
Physical	74	56	15	3	76%	20%	4%	0.87	1.76	2.24
Speech Impairment	48	32	15	1	67%	31%	2%	0.77	2.72	1.14
Undisclosed	79	51	25	3	65%	32%	4%	0.74	2.78	2.10
Another disability not listed	52	30	13	9	58%	25%	17%	0.66	2.17	10.07

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Table 5-B. Secondary (Gr.9 and 10) MATHEMATICS Course Enrolment, 2019-2020

Secondary (Gr.9-10) Mathematics Course Enrolment, 2019-2020	Total Student Count	Student Count (distribution across programs)			Course Enrolment (within-group representation)			Disproportionality (relative representation in Programs vs)		
		ACD	APP	LDCC	ACD	APP	LDCC	ACD	APP	LDCC
All Students (District)	12,318	8,903	2,637	778	72%	21%	6%			
ELL	2,779	1,881	670	228	68%	24%	8%	0.94	1.13	1.30
Low - SES	3,583	1,980	1,135	468	55%	32%	13%	0.77	1.46	2.08
Female	6,044	4,414	1,260	370	73%	21%	6%	1.01	0.97	0.97
Male	6,268	4,484	1,376	408	72%	22%	7%	0.99	1.03	1.03
Indigenous Identity	225	106	88	31	47%	39%	14%	0.65	1.83	2.18
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	2,509	1,209	1,016	284	48%	40%	11%	0.67	1.89	1.79
Valuing Voices Survey:										
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	7,858	6,217	1,362	279	79%	17%	4%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	7,565	6,066	1,256	243	80%	17%	3%	1.01	0.96	0.90
First Nation	197	99	71	27	50%	36%	14%	0.64	2.07	3.85
Métis	87	53	27	7	61%	31%	8%	0.77	1.79	2.26
Inuit	44	22	18	4	50%	41%	9%	0.63	2.35	2.55
Race - All Respondents	7,749	6,161	1,320	268	80%	17%	3%			
Black	773	505	216	52	65%	28%	7%	0.83	1.59	2.05
East Asian	849	796	49	4	94%	6%	0%	1.19	0.33	0.14
Indigenous	173	90	74	9	52%	43%	5%	0.66	2.43	1.58
Latino/Latina/Latinx	226	167	51	8	74%	23%	4%	0.93	1.28	1.08
Middle Eastern	1,240	894	271	75	72%	22%	6%	0.91	1.24	1.84
South Asian	656	588	59	9	90%	9%	1%	1.13	0.51	0.42
Southeast Asian	304	249	49	6	82%	16%	2%	1.04	0.92	0.60
White	4,452	3,575	759	118	80%	17%	3%	1.01	0.97	0.81
Another race not listed	156	121	26	9	78%	17%	6%	0.98	0.95	1.76
Gender Identity - All Respondents	7,734	6,141	1,323	270	79%	17%	3%			
Boy or Man	3,733	2,899	673	161	78%	18%	4%	0.98	1.05	1.24
Gender Fluid	45	32	12	1	71%	27%	2%	0.90	1.56	0.64
Gender Non-Conforming	31	20	10	1	65%	32%	3%	0.81	1.89	0.93
Girl or Woman	3,724	3,045	578	101	82%	16%	3%	1.03	0.91	0.78
Non-Binary	58	41	16	1	71%	28%	2%	0.89	1.61	0.50
Questioning	86	70	15	1	81%	17%	1%	1.02	1.02	0.33
Trans Boy or Man	50	38	11	1	76%	22%	2%	0.96	1.29	0.58
Trans Girl or Woman	20	14	4	2	70%	20%	10%	0.88	1.17	2.88
Two-Spirit	29	20	8	1	69%	28%	3%	0.87	1.61	0.99
Not Listed	105	83	18	4	79%	17%	4%	1.00	1.00	1.10
Not Sure	55	41	12	2	75%	22%	4%	0.94	1.28	1.05
Gender Diverse (composite)**	347	256	79	12	74%	23%	3%	0.93	1.33	0.99
Self-Identified Disability - All Respondents	6,820	5,506	1,088	226	81%	16%	3%			
Does not identify as having a disability	6,168	5,138	874	156	83%	14%	3%	1.43	0.44	0.27
Addiction(s)	70	46	21	3	66%	30%	4%	0.83	1.78	1.19
Autism Spectrum Disorder	106	62	29	15	58%	27%	14%	0.73	1.63	4.09
Blind or Low Vision	58	40	16	2	69%	28%	3%	0.87	1.63	0.95
Chronic Pain	38	25	12	1	66%	32%	3%	0.83	1.87	0.73
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	56	32	16	8	57%	29%	14%	0.72	1.69	4.05
Developmental	33	22	8	3	67%	24%	9%	0.84	1.43	2.53
Learning	309	157	122	30	51%	39%	10%	0.63	2.47	2.90
Mental	184	113	56	15	61%	30%	8%	0.77	1.83	2.33
Mobility	31	22	7	2	71%	23%	6%	0.89	1.33	1.79
Physical	73	46	23	4	63%	32%	5%	0.79	1.87	1.52
Speech Impairment	48	28	17	3	58%	35%	6%	0.73	2.10	1.74
Undisclosed	71	45	20	6	63%	28%	8%	0.80	1.67	2.37
Another disability not listed	63	27	20	16	43%	32%	25%	0.54	1.88	7.42

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Table 5-C. Secondary (Gr.9 and 10) SCIENCE Course Enrolment, 2019-2020

Secondary (Gr.9-10) Science Course Enrolment, 2019-2020	Total Student Count	Student Count (distribution across programs)			Course Enrolment (within-group representation)			Disproportionality (relative representation in Programs vs)		
		ACD	APP	LDCC	ACD	APP	LDCC	ACD	APP	LDCC
All Students (District)	11,781	9,267	1,991	523	79%	17%	4%			
ELL	2,711	1,948	574	189	72%	21%	7%	0.91	1.25	1.57
Low - SES	3,209	2,031	847	331	63%	26%	10%	0.81	1.54	2.37
Female	5,781	4,695	886	220	81%	15%	4%	1.03	0.89	0.86
Male	5,994	4,568	1,123	303	76%	19%	5%	0.97	1.11	1.14
Indigenous Identity	227	115	87	25	51%	38%	11%	0.64	2.27	2.48
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	2,517	1,372	924	221	55%	37%	9%	0.69	2.17	1.98
Valuing Voices Survey:										
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	7,872	6,561	1,070	241	83%	14%	3%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	7,576	6,402	964	210	85%	13%	3%	1.01	0.93	0.89
First Nation	204	106	73	25	52%	36%	12%	0.62	2.63	3.94
Métis	85	57	24	4	67%	28%	5%	0.81	2.07	1.51
Inuit	47	24	16	7	51%	34%	15%	0.61	2.50	4.79
Race - All Respondents	7,759	6,499	1,026	234	84%	13%	3%			
Black	752	549	153	50	73%	20%	7%	0.88	1.48	2.14
East Asian	867	817	42	8	94%	5%	1%	1.13	0.35	0.30
Indigenous	177	97	66	14	55%	37%	8%	0.66	2.72	2.54
Latino/Latina/Latinx	245	185	50	10	76%	20%	4%	0.91	1.49	1.31
Middle Eastern	1,204	936	203	65	78%	17%	5%	0.93	1.23	1.73
South Asian	663	607	45	11	92%	7%	2%	1.10	0.49	0.53
Southeast Asian	304	254	44	6	84%	14%	2%	1.00	1.05	0.63
White	4,465	3,780	588	97	85%	13%	2%	1.02	0.96	0.70
Another race not listed	156	121	21	14	78%	13%	9%	0.93	0.98	2.88
Gender Identity - All Respondents	7,745	6,481	1,028	236	84%	13%	3%			
Boy or Man	3,726	3,015	587	144	81%	15%	4%	0.97	1.15	1.27
Gender Fluid	47	34	11	2	72%	23%	4%	0.86	1.76	1.40
Gender Non-Conforming	29	25	4	-	86%	14%	0%	1.03	1.04	n/a
Girl or Woman	3,741	3,257	402	82	87%	11%	2%	1.04	0.81	0.72
Non-Binary	57	44	13	-	77%	23%	0%	0.92	1.72	n/a
Questioning	85	72	10	3	85%	12%	4%	1.01	0.89	1.16
Trans Boy or Man	48	39	9	-	81%	19%	0%	0.97	1.41	n/a
Trans Girl or Woman	25	18	5	2	72%	20%	8%	0.86	1.51	2.63
Two-Spirit	28	22	5	1	79%	18%	4%	0.94	1.34	1.17
Not Listed	110	87	18	5	79%	16%	5%	0.95	1.23	1.49
Not Sure	55	40	12	3	73%	22%	5%	0.87	1.64	1.79
Gender Diverse (composite)**	349	271	65	13	78%	19%	4%	0.93	1.40	1.22
Self-Identified Disability - All Respondents	6,834	5,803	843	188	85%	12%	3%			
Does not identify as having a disability	6,177	5,386	667	124	87%	11%	2%	1.40	0.38	0.21
Addiction(s)	75	45	22	8	60%	29%	11%	0.72	2.19	3.42
Autism Spectrum Disorder	114	71	27	16	62%	24%	14%	0.75	1.76	4.64
Blind or Low Vision	60	41	17	2	68%	28%	3%	0.82	2.10	1.04
Chronic Pain	43	30	10	3	70%	23%	7%	0.84	1.72	2.20
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	41	31	7	3	76%	17%	7%	0.91	1.26	2.31
Developmental	38	23	10	5	61%	26%	13%	0.73	1.95	4.19
Learning	330	181	112	37	55%	34%	11%	0.65	2.69	3.98
Mental	191	127	53	11	66%	28%	6%	0.79	2.10	1.84
Mobility	31	24	5	2	77%	16%	6%	0.93	1.19	2.03
Physical	75	51	21	3	68%	28%	4%	0.82	2.08	1.26
Speech Impairment	50	29	17	4	58%	34%	8%	0.70	2.53	2.53
Undisclosed	75	53	17	5	71%	23%	7%	0.85	1.68	2.11
Another disability not listed	60	33	15	12	55%	25%	20%	0.66	1.85	6.55

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Table 6. Elementary (Gr.1-8) Achievement Outcomes and Disparities in Achievement by Student Demographics/Identity, 2019-2020³⁵

Elementary (Gr.1-8) Achievement based on available final (June) report card marks, 2019-2020	Achievement Outcomes (% met provincial standard)										Disparities in Achievement (relative difference in % met provincial standard compared to others)				
	French- Reading		French- Writing		Language- Reading		Language- Writing		Math- All Strands**		French- Reading	French- Writing	Language- Reading	Language- Writing	Math-All Strands
	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.					
All Students (District)	32,335	77%	33,210	77%	35,666	83%	33,342	78%	103,095	86%					
ELL	5,240	74%	5,204	74%	6,880	77%	6,238	74%	18,073	80%	0.95	0.95	0.92	0.93	0.92
Low-SES	8,646	70%	8,494	69%	10,050	75%	9,557	71%	28,518	79%	0.88	0.87	0.87	0.86	0.89
Female	16,042	81%	16,510	83%	17,358	86%	16,238	84%	50,258	86%	1.09	1.16	1.09	1.14	1.01
Male	16,281	74%	16,688	71%	18,294	79%	17,094	73%	52,804	88%	0.91	0.86	0.92	0.88	0.99
Indigenous Identity	546	64%	571	62%	719	71%	682	65%	2,016	74%	0.82	0.81	0.86	0.82	0.86
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	5,306	64%	5,470	61%	7,115	72%	6,584	65%	18,948	74%	0.80	0.76	0.84	0.79	0.83
ENG Programs (Alt+Reg)	9,668	77%	9,856	76%	14,392	76%	13,398	72%	39,520	80%	0.99	0.99	0.88	0.86	0.89
EPI Program	19,828	77%	20,460	77%	17,650	87%	16,649	83%	53,604	90%	0.99	0.99	1.12	1.14	1.11
MR Program	2,148	81%	2,375	81%	2,395	86%	2,155	86%	6,564	88%	1.05	1.06	1.05	1.10	1.03
Valuing Voices Survey Results:															
Indigenous Identity - All	12,196	81%	12,720	81%	13,865	85%	12,204	84%	39,261	87%					
Does not identify as Indigenous	11,848	82%	12,351	81%	13,383	86%	11,784	84%	37,909	88%	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
First Nation	247	70%	264	70%	347	78%	307	76%	984	77%	0.85	0.87	0.91	0.91	0.87
Métis	106	73%	115	76%	145	87%	125	79%	380	86%	0.89	0.93	1.02	0.94	0.96
Inuit	72	64%	73	60%	88	78%	80	78%	259	72%	0.78	0.74	0.92	0.92	0.82
Race - All Respondents	11,862	81%	12,382	81%	13,504	85%	11,893	84%	38,211	87%					
Black	903	77%	921	74%	1,099	77%	989	77%	3,149	78%	0.94	0.91	0.89	0.92	0.89
East Asian	1,126	89%	1,249	91%	1,326	93%	1,123	92%	3,702	96%	1.11	1.14	1.10	1.11	1.11
Indigenous	235	71%	243	67%	304	78%	270	74%	872	76%	0.87	0.83	0.91	0.89	0.86
Latino/Latina/Latinx	252	78%	250	77%	292	80%	264	80%	823	87%	0.96	0.95	0.94	0.95	0.99
Middle Eastern	1,820	75%	1,750	74%	2,086	79%	1,873	78%	5,971	82%	0.91	0.90	0.92	0.92	0.93
South Asian	877	85%	928	86%	1,046	90%	920	89%	3,066	92%	1.05	1.07	1.05	1.06	1.06
Southeast Asian	391	88%	411	86%	453	88%	401	87%	1,341	92%	1.08	1.06	1.03	1.03	1.05
White	7,252	82%	7,704	82%	8,022	87%	7,036	85%	22,534	89%	1.02	1.02	1.04	1.03	1.03
Another race not listed	336	77%	360	74%	390	82%	354	79%	1,079	83%	0.94	0.91	0.96	0.94	0.95
Gender Identity - All Respondents	11,812	81%	12,322	81%	13,479	85%	11,836	84%	38,047	87%					
Boy or Man	5,967	77%	6,184	76%	6,842	82%	6,021	79%	19,389	87%	0.91	0.88	0.91	0.90	0.96
Gender Fluid	42	69%	43	67%	45	78%	37	84%	139	83%	0.85	0.83	0.91	1.00	0.95
Gender Non-Conforming	22	86%	25	76%	25	80%	24	79%	71	86%	1.06	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.96
Girl or Woman	5,741	86%	6,018	87%	6,477	90%	5,696	88%	18,248	89%	1.11	1.15	1.10	1.11	1.02
Non-Binary	40	78%	48	90%	54	80%	47	85%	155	78%	0.95	1.11	0.93	1.02	0.89
Questioning	56	82%	65	80%	70	81%	57	86%	189	80%	1.01	0.99	0.95	1.03	0.92
Trans Boy or Man	25	68%	25	60%	29	55%	26	81%	76	62%	0.84	0.74	0.65	0.96	0.71
Trans Girl or Woman	13	62%	15	73%	21	86%	18	89%	56	86%	0.76	0.91	1.00	1.06	0.96
Two-Spirit	11	82%	10	90%	14	57%	13	85%	38	71%	1.01	1.11	0.67	1.01	0.81
Not Listed	62	77%	63	76%	78	74%	70	83%	201	81%	0.95	0.94	0.87	0.99	0.93
Not Sure	78	82%	80	85%	95	83%	84	88%	252	87%	1.01	1.05	0.97	1.05	0.99
Gender Diverse (composite)	232	77%	261	77%	295	76%	250	84%	806	80%	0.95	0.95	0.89	1.00	0.91
Disability - All Respondents	10,923	82%	11,363	82%	12,339	86%	10,926	84%	35,084	88%					
Does not identify as having a disability	9,974	83%	10,369	83%	11,083	87%	9,806	86%	31,694	89%	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Addiction(s)	16	63%	16	69%	25	72%	19	95%	67	67%	0.75	0.83	0.82	1.11	0.75
Autism Spectrum Disorder	164	75%	172	72%	236	79%	211	70%	665	79%	0.91	0.87	0.90	0.81	0.89
Blind or Low Vision	31	81%	31	74%	41	73%	31	77%	105	72%	0.97	0.90	0.84	0.90	0.81
Chronic Pain	12	83%	14	86%	17	94%	14	79%	47	74%	1.01	1.04	1.08	0.92	0.84
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	46	78%	42	76%	52	81%	48	81%	146	85%	0.95	0.92	0.92	0.95	0.95
Developmental	68	65%	66	61%	102	75%	96	60%	296	74%	0.78	0.73	0.85	0.71	0.83
Learning disability	472	65%	491	63%	624	72%	575	66%	1,657	75%	0.79	0.76	0.82	0.77	0.85
Mental disability	157	72%	170	65%	212	74%	182	70%	576	76%	0.87	0.78	0.85	0.82	0.86
Mobility disability	12	75%	10	60%	18	78%	17	82%	58	78%	0.91	0.73	0.89	0.96	0.87
Physical disability	74	76%	80	80%	94	78%	85	74%	279	83%	0.91	0.97	0.89	0.87	0.93
Speech Impairment	59	64%	54	65%	91	75%	87	67%	245	78%	0.78	0.78	0.86	0.78	0.88
Another disability not listed	192	73%	197	74%	254	78%	231	70%	704	79%	0.88	0.90	0.89	0.81	0.88
Undisclosed	62	71%	69	70%	89	76%	72	89%	245	83%	0.86	0.84	0.87	1.04	0.94

³⁵ As until recently Mathematics has been reported out on 5 individual strands, students may contribute to this composite (based on all available strand marks) up to 5 times. Due to this, "# Students" is based on the total number of student marks available.

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Table 7-A. Secondary (Gr.9 and 10) **ENGLISH** Course Achievement Outcomes and Disparities in Achievement by Student Demographics/Identity, 2019-2020

Secondary (Gr.9&10) Course Achievement based on final report card marks, 2019-2020	Achievement Outcomes - ENGLISH (% met provincial standard)						Disparities in Achievement (relative difference in % met provincial standard compared to others)		
	Academic		Applied		Locally Developed		Academic	Applied	Locally Developed
	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.			
All Students (District)	9,475	80%	1,756	50%	246	34%			
ELL	1,874	70%	421	44%	52	35%	0.85	0.86	1.02
Low - SES	2,112	71%	753	44%	105	30%	0.85	0.77	0.64
Female	4,853	88%	716	56%	70	33%	1.17	1.21	0.95
Male	4,618	74%	1,039	46%	176	35%	0.85	0.82	1.05
Indigenous Identity	131	65%	77	39%	22	18%	0.81	0.78	0.51
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	1,481	65%	895	49%	195	35%	0.79	0.99	1.20
Valuing Voices Survey Results:									
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	6,578	83%	870	56%	134	37%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	6,411	83%	803	56%	117	41%	1.00	1.00	1.00
First Nation	111	67%	46	52%	14	7%	0.80	0.93	0.17
Métis	59	71%	16	44%	1	0%	0.85	0.78	0.00
Inuit	27	74%	8	50%	2	0%	0.89	0.89	0.00
Race - All Respondents	6,514	83%	841	56%	128	36%			
Black	560	70%	115	51%	13	31%	0.84	0.89	0.88
East Asian	814	90%	38	61%	4	25%	1.09	1.07	0.72
Indigenous	110	69%	49	47%	9	11%	0.83	0.82	0.31
Latino/Latina/Latinx	187	80%	28	36%	2	0%	0.96	0.62	0.00
Middle Eastern	914	75%	133	50%	17	24%	0.89	0.86	0.65
South Asian	609	89%	35	74%	5	60%	1.09	1.32	1.79
Southeast Asian	252	79%	32	59%	2	50%	0.95	1.05	1.46
White	3,844	85%	513	60%	84	40%	1.05	1.15	1.57
Another race not listed	122	83%	24	54%	6	17%	1.00	0.95	0.47
Gender Identity - All Respondents	6,497	83%	841	56%	134	37%			
Boy or Man	2,990	77%	500	53%	94	39%	0.88	0.89	1.10
Gender Fluid	37	78%	8	50%	-	-	0.94	0.89	n/a
Gender Non-Conforming	26	77%	4	75%	-	-	0.92	1.34	n/a
Girl or Woman	3,284	89%	290	62%	37	35%	1.14	1.16	0.89
Non-Binary	48	81%	7	71%	1	100%	0.98	1.28	2.65
Questioning	78	88%	12	58%	1	100%	1.06	1.04	2.65
Trans Boy or Man	45	91%	7	43%	-	-	1.10	0.76	n/a
Trans Girl or Woman	19	79%	3	33%	-	-	0.95	0.59	n/a
Two-Spirit	25	76%	4	50%	-	-	0.91	0.89	n/a
Not Listed	86	76%	20	55%	2	0%	0.91	0.98	0.00
Not Sure	41	83%	6	17%	1	0%	1.00	0.30	0.00
Gender Diverse (composite)**	292	80%	62	53%	4	50%	0.96	0.95	1.32
Disability - All Respondents	5,791	84%	688	55%	104	35%			
Does not identify as having a disability	5,373	85%	506	57%	58	38%	1.00	1.00	1.00
Addiction(s)	48	71%	22	32%	3	33%	0.83	0.56	0.88
Autism Spectrum Disorder	72	67%	28	61%	11	64%	0.78	1.07	1.68
Blind or Low Vision	46	50%	9	33%	2	100%	0.59	0.59	2.64
Chronic Pain	32	69%	5	60%	1	100%	0.81	1.06	2.64
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	33	76%	5	40%	2	50%	0.89	0.71	1.32
Developmental	23	78%	10	30%	2	100%	0.92	0.53	2.64
Learning disability	184	67%	115	53%	26	23%	0.79	0.94	0.61
Mental disability	131	69%	52	50%	7	43%	0.81	0.88	1.13
Mobility disability	24	83%	4	50%	2	100%	0.98	0.88	2.64
Physical disability	56	77%	15	67%	3	67%	0.90	1.18	1.78
Speech Impairment	32	72%	15	40%	1	100%	0.85	0.71	2.64
Another disability not listed	51	69%	25	52%	3	33%	0.81	0.92	0.88
Undisclosed	30	80%	13	69%	9	33%	0.94	1.22	0.88

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Table 7-B. Secondary (Gr.9 and 10) **MATHEMATICS** Course Achievement Outcomes and Disparities in Achievement by Student Demographics/Identity, 2019-2020

Secondary (Gr.9&10) Course Achievement based on final report card marks, 2019-2020	Achievement Outcomes - MATHEMATICS (% met provincial standard)						Disparities in Achievement (relative difference in % met provincial standard compared to others)		
	Academic		Applied		Locally Developed		Academic	Applied	Locally Developed
	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.			
All Students (District)	8,903	73%	2,637	58%	778	55%			
ELL	1,881	68%	670	51%	228	51%	0.92	0.84	0.91
Low-SES	1,980	63%	1,135	52%	468	54%	0.82	0.79	1.00
Female	4,414	77%	1,280	61%	370	57%	1.10	1.09	1.10
Male	4,484	70%	1,376	58%	408	52%	0.91	0.92	0.91
Indigenous Identity	108	56%	88	52%	31	48%	0.76	0.89	0.88
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	1,209	57%	1,016	55%	284	47%	0.75	0.90	0.79
Valuing Voices Survey Results:									
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	6,217	76%	1,362	62%	279	55%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	6,068	76%	1,256	62%	243	54%	1.00	1.00	1.00
First Nation	99	62%	71	59%	27	63%	0.81	0.95	1.16
Métis	53	68%	27	59%	7	14%	0.89	0.95	0.28
Inuit	22	77%	18	50%	4	75%	1.02	0.80	1.38
Race - All Respondents	6,161	76%	1,320	62%	268	54%			
Black	505	60%	216	49%	52	54%	0.79	0.78	0.99
East Asian	796	91%	49	73%	4	25%	1.24	1.21	0.46
Indigenous	90	61%	74	55%	9	67%	0.81	0.90	1.23
Latino/Latina/Latinx	167	67%	51	61%	8	25%	0.89	0.99	0.45
Middle Eastern	894	70%	271	52%	75	47%	0.92	0.83	0.82
South Asian	588	85%	59	71%	9	67%	1.14	1.17	1.23
Southeast Asian	249	78%	49	57%	6	33%	1.04	0.93	0.61
White	3,575	75%	759	67%	118	59%	0.98	1.21	1.16
Another race not listed	121	67%	26	62%	9	89%	0.89	1.01	1.67
Gender Identity - All Respondents	6,141	76%	1,323	62%	270	55%			
Boy or Man	2,899	74%	673	60%	161	53%	0.95	0.94	0.92
Gender Fluid	32	84%	12	67%	1	0%	1.12	1.07	0.00
Gender Non-Conforming	20	85%	10	70%	1	100%	1.12	1.12	1.81
Girl or Woman	3,045	78%	578	63%	101	56%	1.07	1.02	1.03
Non-Binary	41	61%	16	81%	1	100%	0.80	1.31	1.81
Questioning	70	81%	15	73%	1	100%	1.08	1.18	1.81
Trans Boy or Man	38	74%	11	82%	1	0%	0.97	1.32	0.00
Trans Girl or Woman	14	50%	4	100%	2	50%	0.66	1.61	0.90
Two-Spirit	20	60%	8	75%	1	0%	0.79	1.20	0.00
Not Listed	83	63%	18	67%	4	100%	0.83	1.07	1.83
Not Sure	41	59%	12	50%	2	100%	0.77	0.80	1.81
Gender Diverse (composite)**	256	70%	79	70%	12	67%	0.92	1.12	1.21
Disability - All Respondents	5,506	77%	1,088	62%	226	56%			
Does not identify as having a disability	5,138	78%	874	62%	156	59%	1.00	1.00	1.00
Addiction(s)	46	50%	21	43%	3	33%	0.64	0.70	0.57
Autism Spectrum Disorder	62	65%	29	72%	15	40%	0.82	1.18	0.68
Blind or Low Vision	40	55%	16	81%	2	50%	0.70	1.32	0.85
Chronic Pain	25	72%	12	67%	1	0%	0.92	1.08	0.00
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	32	59%	16	81%	8	25%	0.76	1.32	0.42
Developmental	22	55%	8	75%	3	33%	0.70	1.22	0.57
Learning disability	157	57%	122	66%	30	53%	0.73	1.08	0.90
Mental disability	113	60%	56	70%	15	60%	0.77	1.13	1.02
Mobility disability	22	59%	7	71%	2	50%	0.76	1.16	0.85
Physical disability	46	72%	23	74%	4	50%	0.92	1.20	0.85
Speech Impairment	28	57%	17	71%	3	67%	0.73	1.15	1.13
Another disability not listed	45	69%	20	65%	6	83%	0.88	1.06	1.41
Undisclosed	27	70%	20	80%	16	50%	0.90	1.30	0.85

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Table 7-C. Secondary (Gr.9 and 10) SCIENCE Course Achievement Outcomes and Disparities in Achievement by Student Demographics/Identity, 2019-2020

Secondary (Gr.9&10) Course Achievement based on final report card marks, 2019-2020	Achievement Outcomes - SCIENCE (% met provincial standard)						Disparities in Achievement (relative difference in % met provincial standard compared to others)		
	Academic		Applied		Locally Developed		Academic	Applied	Locally Developed
	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.	# Students	% Met Std.			
All Students (District)	9,267	78%	1,991	52%	523	52%			
ELL	1,948	72%	574	49%	189	42%	0.90	0.92	0.72
Low-SES	2,031	70%	847	51%	331	50%	0.88	0.92	0.84
Female	4,695	81%	866	57%	220	59%	1.10	1.16	1.24
Male	4,568	74%	1,123	49%	303	48%	0.91	0.86	0.80
Indigenous Identity	115	60%	87	47%	25	36%	0.77	0.90	0.68
SpEd (excl. Gifted)	1,372	63%	924	50%	221	48%	0.79	0.91	0.86
Valuing Voices Survey Results:									
Indigenous Identity - All Respondents	6,561	80%	1,070	57%	241	51%			
Does not identify as Indigenous	6,402	80%	964	58%	210	53%	1.00	1.00	1.00
First Nation	106	62%	73	48%	25	36%	0.78	0.82	0.68
Métis	57	70%	24	46%	4	50%	0.87	0.79	0.94
Inuit	24	63%	16	38%	7	43%	0.78	0.64	0.80
Race - All Respondents	6,499	80%	1,026	58%	234	51%			
Black	549	67%	153	48%	50	56%	0.84	0.81	1.10
East Asian	817	91%	42	64%	8	75%	1.16	1.13	1.46
Indigenous	97	65%	66	55%	14	64%	0.81	0.95	1.25
Latino/Latina/Latinx	185	76%	50	46%	10	60%	0.95	0.80	1.16
Middle Eastern	936	73%	203	49%	65	42%	0.91	0.83	0.75
South Asian	607	88%	45	60%	11	36%	1.12	1.05	0.69
Southeast Asian	254	83%	44	73%	6	33%	1.05	1.28	0.64
White	3,780	80%	588	62%	97	57%	1.00	1.16	1.15
Another race not listed	121	72%	21	71%	14	43%	0.90	1.25	0.82
Gender Identity - All Respondents	6,481	80%	1,028	58%	236	52%			
Boy or Man	3,015	77%	567	54%	144	53%	0.94	0.84	1.11
Gender Fluid	34	71%	11	36%	2	100%	0.89	0.62	1.97
Gender Non-Conforming	25	64%	4	75%	-	-	0.80	1.29	n/a
Girl or Woman	3,257	83%	402	64%	82	46%	1.09	1.16	0.86
Non-Binary	44	75%	13	62%	-	-	0.94	1.06	n/a
Questioning	72	85%	10	80%	3	33%	1.07	1.38	0.65
Trans Boy or Man	39	74%	9	78%	-	-	0.93	1.34	n/a
Trans Girl or Woman	18	39%	5	80%	2	50%	0.49	1.38	0.98
Two-Spirit	22	77%	5	60%	1	100%	0.97	1.03	1.96
Not Listed	87	69%	18	78%	5	20%	0.87	1.34	0.39
Not Sure	40	73%	12	33%	3	100%	0.91	0.57	1.98
Gender Diverse (composite)**	271	73%	65	68%	13	46%	0.91	1.17	0.90
Disability - All Respondents	5,803	81%	843	57%	188	51%			
Does not identify as having a disability	5,386	82%	667	57%	124	43%	1.00	1.00	1.00
Addiction(s)	45	56%	22	36%	8	75%	0.68	0.64	1.75
Autism Spectrum Disorder	71	61%	27	56%	16	75%	0.74	0.98	1.75
Blind or Low Vision	41	59%	17	47%	2	100%	0.71	0.83	2.34
Chronic Pain	30	70%	10	60%	3	100%	0.85	1.06	2.34
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	31	74%	7	57%	3	67%	0.90	1.01	1.56
Developmental	23	70%	10	40%	5	80%	0.85	0.71	1.87
Learning disability	181	64%	112	56%	37	59%	0.77	1.00	1.39
Mental disability	127	65%	53	58%	11	73%	0.79	1.03	1.70
Mobility disability	24	75%	5	60%	2	100%	0.91	1.06	2.34
Physical disability	51	75%	21	71%	3	100%	0.91	1.26	2.34
Speech Impairment	29	48%	17	59%	4	100%	0.59	1.04	2.34
Another disability not listed	53	68%	17	47%	5	40%	0.83	0.83	0.94
Undisclosed	33	82%	15	40%	12	75%	1.00	0.71	1.75

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