

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