

## **Delegation – Robin Browne, 613-819 Black Hub**

### **School Resource Program**

Madame Chair, Madame Director, trustees.

I am here to express the 613-819 Black Hub's opposition to having cops in school and to state our intention to seek full involvement in the review of police involvement in schools that is on tonight's agenda.

We oppose having cops in schools, via the School Resource Program, as we have no credible quantitative evidence that it benefits Black students but we have plenty of qualitative data indicating it that hurts them.

There's a problem with systemic racism in Canadian schools and a problem with systemic racism in Canadian police forces so it's frankly shocking that no one realized that putting police and schools together - two institutions that have the power to take complete control of kids lives - or end them, in the case of police - was a bad idea.

Wasn't it clear after two Peel police officers handcuffed a six-year-old black girl for 28 minutes - and the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal ruled that the officers' actions were racially motivated?

Or wasn't it clear when an Ottawa Police officer assaulted a Black teen from Notre Dame School, on camera, after the youth protested the cop accusing him of stealing a bike?

Wasn't it clear, in 2017, after Canada's largest school board, the Toronto District School Board, ended its school resource program following a report by TDSB staff found the program caused some students to feel uncomfortable and even intimidated?

Critics of the TDSB decision pointed out that 57 per cent of those surveyed had a generally positive impression of the program while only 10 per cent had strong negative feelings. What they don't mention, or perhaps didn't read, is the paragraph immediately under the numbers, which says:

"At the Student Focus Group sessions, a majority of students indicated that they were very uncomfortable with having an SRO in their school. They noted that the presence of the SRO often made them feel intimidated and frequently mentioned feeling that they were under continual surveillance and suspicion, leading many of them to stay away from school. Students often spoke of the stigma associated with having an SRO assigned to their school, and the impact of this perception on both the school and their community as a whole. They were keenly aware of the fact that SROs were mostly deployed to schools with a high proportion of racialized students and within communities which they felt were already overly policed, making them feel

that they were targets for discrimination. They also felt strongly that SROs were potentially gathering personal information and data which could later be used against them or their friends.

We suspect this was the Black students talking but can't be sure as the study didn't break the results down by race.

The Jan. 2018 study on the School Resource Program in Peel Region that Ottawa Police Association President, Matt Skof, recently cited to back up his recent attack on Chief Peter Sloly. Skof used the study to argue that Chief Sloly should be defending the program from critics. A reminder that Peel is the same place where the cops hog tied the 6-year-old girl. The study, by Carleton professor Linda Duxbury, basically said everyone loved the program. The only problem is Duxbury also didn't separate out responses from Black students. Instead, she lumped everyone together as "people who considered themselves to be a member of a minority group." That means, Black students' answers could be potentially mixed in with women, any visible minority, and LGBTQ+.

Our position is, until we get racism out of policing, keep police out of schools.

Thank you.