

January 27, 2021

Dear Policy & Governance Stakeholder Representative,

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

Part I: Background and Context Report

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

Part II: Stakeholder Engagement

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,



David Nelson
Deputy Superintendent

cc: VBE Trustees
Suzanne Hoffman, Superintendent
J. David Green, Secretary-Treasurer

Attachment: Vancouver School Board/VPD School Liaison Program Review

Vancouver School Board/VPD School Liaison Program Review

JANUARY 2021

JOAN AXFORD

Contents

A.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
B.	BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	4
1.	Terms of Reference	5
2.	Historical Background.....	5
3.	Current Program in Vancouver Schools with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD).....	7
4.	RCMP Program and Vancouver Schools.....	9
5.	VPD Cadets Program	9
6.	Vancouver Police Department - Description of the Programs.....	9
C.	EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER PROGRAMS IN OTHER DISTRICTS IN BC AND CANADA 14	
1.	Provincial Information and Guidelines	14
2.	BC School Districts.....	15
3.	Comparison Chart – BC School Districts.....	19
4.	Other Metropolitan School Districts Across Canada.....	20
5.	Comparison Chart – School Districts in Other Provinces.....	24
D.	INFORMATION ABOUT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS	26
E.	APPENDIX.....	28
1.	Appendix 1 – Memorandum of Understanding between the Vancouver School Board and Vancouver Police Department	28
F.	BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LINKS	49

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Information for this report was obtained from the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

B. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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

The Vancouver Board of Education resolves:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Terms of Reference

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

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

2. Historical Background

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

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

Education and Student Services Committee Meeting March 28, 1972:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Education and Student Services Committee Meeting June 27, 1972:

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

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

A vote was taken on the motion and declared CARRIED.

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

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

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

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

Committee IV Meeting:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The full MOU is included in the Appendix 1.

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

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

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

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

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

School Liaison Officers engage in the following:

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

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

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

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

Education for Elementary Students:

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

Education for Secondary Students:

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

Education for Parents and the Community:

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

Education for Staff:

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

Education for Administrators:

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

4. RCMP Program and Vancouver Schools

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

5. VPD Cadets Program

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

6. Vancouver Police Department - Description of the Programs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Provincial Information and Guidelines

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Ontario document states that,

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

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

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

2. BC School Districts

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

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

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

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

The Superintendent of Schools and Police meet twice a year. The district states that they believe that their partnership with the RCMP is working well and, therefore, the SRO program will continue. However, they do indicate that they are currently reviewing the program and hope in the future to increase the use of restorative justice programs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The program in Delta is currently under review.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Comparison Chart – BC School Districts

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

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

4. Other Metropolitan School Districts Across Canada

Edmonton Public Schools: 213 schools, 102,000 students

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Winnipeg School Division: 78 schools, 33,000 students

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Comparison Chart – School Districts in Other Provinces

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

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

D. INFORMATION ABOUT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It uses a three-tiered approach:

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

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

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

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

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

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

E. APPENDIX

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

Memorandum of Understanding

between the

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

School-Liaison Program

INDEX

PREAMBLE

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

ROLES

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

RESPONSIBILITIES

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

PROTOCOLS

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

Memorandum of Understanding

between

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

Regarding the School Liaison Program

PREAMBLE

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.0 DEFINITIONS

1.1 The definitions in this subsection apply in this MOU.

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

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

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

2.0 VISION

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

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

3.0 GOALS

3.1 The goals of the SLP initiative are to:

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

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

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

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

4.0 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Nothing in this MOU will be interpreted or applied so as to contravene obligations and procedures required by provincial or federal legislation, and the policies or regulations of the VPD and the VSB, including but not limited to the:
 - a. *School Act*
 - b. *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
 - c. *Youth Criminal Justice Act*
 - d. *Criminal Code,*
 - e. *Police Act*
 - f. *Child, Family and Community Service Act..*
- 4.2 The VPD and VSB will engage in supportive, collaborative, and consultative processes, to develop and define the partnership at the school and district level.
- 4.3 Critical to the success of the SLP partnership is the understanding and agreement that supporting and enhancing education, promoting pro-social behaviours and positive student development, and involving parents and the broader community, is fundamental to asset building and resiliency in students.

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

5.0 STRATEGIES

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

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

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

6.0 ROLE OF THE VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD

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

7.0 ROLE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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

8.0 ROLE OF THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

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

9.0 ROLE OF SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICERS

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

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

9.3 The specific duties of the SLO include:

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

10.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VSB

10.1 The VSB will provide each SLO with the following:

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

11.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VPD

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

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

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

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

12.0 ORIENTATION PROTOCOL

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

13.0 DEPLOYMENT/ASSIGNMENT PROCESS PROTOCOL

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

14.0 PLANNING PROTOCOLS

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

15.0 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

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

16.0 STUDENT INFORMATION DISCLOSURE PROTOCOL

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

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

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

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

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

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

17.0 CRITICAL INCIDENT PROTOCOLS

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

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

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

18.0 VSBNPD COORDINATION COMMITTEE

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

Appendix 1

School Based Prevention Topics

Including but not limited to:

- Education for Elementary Students:
 - o Stranger danger
 - o Substance abuse prevention
 - o Halloween safety
 - o Introduction to 911 and policing
 - o Conflict resolution
 - o Introduction to the SLO
 - o Gang recruitment
 - o Internet safety
 - o Bullying
 - o Theft & Shoplifting
 - o Abuse Prevention
- Education for Secondary Students:
 - o Substance abuse prevention
 - o Dating violence
 - o Conflict resolution
 - o Driver licensing
 - o Police department recruiting
 - o Drinking and driving
 - o Introduction to the SLO
 - o Gang recruitment
 - o Internet safety
 - o Bullying
 - o Street Racing
 - o Abuse Prevention
 - o Theft & Shoplifting
 - o Criminal Law
- Education for Parents and the Community
 - o Drugs
 - o Community safety
 - o Child abduction prevention
 - o Gangs
 - o Sexual exploitation of children and youth
 - o Crime prevention in the neighbourhood
 - o School safety
 - o Internet safety
- Education for Staff
 - o Current trends in youth crime
 - o Responding to intruders
 - o Response to critical incidents
 - o Drugs and weapons
 - o Threat assessment and responding to threats

Appendix 1 -Continued

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

Appendix 2

Equipment Provided by the VSB

Minimum Requirements

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

Appendix 3

Youth Services Unit (YSU)

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

Appendix 4

The VSB/VPD Coordination Committee

Name of Committee:

Vancouver School Board/Nancouver Police Department Coordination Committee

1. Terms of Reference:

This Standing Committee is created under the authority of:

VSB Superintendent and Board
VPD Executive and Police Board

2. Mandate

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

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

3. Specific Goals And/Or Objectives

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

4. Themes and Guiding Principles

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

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

5. **Responsibilities**

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

6. **Membership**

The Committee will consist of four persons per organization.

For the VPD (4 Representatives): Inspector in Charge of Youth Squad Section, 3 others as determined by him/her (with Alternates)

For the VSB (4 Representatives): Associate Superintendent,
Representatives from VASSA and VEPVPA, Manager Social Responsibility and Diversity

7. **Conduct of Meetings**

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

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

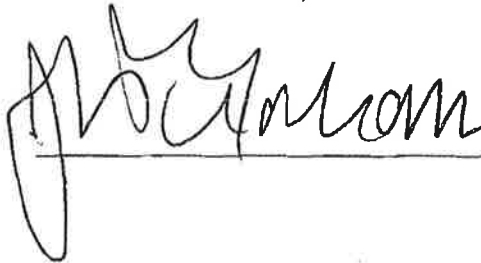
Chris Kelly

Superintendent of Schools, Vancouver School Board

 _____ June 23, 2006

Jamie Graham

Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department

 _____

F. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LINKS

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

Public Safety Canada Web Site <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/dtls-en.aspx?i=10152>

Evaluation of SLO program in Winnipeg Manitoba

[Carleton Study Finds Big Benefits to Police Presence in Peel Region Schools | Sprott School of Business](#)

Peter G. Jaffe, Lynn C. Watson, and Claire V. Crooks, *Creating Safe School Environments: From Small Steps to Sustainable Change* (London, Ont.: The Althouse Press, 2010).

BC Ministry of Education and the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. *Focus on Harassment and Intimidation: Responding to Bullying in Secondary School Communities*. 2001

BC Ministry of Education. *Focus on Suspension: A Resource for Schools*. 1999

BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association and BC Student Voice. *The Voice on Harassment - BC Student Voice answers four questions posed by the Ministry of Education concerning bullying, intimidation and harassment in schools*. 2001

Center for the Prevention of School Violence, Raleigh, North Carolina, U.S.A.

How to Establish and Maintain Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools. (website article)

Canadian Edition of Police in Schools: Laying the Foundation for a Trauma-Informed Assessment of School Resource Officer (SRO) Programs. Authors J. Kevin Cameron, Executive Director NACTATR and Dr. Kevin Godden, Superintendent of Schools, Abbotsford School Division

Costello, Bob, Joshua Wachtel, and Ted Wachtel. *The Restorative Practices Handbook for Teachers, Disciplinarians and Administrators: Building a Culture of Community in Schools*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices, 2009.

PARTNERS A Guide to Effective Collaboration between School Administrators and Police Working in Alberta's Schools - Alberta Education – Cross-Ministry Services Branch 44 Capital Boulevard, 10044 - 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6

[Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol](#), published by the Ontario Government in 2015

MAINTAINING SCHOOL SAFETY: A Guide for School and Police Personnel in B.C. 2019 – Published by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Vancouver Police Department Report - [Community Matters Report](#)- May 2020

National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) in the United Kingdom Summary of Findings: Anne Wilkin, Emily Lamont, Shona Macleod 20 October 2011

Police in Schools Research by Carleton University Business Professor [Linda Duxbury](#) and Psychology Professor [Craig Benelli](#)

Research on the Role of Law Enforcement in Public School Safety-University of Cincinnati

THE ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOL SAFETY: A NATIONAL SURVEY Lawrence F. Travis III Julie K. Coon Center for Criminal Justice Research University of Cincinnati Study