

Date November 28, 2022

ITEM

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Preeti Faridkot, Trustee

RE: Notice of Motion – Implementation of a revised and reimagined School Liaison Officer Program

Reference to  
Education Plan

**GOAL:** The Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by...

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Improving school environments to ensure they are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive places for students and families.

## REFERENCE TO VSB POLICY

Please indicate if the proposed motion relates to an existing policies from the [Board Policy Handbook](#). You must check one or more boxes.

- Relates to Policy No.
- This is an action motion and does not change or contradict any existing policies from the Board Policy Handbook.

## PROPOSED MOTION

That the Vancouver Board of Education write to Chief Constable Palmer of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Vancouver Police Board to request implementation of a revised and reimagined School Liaison Officer (SLO) program, effective and operational no later than September 2023, which takes into consideration the thoughtful inputs and opportunities from the 2021 SLO engagement report compiled by Argyle Communications, along with those from stakeholders and the community.

That staff provide updates to the Policy and Governance Committee on progress in development of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the VPD for a reimagined SLO program, and updates on how this program will work collaboratively with the Safe and Caring Schools team.

## RATIONALE

The Vancouver School District is committed to fostering safe and caring schools that promote safety, mutual respect, and acceptance.

In April 2021, the Vancouver Board of Education (VSB) voted to discontinue the longstanding School Liaison Officer (SLO) program and remove police officers from the city's schools effective at the end of June 2021.

In September 2021, in the wake of the elimination of the SLO program, a new VSB department, Safe and Caring Schools, was created. The department's stated purpose is to educate, prevent and provide intervention services for students, staff and families related to school and student safety.

Subsequent to the discontinuation of the SLO program in June 2021, the city has seen a marked increase in incidents involving Vancouver youth, leading the VPD to raise an alarm in the spring of 2022 in response to a series of "troubling and violent" swarmings, robberies, and attacks on teens. The VPD also reports that since March of 2022, officers have encountered a concerning number of young people with imitation guns, bear spray, brass knuckles, and machetes near schools and in the community.

In response to the notable increase in youth involved violence in Vancouver, B.C. Public Safety Minister Mike Farnworth stated on May 10, 2022, that the government will work with police and school districts to determine whether additional support is required to prevent such attacks.

The election of a new School Board on October 15, 2022, and the demonstrable lack of community consensus surrounding the discontinuance of the SLO program, offers the incoming Board an opportunity to implement a reimagined SLO program that addresses the needs and concerns of students and stakeholders.