

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 7:00 to 8:30pm
Room 180, VSB Education Centre

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

The meeting is currently being broadcasted live, and both the audio and video recordings will be accessible to the public for viewing even after the meeting ends. Footage from this meeting may be viewed from Canada or anywhere else in the world.

Meeting Decorum:

The Board has a strong commitment to ethical conduct. This includes the responsibility of committee participants (i.e., committee members, staff, inherent rights holder representatives, stakeholder representatives) to conduct themselves with appropriate decorum and professionalism. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Committee to see that decorum is maintained at Committee meetings:

- Committee participants engage in discussion by requesting to speak through the Chairperson, ensuring inclusive and orderly dialogue.
- A respectful and collegial environment is maintained as participants share diverse perspectives and contribute to meaningful discussions.
- Staff are trusted to provide objective, high-quality reports that reflect their professional expertise. Their contributions are respected and form a vital part of informed committee decision-making, free from external pressure or influence.
- Committee discussions are conducted in a constructive manner, with participants avoiding language or actions that could be perceived as personal, inflammatory, or accusatory.
- All participants are expected to demonstrate professionalism and courtesy in their interactions, contributing to a positive and productive committee culture.

Please see reverse for the Purpose/Function and Power and Duties of this Committee.

1. Information Items

- 1.1 Evaluation of the School Liaison Officer Program
- 1.2 Receipt of May 6, 2026 Advocacy Subcommittee Report

Presenters

- Pedro da Silva, Associate Superintendent
- Christopher Richardson, Advocacy Subcommittee Chair

2. Discussion Items

- 2.1 Draft Policy Review: Trustee Remuneration and Expenses Policy

Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer | CFO

Policy and Governance Committee

A. Responsibilities:

- A.1 Review the policy framework for the organization and make policy recommendations to the Board.
- A.2 Assess and make recommendations regarding Board governance structures.
- A.3 Ensure Board Policies are reviewed at least once in a four-year term and that compliance with legislation, regulations and legislative mandate is maintained.
- A.4 Review and make recommendations to the Board on the school district's compliance with legislative requirements.
- A.5 Annually review and recommend an Advocacy Plan to the Board that supports the achievement of the Board's strategic objectives.
- A.6 Review matters referred to the committee by the Board and make recommendations as requested.

May 13, 2026

TO: Policy and Governance Committee

FROM: Pedro da Silva, Associate Superintendent

RE: Evaluation of the School Liaison Officer Program

*Reference to
Education Plan*

**GOALS AND
OBJECTIVES:**

Goal 1: The Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by...

- Improving school environments to ensure they are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive places for students and families.

INTRODUCTION

This report is provided to the Policy and Governance Committee for information.

BACKGROUND

The School Liaison Officer (SLO) Program has operated in Vancouver schools since 1972. In 2021, following community concerns—particularly from Black and Indigenous students—the Board suspended the Program.

In November 2022, a newly elected Board approved the re-establishment of a re-imagined SLO Program, guided by a revised Memorandum of Understanding between the Vancouver School Board (VSB) and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD). Key changes included reduced visible markers of policing, enhanced training requirements, greater emphasis on relationship-building and mentorship, and an explicit commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The renewed program was reintroduced in schools in September 2023.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, the VSB and VPD engaged an independent third party to conduct a review of the SLO Program, focused on understanding the impact of program changes on students and staff, as well as identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement.

OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was conducted by Qatalyst Research Group as an independent, third-party review. Qatalyst was responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, analysis, and preparation of all reports and presentation materials.

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, including:

- Interviews with school administrators and School Liaison Officers;
- Surveys of secondary school students and school staff;
- Review of prior external reports and follow-up reviews; and
- Analysis of VPD administrative data related to calls for service and outcomes.

The evaluation examined:

1. Whether program changes were implemented as intended;
2. Perceptions and experiences of students, staff, and administrators, including Black and Indigenous students; and
3. The program's contribution to school safety, community relationships, early intervention, and crime prevention.

PRESENTATION

All evaluation findings, analyses, and conclusions were developed independently by Qatalyst Research Group.

At the meeting Qatalyst representatives will:

- Present the evaluation findings; and
- Respond to questions regarding the report and presentation.

Attachment:

A. Evaluation of the School Liaison Office Program – Final Report, April 2026

EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER (SLO) PROGRAM

Final Report - April, 2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The School Liaison Officer (SLO) Program has operated in Vancouver schools since 1972. Following its suspension in 2021 and concerns raised, particularly by Black and Indigenous students, a reimagined SLO Program was reestablished in 2022, introducing new training requirements, changes to officers’ appearance, and engagement approaches designed to address those concerns.

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the renewed SLO Program and to gather perceptions of it. Specifically, the evaluation examined whether program changes were implemented as intended; whether perceptions and experiences of school administrators, teachers, and students—particularly Black and Indigenous students—have evolved in relation to SLOs; and the Program’s contribution to positive youth engagement, safe schools, early intervention, and crime prevention.

A mixed-methods design was used. Primary data collection included one-on-one interviews with 25 school administrators from 24 schools, and interviews with 15 SLOs to explore implementation, engagement, and working relationships. Surveys with 707 students and 172 school staff from 17 VSB secondary and 7 independent schools were conducted. Secondary data included the 2021 Argyle external review, the 2024 Year 1 follow-up, and VPD administrative data from September 2023 to June 2025 on SLO activities, Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) calls, General Occurrence (GO) reports, offence types, recommended charges, and outcomes.

As with any perception-based study, findings are constrained by varying levels of familiarity with the Program across respondents, lower response rates for some demographic variables (notably ethnicity), and limitations in comparing current data with prior reviews that did not consistently disaggregate results by group.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES

All program changes have been implemented as planned and are generally well-received by those engaged in this review. Staff and SLOs report that the renewed Program has addressed earlier concerns by reducing visible markers of policing (standard uniforms, visible weapons, marked police vehicles), improving diversity across SLOs, and placing greater emphasis on relationship-building, mentorship, and community involvement rather than enforcement. Additional training for SLOs is considered central to program success in a school setting. All SLOs reported receiving additional training in the last two years. Officers emphasized that this training is directly applicable to their daily work with students and enhanced their capacity for communication, de-escalation, and youth-focused support.

SLOs are generally engaged in various school activities and, when required, in responding to incidents and conducting investigations. How this role is expressed varies by school. Some schools

adopt a more transactional approach, calling on SLOs primarily to respond to specific incidents, while others integrate SLOs more fully into school life, such as sports, presentations, field trips, meetings with students or parents, and support to students who may be victims or at risk of engaging in harmful or criminal behaviour.

School staff and students interact with SLOs in different ways. Nearly all staff who completed the survey (95%) reported some interaction with an SLO, most commonly referring students for support, seeking guidance on bullying and safety issues, and discussing emerging concerns such as antisemitism or online harassment. In contrast, only 43% of students surveyed reported any interaction with an SLO. A majority of students reported little or no direct contact with SLOs, which shapes both their familiarity with the Program and their perceptions of it. Students who are more familiar with the Program tend to hold more positive views of the SLOs.

PERCEPTION OF THE PROGRAM

Overall, most students are comfortable approaching SLOs for help or guidance. Over 85% of students who answered the question indicated that they feel either comfortable or they feel 'natural' (at ease) when approaching an SLO. Students who are uncomfortable (9% in total) are more likely to have never interacted with an SLO (75% vs. 35% of all students), to hold negative views of police (46% vs. 12% overall), to identify as female (63% vs. 50%) or as non-binary/prefer not to answer (22% vs. 3%), and to be less familiar with the Program (63% not familiar vs. 45% of all students).

School staff and students generally see SLOs as contributing to a sense of safety and a positive school community, though students are more neutral, reflecting their lower familiarity. Seventy-two percent of school staff agreed that SLOs contribute to a sense of safety in schools, compared with 57% of students. Students were more likely to be neutral (neither positive nor negative) in their views (29% vs. 7% of staff) and less likely to disagree (7% vs. 20% of staff). A similar pattern emerges in perceptions of SLOs' contribution to a positive school community: 72% of staff and 58% of students agreed that SLOs support a positive community climate; 30% of students were neutral, and only about 7% of students (vs. 18% of staff) disagreed.

Most students and staff surveyed support having SLOs assigned to their schools, or do not have an opinion (are neutral). Seventy-four percent (74%) of staff and 63% of students who completed the survey support having an SLO in their school; about one-third of students are neutral, and only 4% oppose the Program, compared to 19% of staff.

Negative perceptions of the Program have declined markedly since the 2021 Argyle review, especially among Black and Indigenous students. The proportion of all students who believe that SLOs *do not* contribute to a sense of safety in schools fell from 20% in 2021 to 7% in 2025. The negative perception among Black students decreased from 60% to 12% and among Indigenous students from 33% to 6%. Negative views of SLOs' impact on the school community decreased overall from 23% to 6%, from 75% to 12% among Black students, and from 33% to 0% among Indigenous students.

The Program appears to improve perceptions of the police among a substantial segment of the school community, including 45% of staff and 28% of students who reported that their views of the police had become more positive as a result of their interactions with SLOs.

EARLY INTERVENTION AND CRIME PREVENTION

Police call-for-service data indicate that SLOs respond to a broad range of incidents, with only about half requiring formal police reports. Between September 2023 and June 2025, there were 1,117 unique calls for service from secondary schools participating in the SLO Program. Fifty-two percent of calls resulted in a General Occurrence (GO) report; 48% did not. SLOs interviewed explicitly stated a preference not to document incidents that can be resolved informally, reserving GO reports for situations requiring further investigation or where prior warnings have not been effective.

Of 699 types of offenses recorded, 60% fell into the top 10 offence categories. In total, charges were recommended in 68 incidents, and the distribution of individuals involved in these incidents by ethnicity reflects the broader student population. More than two-thirds of those recommended for charges were self-identified as Caucasian (27%), Asian (18%), Middle Eastern (13%), or Hispanic (12%), with smaller proportions identifying as Indigenous (9%), South Asian (7%), or Black (3%), and 10% not specified.

Relatively few recommended charges are ultimately pursued or result in conviction, consistent with the Program's stated emphasis on diversion and restorative approaches. In 74% of cases for which charges were recommended, they were not pursued. Of the 13 individuals for whom charges were pursued and approved by Crown counsel, 4 resulted in convictions, and 4 are still before the courts; the remainder involved alternative outcomes, such as conditional discharge, undertakings with conditions, or participation in alternative measures.

Feedback from school administrators, staff, and SLOs confirmed that the SLOs focus is on prevention and early intervention, avoiding unnecessary criminalization of students. Respondents emphasized that SLOs' primary contributions to prevention and early intervention lie in their presence at schools, familiarity with school staff and students, collaborative supervision with school staff, proactive relationship-building, and timely response to emerging issues. SLOs are described as working closely with principals, teachers, counsellors, parents, and external agencies to identify at-risk students early, support victims of crime, and design responses that both resolve incidents and reduce the likelihood of escalation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

The VPD’s SLO program was first established in 1972, with the primary purpose of addressing the safety concerns of students, families, educators, and staff. Through the integration of relationship building, education, and engagement, as well as conducting investigations, when necessary, the VPD’s SLO program sought to provide support to all individuals in school communities, both within the Vancouver School Board (VSB) and in independent schools across the city of Vancouver.

From 1972 to 2021, the VPD’s SLO program consisted of collaborative school-based and community initiatives, including youth crime prevention projects, recreation and athletic activities, as well as leadership and personal development opportunities. The program enabled students to speak informally with SLOs about any safety concerns, thereby facilitating preventive, proactive policing. Centered on relationship building and diversion from the criminal justice system as the guiding principles, these alternatives to traditional policing improved outreach and engagement with school communities, allowing increased communication, as well as streamlined access to services.

In the spring of 2020, an external, independent review of the VPD’s SLO program was conducted, with all relevant members of the school community consulted. The report found that while the majority of respondents held either positive or neutral views on the existing SLO program, self-identified Black and Indigenous students held comparatively negative views, with police identified as symbols of larger societal concerns, including oppression, systemic racism, and abuses of power. Based on this information, the Vancouver School Board of Trustees voted to terminate the SLO program in June 2021.

In November 2022, a newly elected Vancouver School Board of Trustees passed a motion to reestablish a revised and reimagined SLO program to address the concerns raised in the report. This led to renewed collaboration between the VPD and the VSB, along with an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining each party's independent and collective duties and responsibilities. The SLO Program was reestablished in schools in September 2023.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the School Liaison Officer (SLO) program, including its alignment with the principles outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Vancouver School Board (VSB). More specifically, the review focused on answering the following questions:

1. Have the changes to the SLO Program been implemented as planned (e.g. training, operational structures, etc.)?
2. How effective have the engagement strategies been in increasing awareness and understanding of the Program?
3. Has the experience of school administrators, staff (school staff) and students, particularly Black and Indigenous students, in interacting with SLOs changed?

4. Has the Program contributed to positive youth engagement, safe schools and crime prevention strategies?

This report outlines the results of the data analysis and engagement. Given that the Program has recently undergone significant changes, the review was *not* intended to develop further recommendations but rather to provide an independent analysis of data and feedback collected from various stakeholders. The primary focus is on assessing the effectiveness of the changes implemented rather than on prescribing changes or future actions.

1.3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

A steering committee was established for the project, comprised of members from VPD and VSB staff. The Qatalyst team first developed an evaluation framework and engagement plan, which was reviewed and approved by the committee. The committee also provided guidance, outreach support (e.g. VSB took a lead role in informing the school staff and students about the survey and distributing the survey link), and provided necessary data for the evaluation (e.g. SLO and other reports).

The primary and secondary data collected as part of this evaluation are described below.

INTERVIEWS WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

We conducted one-on-one interviews with **25 school administrators** representing 24 secondary, independent and elementary schools that have used SLO support in the past two years. The purpose of the interviews was to gather leadership perspectives on the implemented changes and the Program's contribution to school safety.

Table 1. Number of School Administrators Engaged

| Schools | Principals | Vice-Principals | Total |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|-------|
| Secondary | 15 | 4 | 19 |
| Elementary | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Independent | 3 | 0 | 3 |

INTERVIEWS WITH SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICERS

We conducted one-on-one interviews with **15 School Liaison Officers** to discuss issues related to the implementation of changes, engagement and outreach activities, and their perceptions of the relationship with school administrators and students.

SURVEYS OF SCHOOL STAFF AND STUDENTS

879 students and school staff participated in the survey by responding to some but not all survey questions. This included 707 students and 172 teachers and other school staff (hereafter collectively referred to as “school staff”) across 17 VSB secondary and 7 independent schools. Please note that the total number of respondents for any one question will vary slightly because not all survey respondents answered all survey questions. The report uses the total number of those who responded to the question. This line of inquiry focused on participants' interactions and the type of

interactions with SLOs, their comfort in approaching SLOs, and their levels of support and perceptions of the Program's contribution to a sense of safety in schools.

The participation in the survey was voluntary and confidential. Students and school staff were not asked to provide any personal information. To encourage participation, participating schools held random draws among students who completed the questionnaires, and four laptops were awarded to selected students.

The engagement strategy involved the following:

- Qatalyst developed communication materials, including the information poster that was distributed to schools via school administrators. The poster included a QR code, a link to the survey questionnaire, and contact information for the Qatalyst Research team (email and phone numbers). School staff and students were given several options for providing feedback. Only a few individuals chose to contact the research team; most completed the online survey.
- Vancouver School Board staff distributed invitations to schools with a request for the survey to be shared with students and staff, with a focus on gathering perspectives from a diversity of participants.
- The surveys were open for more than 4 school months (June 2025 and from September to November 2025) to allow for targeted outreach and increased participation. The following tables provide a summary of the participants' demographics.

Table 2. Number of School Staff and Students Engaged

| Schools | School staff | Students* |
|------------------|--------------|------------|
| Secondary | 156 | 613 |
| Independent | 14 | 71 |
| Did not indicate | 2 | 23 |
| Total | 172 | 707 |

*Elementary school staff and students, and students at some independent schools, did not participate in the survey.

Table 3. Demographics of School Staff and Students Surveyed¹

| Demographics | Students | | School staff | |
|-------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | # | % of total | # | % of total |
| Ethnicity | | | | |
| White | 187 | 27% | 98 | 58% |
| East Asian | 177 | 25% | 33 | 20% |
| Southeast Asian | 110 | 16% | 2 | 1% |
| South Asian | 61 | 9% | 3 | 2% |
| Mixed race ² | 44 | 6% | 4 | 2% |
| Middle Eastern | 35 | 5% | 4 | 2% |
| Black | 29 | 4% | 5 | 3% |

¹ Please note that the total number of participants reporting on various demographic indicators varies across indicators.

² 4 students identified as mixed Indigenous and other ethnicities

| Demographics | Students | | School staff | |
|----------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | # | % of total | # | % of total |
| Latin American | 19 | 3% | 1 | 1% |
| Indigenous | 16 | 2% | 5 | 3% |
| Prefer not to answer | 20 | 3% | 14 | 8% |
| Gender/Sexual Orientation | | | | |
| Female | 356 | 50% | 100 | 59% |
| Male | 322 | 46% | 60 | 35% |
| Non-binary | 8 | 1% | 4 | 2% |
| LGBTQ2SIA+ | 3 | 1% | 0 | 0% |
| Prefer not to answer | 11 | 2% | 6 | 4% |
| Grade * | | | | |
| Grade 8 | 174 | 25% | 89 | 52% |
| Grade 9 | 87 | 12% | 91 | 53% |
| Grade 10 | 165 | 24% | 103 | 60% |
| Grade 11 | 158 | 23% | 100 | 58% |
| Grade 12 | 115 | 16% | 97 | 56% |
| School Staff (other) | | | 46 | 27% |
| Administrators | - | - | 15 | 9% |
| Counsellors/ youth workers | - | - | 12 | 7% |
| Others (support staff) | - | - | 19 | 8% |

Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025

*Note. Teachers can teach more than one grade; some totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding

PRELIMINARY RESULTS DISCUSSION WITH THE VSB DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE VPD INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Qatalyst team presented preliminary findings to both committees and provided an opportunity for reflection, questions and further discussion. The discussions centered on the need for the report to include information on charges arising from police responses to school calls for service (see section 3.3) and to make additional efforts to engage more Indigenous students, which were undertaken but with limited success (see below).

EFFORTS TO ENGAGE WITH UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

Additional efforts were made to reach underrepresented groups, particularly Indigenous students in secondary schools, as they were a group of interest for comparison to the previous SLO review report (Argyle Report, 2021). The survey was reopened and extended for an additional two weeks. During this time, a targeted outreach was made to Indigenous students through school staff and directly to youth across the schools, particularly schools that have a higher number of Indigenous students. These efforts were not very successful as Indigenous students reported that they had no knowledge of nor interactions with SLOs and therefore no opinion of the Program. Some school staff reported that it is likely that more Indigenous students participated in the survey than the data shows, but they may not have disclosed their identity (e.g., 20 students did not disclose their ethnicity). It is important to note that Indigenous students represent 4% of students within VSB schools.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data was reviewed, including:

- **Past SLO review reports**, including Argyle Report, completed in 2021, and Year 1 Follow-Up review, conducted by VPD in 2024. The data from these reports were used to compare changes in perceptions before the renewal of the Program (2021) and a year after the renewal of the SLO program. Direct comparisons of change in perceptions were conducted on two specific issues: SLOs' contribution to a sense of safety in schools and SLOs' contribution to a sense of a positive community in schools.
- **VPD data records** were analyzed for the period of September 2023 to June 2025, reflecting the school periods since program renewal. The analysis included:
 - A dataset documenting the engagement and other activities the SLOs participated in within school communities (e.g. SLOs' engagement type and frequency, time spent on different activities, direct engagement with students, ethnicity where disclosed)
 - A Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) records on calls for police service within SLO participating schools. This dataset includes records of the initial call type, the unit dispatched (SLOs, Youth Investigative Unit, or Other Police Officers), and whether the call resulted in a general occurrence report.
 - General Occurrence (GO) reports are written when officers respond to an incident that requires an official incident file and investigative records. This data included the number and type of offences.
 - Number and type of charges recommended and outcomes of charges (pursued, approved, not approved)

1.4. METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

As with any research that reports on perceptions of individuals with varying levels of familiarity or interest in the issues or topics covered, there is a potential for bias and other methodological limitations. The results of this engagement should be interpreted within the following context:

- As discussed in the report, many students are not familiar with the Program, and their perceptions of the SLOs are based on other environmental factors (e.g. social discourse, past experiences or perceptions of law enforcement, family background, etc.).
- Not all participants answered every survey question. For each question, the analysis is based only on the number of people who responded to that specific question (the denominator). This approach provides a more accurate picture of respondents' views of the particular issue.
- The lack of familiarity with the SLO program among students and their choice not to disclose their demographic information resulted in some limitations in the perceptions of students from various ethnic and other backgrounds. For example, 9% of students who responded to the questionnaires did not provide an opinion on the Program because they

were not familiar with it (i.e., these students answered a few survey questions, including one on familiarity with the program, but skipped the rest). Despite targeted outreach to Indigenous students, the feedback received from the school staff was that students were provided with the information, but either chose not to participate or participated without disclosing their ethnicity. As noted earlier, 3% of students did not disclose their ethnic background.

- The comparison analysis with the Argyle report and the Year 1 follow up review was not always possible because the data in those reports were not always disaggregated by the participant groups (students vs. school staff, ethnic groups, etc).

2. PROFILE OF THE SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

This chapter describes the renewed School Liaison Officer Program, as outlined in the 2022 MOU signed between VPD and VSB.

2.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

The VSB and VPD share a strong commitment to ensuring that students, parents, school staff, police, community members, service agencies and other partners work collaboratively so that:

- Students can learn in a safe environment free from discrimination and harm, where they develop strong self-esteem, responsible behavior and respect for the well-being and diversity of others, which will help them reach their intellectual, social, and physical potential;
- Preventative and appropriate intervention strategies are provided for students who have engaged in risky, unsafe, or otherwise criminal behavior, where appropriate diversion and restorative justice principles are applied in accordance with the Youth Criminal Justice Act; and,
- Effective and timely communication links are maintained between the VSB, VPD and all partners.

The partnership between the VPD and VSB reflects the shared commitment of both organizations to work cooperatively and collaboratively to support school safety through an intentional focus on proactive, preventive strategies and approaches.

2.2 STRUCTURE OF THE RE-IMAGINED SLO PROGRAM

The restructuring of the Program in 2022 centred on addressing concerns and perspectives of the Indigenous, racialized and equity-deserving students by acknowledging that the presence of police makes them feel less safe and less comfortable in school. The community engagement also highlighted the need for SLOs to consistently engage with, interact with, and explain their presence in schools to alleviate concerns, address misconceptions, and reduce miscommunication. Key themes focused on the 'humanization' of the SLOs, with a consistent emphasis on the visual components of the SLO program.

The changes made to the program include:

- **Focus on Diversity.** The VPD seeks to recruit qualified officers from diverse demographic and cultural backgrounds while adhering to VPD processes, rules, and collective agreements. SLOs are carefully selected based on their qualifications, experience, character, and fit for this community-oriented role.

Increased Training. The renewed SLO program consists of a revised, mandatory training portfolio for all SLOs. The additional training requirements for SLOs are intended to be robust and well-rounded, with particular emphasis on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Specialized Investigation, Youth, Leadership, Effective Communication, and Supporting

students with diverse abilities. In addition to mandatory EDI courses, trauma-informed policing courses have been added to the training. In accordance with the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the guiding principles of restorative justice, SLOs are trained to ensure that diversion occurs whenever possible and that alternative measures are used to minimize the impact of crime on youth victims and perpetrators. The leadership and communication course support the SLOs in their daily functions, given the emphasis on informal relationship-building and connection in this role. Finally, the VSB engaged members of the Education Services team to provide training and information to SLOs on working with students with diverse abilities.

- **Alternative Uniforms.** The SLO attire readily identifies the SLO as a police officer while providing an alternative to the standard VPD operational uniform. The daily SLO attire consists of the following:
 - Blue golf shirt branded with the VPD crest on the chest
 - Black or blue hiking-style pants
 - VPD identification jacket
 - Winter jacket with crest
 - Black shoes

For recreational/athletic outreach events, standardized physical training gear is issued to all SLOs for use at their discretion, including T-shirts branded with the VPD crest and athletic shorts.

- **Smaller Force Options, including firearms.** In response to concerns about SLOs carrying firearms, SLOs will be equipped with a concealed, smaller firearm. Those include a smaller sidearm fully concealed, a smaller oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray, and a smaller baton.
- **Vehicles.** The SLOs use unmarked vehicles, which enable maximum youth engagement while maintaining full police functions and operations.
- **Program Review and Assessment.** Ongoing program reviews will be undertaken, including annual surveys and facilitated discussions.

STAFFING

For the 2023-24 school year, the staffing provided by the VPD includes:

- 15 Constables organized into two teams
- 2 Sergeants
- 1 Youth Justice Programs Coordinator

Secondary schools are assigned to each SLO based on the total number of students and/or the number of incidents requiring police support. SLOs are informed and apprised of critical incidents and significant events occurring across the school district, so that adequate coverage and support can be provided to schools during holidays, illness, and/or extended leaves and absences. In this manner, while schools are assigned to SLOs to foster relationship-building and connectivity, the

SLO unit as a whole is expected to be available to support the varying schools across the district. The school assignments and responsibilities of the SLOs are as follows:

- Every SLO officer is responsible for a minimum of one VSB Secondary School, not including University Hill Secondary, which is located outside VPD jurisdiction and policed by the RCMP. The SLO officer is also responsible for corresponding feeder elementary schools, independent schools, alternate and alternative programs in the corresponding geographical area.
- One SLO officer and the Youth Justice Programs Coordinator will be responsible for the alternate and alternative programs located offsite/separate from other secondary schools

It is necessary that dedicated office space at each VSB secondary school be in close proximity to the administration, including the principal, vice-principal, and school counsellors. This enables students and staff to speak with SLOs in an accessible, safe, and secure location, thereby increasing privacy, confidentiality, and trust. It is of the utmost importance that SLOs are readily accessible, as they will be actively involved in school communities and available for informal conversations and relationship-building throughout the school, where possible. In situations requiring formal reporting and/or conducting investigations, it is essential that SLO offices are safe spaces that are both inviting and private.

2.3 PROGRAM STRATEGIES

To achieve its objectives, the SLO program will implement the following strategies:

- **Prevention and Education:** This strategy includes education and awareness programs, role modelling, developing positive relationships, and supporting schools and communities to create safe and inclusive learning environments.
- **Establishing Positive Connections:** SLOs work to establish positive connections with the school communities to which they are assigned. This includes being available to support students and families who may be in contact with and/or experiencing challenges related to the criminal justice system. With the support of the school administrator, SLOs actively build trust with students and families, regardless of their prior interactions with SLOs in schools or with the police.
- **Early Intervention:** The earliest possible identification of students at risk of harm, exploitation, victimization or criminal behaviour is a primary objective for the VPD and the VSB. Referrals to agency partners and remedial processes are pursued at the earliest opportunity to mitigate risks and reduce the potential for harm to self or others.
- **Supporting Victims of Crime:** SLOs actively work to support members of the school community who have been victims of a crime. The SLO work collaboratively with school administrators and families to ensure victims of crime are heard and supported.

- **Crime Prevention:** SLOs engage in intervention and crime prevention activities within the school community. Where possible and appropriate, SLOs refer students to programs and supports to prevent their engagement with the criminal justice system.
- **Justice System Processes:** When all other diversion options have failed or are not appropriate, students who have committed a criminal offence may be processed through criminal justice processes. The VPD leads criminal investigations in accordance with the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- **Information Management:** Sharing information to identify and support students who are at risk of or engaged in criminal activities is a priority for ensuring safe and healthy schools. Information sharing is conducted in compliance with, and enabled by, the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act* and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

2.4 PARTNERS' ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The SLO Program is delivered collaboratively between the VPD and VSB.

VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

The VPD provides police constables who work as SLOs within VSB schools during the regular school calendar year and summer school. It also provides SLOs with all requisite duty equipment and sets the operational policy.

SLOs build relationships between school communities and the VPD, fulfilling a unique role in retaining all the duties of a peace officer while also undertaking responsibilities relative to working in an educational setting with students and other adults, including parents, school staff and administrators. The specific duties of the SLO include:

- Delivering safety and crime prevention programs.
- Providing advice and guidance to students, staff, and parents who seek support.
- Acting as a resource to students, administrators, and staff.
- Working to enhance the safety and security of the school.
- Supporting and engaging with various school teams and clubs, and accompanying classes on field trips when requested.
- Investigating criminal offences related to schools when required.
- Serving as a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system

VANCOUVER SCHOOL BOARD

The VSB provides each SLO with an office space that is private and in close proximity to the school administrative office or counseling department, where feasible. The school principal will collaborate with the assigned SLO to determine a suitable space. The principal provides orientation to SLOs at the start of the school year.

School principals and vice principals work collaboratively with the SLO(s) assigned to their school community and ensure the officer has the information and support required to fulfill their role. The

privacy rights of staff and students, as well as all applicable laws, shall be adhered to in providing information to SLO officers.

At the start of the school year, the school communities are informed of the plans for the SLO program in their schools. This includes information on the SLO assigned to support the school, ways students and/or families can contact the SLO, and an overview of key supports and activities the SLO will be involved in within the school.

As part of their shared commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, both the VPD and VSB commit to continuing to engage with, and learn from, Indigenous Rightsholders and Nations.

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES AND ROLE OF SLOS

All Program changes have been implemented as planned and are well-received by those engaged in this review.

Both School Liaison Officers (SLOs) and school administrators reported that the changes to the SLO Program have been implemented as planned. No concerns were raised about the implementation of the Program changes. Most SLOs began in their positions after the program renewal and therefore could not comment on differences in approach; however, all reported a smooth integration into the current structure. A few SLOs raised concerns that the shift away from marked police cars and uniforms has diminished the visible presence of officers, thereby reducing deterrence and making it harder for students and school staff to recognize SLOs as police officers and seek assistance.

The changes implemented, particularly the introduction of plainclothes officers, concealed equipment, and increased training for SLOs, have been well received across all participating schools. Most school staff reported that the SLO program has responded to concerns by reducing visible markers of policing (uniforms, weapons, vehicles), improving representation, and emphasizing relationship-building, mentorship, and community involvement over enforcement.

Nearly half of the school staff also believe that the changes should address students' concerns, whereas others did not provide an opinion, suggesting that students should comment on whether they feel more comfortable with the program (this is further discussed in section 3.2).

Table 4. SLO Program Change Addressed Concerns

| Responses | # | % of total |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 82 | 49% |
| Not sure/don't know | 55 | 33% |
| No | 31 | 18% |
| Total | 168 | |

Source: School Staff Survey, 2025

A summary of both positive and negative feedback from school staff is provided in the table below.

| Summary of Feedback |
|--|
| Positive (n=64) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Friendly and approachable officers (45 mentions): Staff indicated that SLO officers are friendly (e.g., having warm personalities, such as being welcoming, kind) and approachable (e.g., speaking to students in a caring and genuine manner, avoiding using an authoritative tone and body language). This has made students feel safe approaching SLOs for advice, conversation, and help.▪ Positive changes in police appearance (28 mentions): Many staff reported that changes in the SLO's appearance, including wearing casual clothing, concealment of equipment (e.g., carrying a small gun and radio out of sight), and unmarked vehicles (e.g., not driving traditional police car) has helped officers blend in with the school community (e.g., "They are physically just another adult |

Summary of Feedback

in our school, they no longer stand out as VPD, but the impact is very huge and positive) and increase students' comfort in interacting with officers.

- **Relationship building, school activities (17 mentions):** Staff mentioned that officers' engagement in the school community – including sports activities (e.g., powerlifting club, coaching a basketball team), field trips, has been a very positive contribution to the school community (e.g., *“He always has students in his office hanging out... and students view him as a positive/supportive adult in the building”*).
- **Officers from minority groups (7 mentions):** Some staff members indicated that the officers serving their school come from a diverse background, which helped students from minority groups feel better represented, and more trusting of police (e.g., *“... change the narrative of how youth of colour interact with police”*). One staff member also noted officers from minority groups are more aware of racial biases in police interactions.
- **Improves safety of schools (4 mentions):** A few staff members indicated that the SLOs have been helpful in addressing problems faced by the school (e.g., *“We have several troubled students who are well known to our SLO and it helps to know she is keeping an eye on these kids”, “the SLO officer has helped him navigate through some potentially dangerous situations”*) that has made schools feel safer (*“SLOs are part of the community, not officers outside of the community”*).

Negative (n=26)

Some staff believe that officers do not belong in schools, and that their presence can be harmful to students, including:

- **Student's anxiety and discomfort (16 mentions):** Some staff noted that the presence of a police officer – even if there is weapon concealment – creates anxiety and fear in students.
- **Incorrect messaging to students (7 mentions):** Staff noted that schools should be places of learning, welcoming, and safety. Having police in schools sends the wrong message to students – it indicates to students that they are possible places of criminals and criminal activity, counterproductive to the school's agenda (e.g., *“A law and order agenda is counterproductive to these goals”*).
- **Aggressive posturing (3 mentions):** A few staff members noted that some officers do not fully conceal weapons or do not engage with students, or have been engaged in incidents with some students, which causes an uncomfortable school atmosphere.
- **Privacy concerns (2 mentions):** Two staff members expressed concerns about student information and data recorded to police databases.

Source: School Staff Survey, 2025

SLOs received a wide range of additional training that prepared them well to work with youth in the school environment.

All SLOs received additional training in the last two years. SLOs reported participating in various training activities, typically offered by VSB. All SLOs participated in the Anti-Racism training mandatory for all staff and those working within the school system. Other training reported by SLO included Restorative Justice, Trauma-Informed Training, Suicide Prevention, and Critical Incidents De-escalation Strategies when working with neurodivergent or vulnerable youth. SLOs noted that training is tailored to dealing with youth in the school environment. They also reported that training is relevant and useful for communication and relationship-building with students. A few

officers noted that additional training may be useful related to issues such as online safety, social media, cyberbullying, mental health, autism sensitivity, and collaboration with school staff and other agencies.

SLO's are involved in school activities and interact with students and staff in various ways, both directly and indirectly.

The level and intensity of SLOs' involvement in school activities are driven by each school's approach to building relationships with SLOs.³ According to interviews with school administrators, some adopted a more transactional approach to working with SLOs, having them participate in limited, structured introductions and presentations (assembly presentations about their roles), and visit schools when called upon to help resolve incidents. In other schools, administration and teachers may invite SLOs to participate in field trips, present on various issues, and be more actively engaged with the school community and more visible on school grounds.

Overall, SLOs engage with the school community in two major ways:

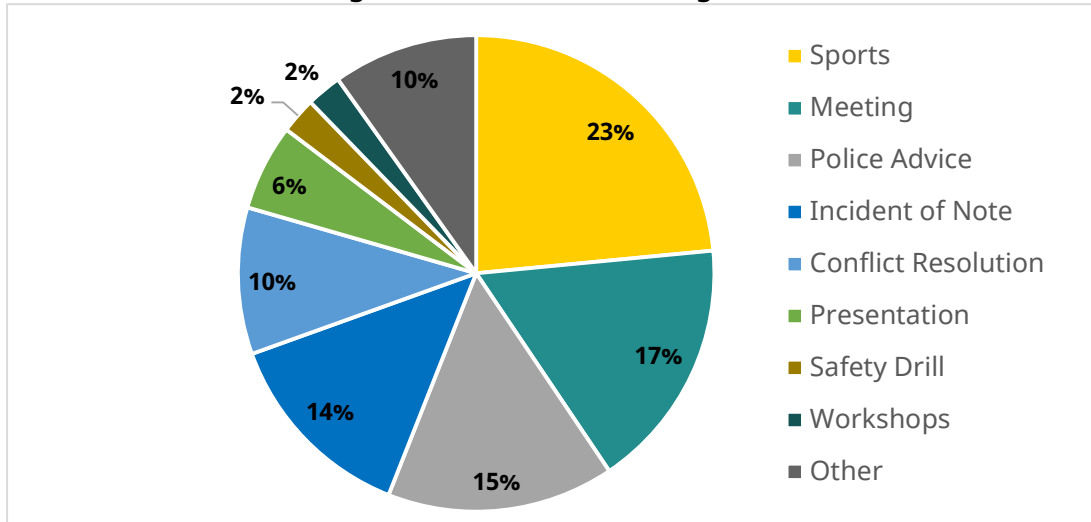
- **Actively participating in school activities.** School administrators and SLOs reported that officers typically participate in a range of school activities to build relationships and raise awareness. SLOs participate in extracurricular activities, including coaching sports teams, leading clubs, and organizing or supporting events such as tournaments, running clubs, and youth initiatives. These activities provide informal settings for students to interact with the officers, which is described as beneficial for relationship-building and normalizing the officers' presence in the school. Administrators and SLOs both highlighted that involvement in school events, field trips, and community outreach initiatives helps integrate SLOs into the school's daily life and makes them more approachable to students.

A number of SLO-led youth programs were created or reinvigorated during the first year of the renewed SLO program, including VPD Running Club, VPD Titans Swim Club, Vancouver Technical Youth Boxing Club, and Iron Bulldogs Health Club.

According to SLOs' records, they collectively recorded engaging in 2,500 school activities, over half of which involved participation in sports, meetings with students or parents, and providing support to students. Most common "other" activities included one-on-one student support in their office for personal issues, participating in school events like karaoke and food challenges, shopping for and delivering charitable gifts (Kops 4 Kids and Food for Families), addressing student conflicts and safety concerns, and building relationships with at-risk youth through casual conversations and mentorship.

³ SLOs are assigned to secondary schools and visit elementary schools when they are invited.

Figure 1. SLO Activities Categories



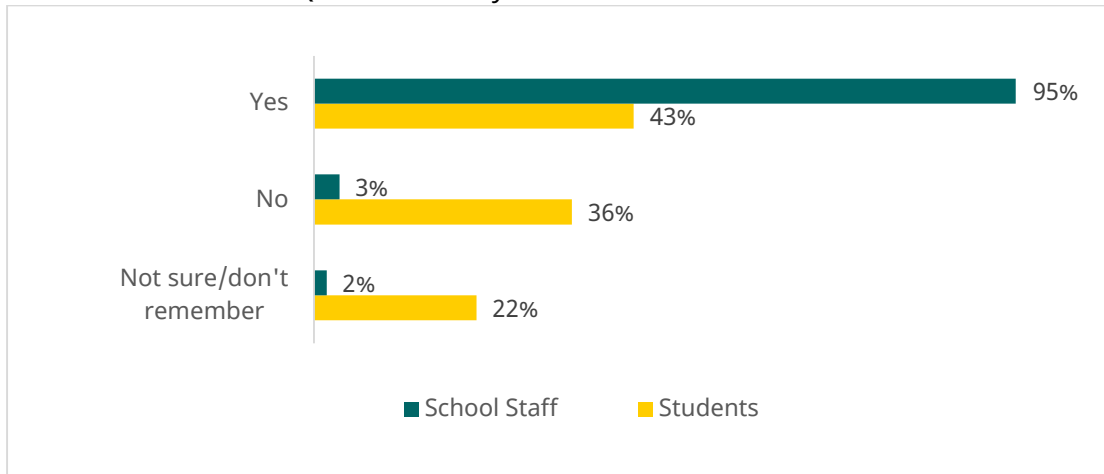
Source: SLO Activity Report; Total may not add up to 100% due to rounding

- Responding to incidents.** School administrators noted that the SLOs are called upon by administrators and school staff to help address concerns raised by students and parents, such as bullying, harassment, online safety, and help resolve/de-escalate incidents involving fights (particularly where a weapon may be involved), visits to schools by outsiders (youth not attending the school), checking on missing persons reports, responding to parents' concerns, etc.

School staff are more likely to interact directly with SLOs than students.

Fewer than half (43%) of surveyed students reported interacting with an SLO officer, while nearly all staff (95%) who completed the survey reported interacting with an SLO officer in some capacity.

Figure 2. Interactions with SLO
 Questions: Have you interacted with an SLO?



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025

School staff reported that their interactions with an SLO most commonly included referring students to them for support, seeking advice and guidance on specific issues or incidents, such as bullying and safety concerns, and discussing emerging issues or problematic behaviours.

Table 5: Staff Interactions with SLO Officers

| Type of interaction | Staff | |
|--|------------|-----|
| | # | % |
| Referred students to SLO for support (e.g. to explore community support and services) | 27 | 17% |
| Received guidance about specific issues (e.g. bullying, safety concerns) | 26 | 17% |
| Discussed emerging issues (e.g. antisemitism in schools, online harassment, checking in on students, etc.) | 24 | 15% |
| General conversations, participated in field trips, and other activities | 18 | 12% |
| Reported students' activities to SLO for further investigation | 15 | 10% |
| Participated in safety and crime prevention activities together with SLO | 14 | 9% |
| Engaged in most or all of the above interactions | 31 | 20% |
| Total Responding | 155 | |

Source: School Staff Survey, 2025;

Of the 301 students who indicated they had interacted with SLO officers, 288 reported on different ways in which they interacted with officers. Most reported doing so through sports activities, in general/informal interactions, and through participation in training and other educational activities (presentations, workshops on safety, etc.).

Table 6: Student's Interactions with SLO Officers

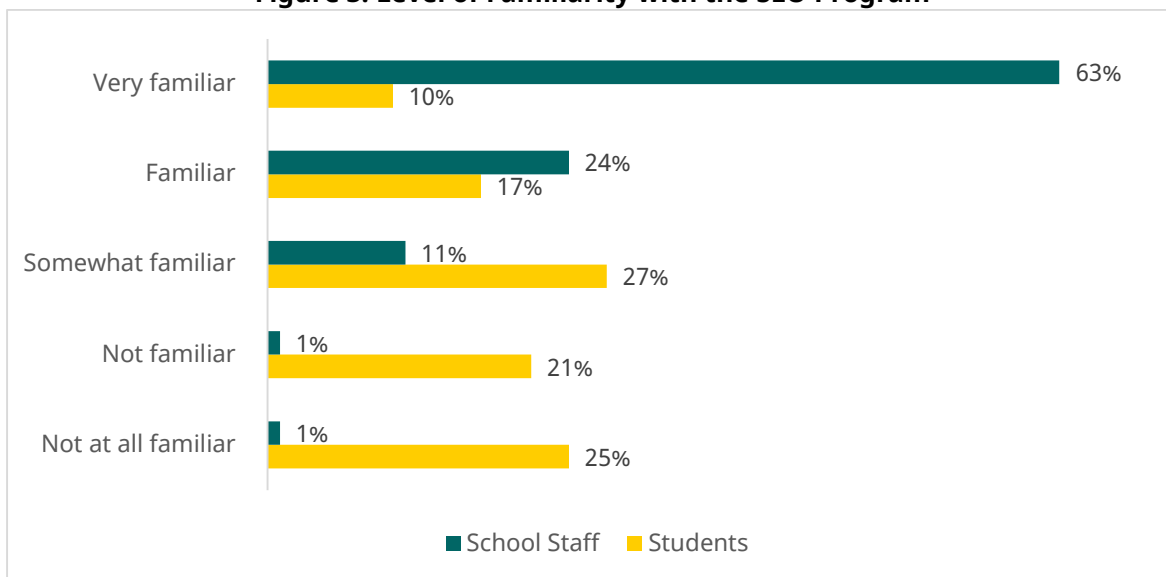
| Type of interactions | Students | |
|--|------------|-----|
| | # | % |
| I interacted with the officers in school activities (sports) | 107 | 37% |
| Talked to officer (e.g., greetings, general conversations) | 82 | 28% |
| I received guidance about a specific issue, such as bullying | 36 | 13% |
| I participated in training/educational activities with an SLO | 23 | 8% |
| I reported a specific incident in school | 21 | 7% |
| I participated in safety and crime prevention activities | 16 | 6% |
| Other (e.g., the SLO raised awareness for, and donated to my club) | 3 | 1% |
| Total | 288 | |

Source: Students Survey, 2025;

Despite the SLOs' involvement in various school activities, students' awareness of the Program has not increased in recent years.

Nearly all staff reported being at least somewhat familiar with the program, with nearly 88% reporting being very familiar or familiar. In contrast, just over half of students (54%) reported familiarity with the Program, with only 27% reporting familiar or very familiar.

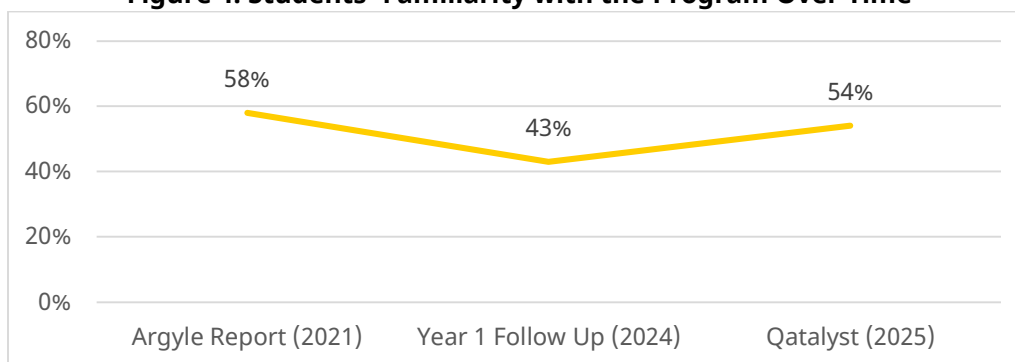
Figure 3. Level of Familiarity with the SLO Program



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025

Familiarity with the renewed Program has increased since the Year 1 follow-up review, but remains below the levels reported in the Argyle Report (2021).

Figure 4. Students' Familiarity with the Program Over Time



Sources: Argyle Report (2021), Year 1 Follow-Up Review (2024), Qatalyst Student Survey (2025)

School administrators and staff across schools had different opinions on whether additional efforts are needed to increase familiarity with the program. Some reported that SLOs should be more involved in school activities and interact with students, so they can become more aware of the Program and how SLOs can support them. Others suggested that students are introduced to the SLOs during school assemblies and occasional presentations but do not need further engagement unless concerns are raised, which can then be referred to the SLO. Some administrators noted that their students are unaware of the program unless they were a victim or involved in incidents that require SLO attention.

The different approaches to SLOs' interactions with schools are reflected in the program's level of familiarity across schools. The average familiarity rating ranged from 1.0 to 3.7, on a scale from 1 (not at all familiar) to 5 (very familiar). The level of familiarity also varies by grade, with younger students (grade 8) rating it lower (2.1) and older students (grade 12) rating it higher (average 3.1). Students identifying as Latin American tended to rate their familiarity with SLOs lowest (2.1), and those identifying as Middle Eastern rated it highest (3.2).

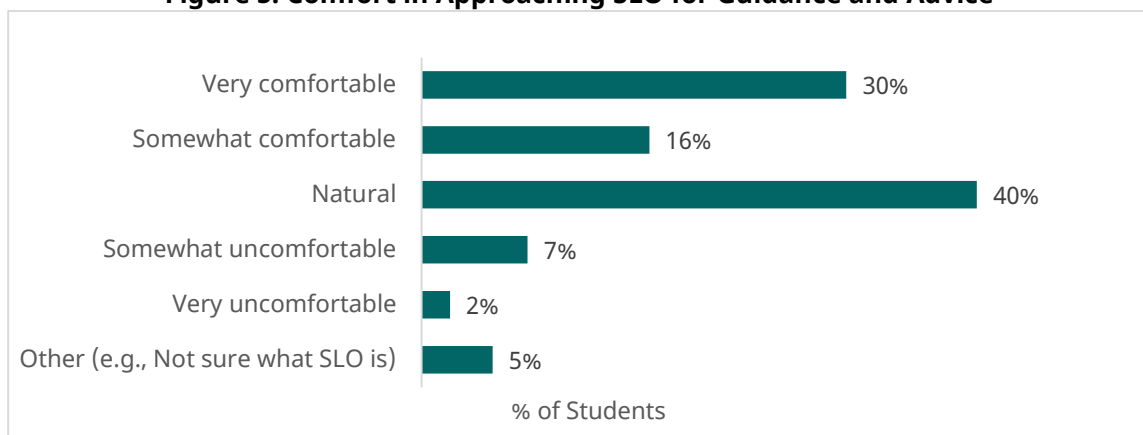
As illustrated in the following section, students who are more familiar with the Program tend to have more positive views of its various aspects.

3.2 PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROGRAM

More than 85% of students reported feeling comfortable or natural (feel at ease) about approaching SLOs for help or guidance.

As illustrated in the following chart, among students who responded to the question about whether they are comfortable approaching an SLO for help and guidance, most are comfortable or feel at ease to approach an SLO. Only 2% reported being very uncomfortable, and 7% reported being somewhat uncomfortable. Students who reported being somewhat or very familiar with the SLO program were significantly more likely to report being very or somewhat comfortable approaching SLO (75% vs. 16% among those who were not familiar with SLO).

Figure 5. Comfort in Approaching SLO for Guidance and Advice



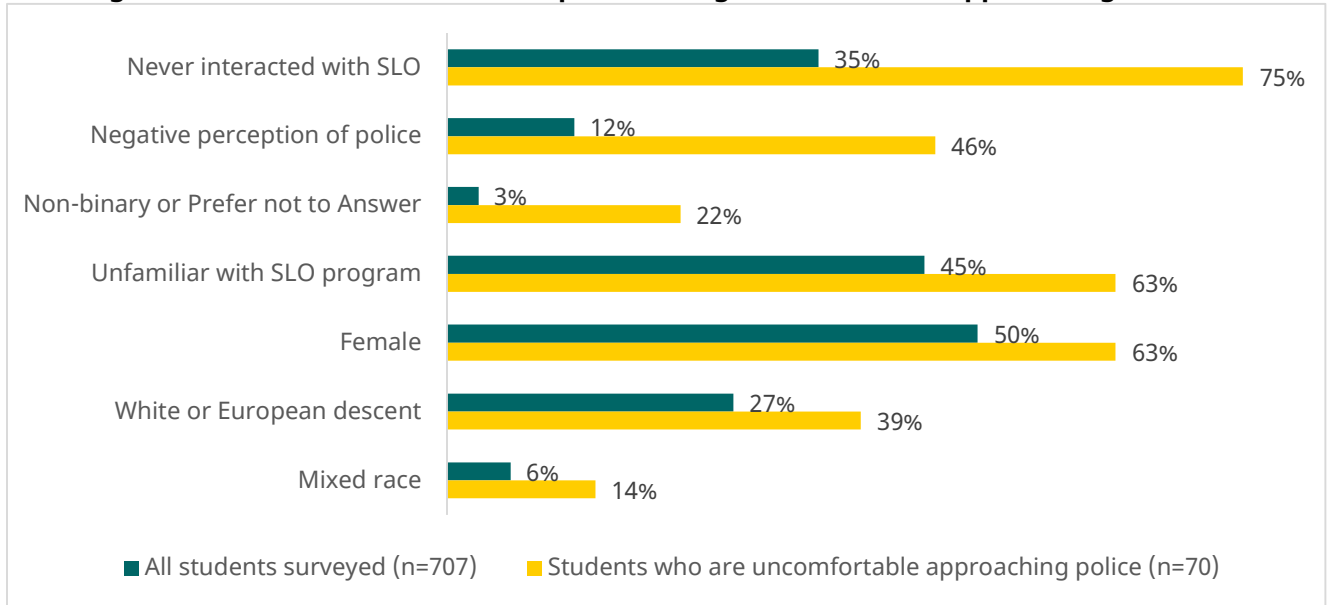
Source: Students Survey, 2025

Compared to the overall profile of students surveyed, students who said they were *somewhat or very uncomfortable* (9%) approaching SLOs for help or assistance were more likely to:

- Have never interacted with an SLO (75% reported they have never interacted with SLOs vs. 35% of total students)
- Have negative views of the police (46% reported having a negative view of the police vs. 12% of total students)
- Be non-binary/preferred not to answer (22% vs. 3% of total students)
- Be female (63% identified as female vs. 50% of total respondents)

- Self-identify as White of European descent (39% vs 27% of total students) and mixed race 14% vs. 6% of total students) and
- Not be as familiar with the Program (63% not familiar vs. 45% of total students)

Figure 6. Profile of Students who Reported Being Uncomfortable Approaching SLO



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025

When asked to elaborate on why they feel comfortable or uncomfortable approaching an SLO in their schools, **425 students provided feedback**. Of those, 166 students (38%) reported that they were not familiar with the Program or did not understand it well. The following table summarizes the remaining 260 responses.

Table 7. Feedback from the Students

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Positive or Neutral (n = 232, 55%)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approachable and friendly: Many students explained they feel comfortable with their SLO officer because officers are friendly, kind, and easy to talk to (e.g., “He walks through the halls fist-bumping people and saying hi”, “Our officer is very open and seems like a very caring person”). ▪ Actively engaged in school activities: Some students felt comfortable engaging with officers because they participate in school activities such as basketball (e.g., “he was my grade 8 basketball coach”) and other activities (e.g., “integrated into our community through field trips and other activities”, “He like pops into classes and always helps with stuff”), providing students opportunities to meet, familiarize and interact with officers. ▪ Safety and trusted authority: Students also reported feeling a general sense of comfort and security from the presence of SLOs. Students felt comfort because they perceived the SLO can effectively respond to incidents (e.g., “makes the school feel more secure against intruders or people from outside of the school posing as a threat”), and also due to knowledge that they were being actively safeguarded by authority (e.g., “because they are a trusted adult who knows what they are doing”). |
| <p>Negative or Unfamiliar</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fear of law enforcement personnel: Students indicated feeling SLOs made them uncomfortable because they were fearful of law enforcement personnel in general |

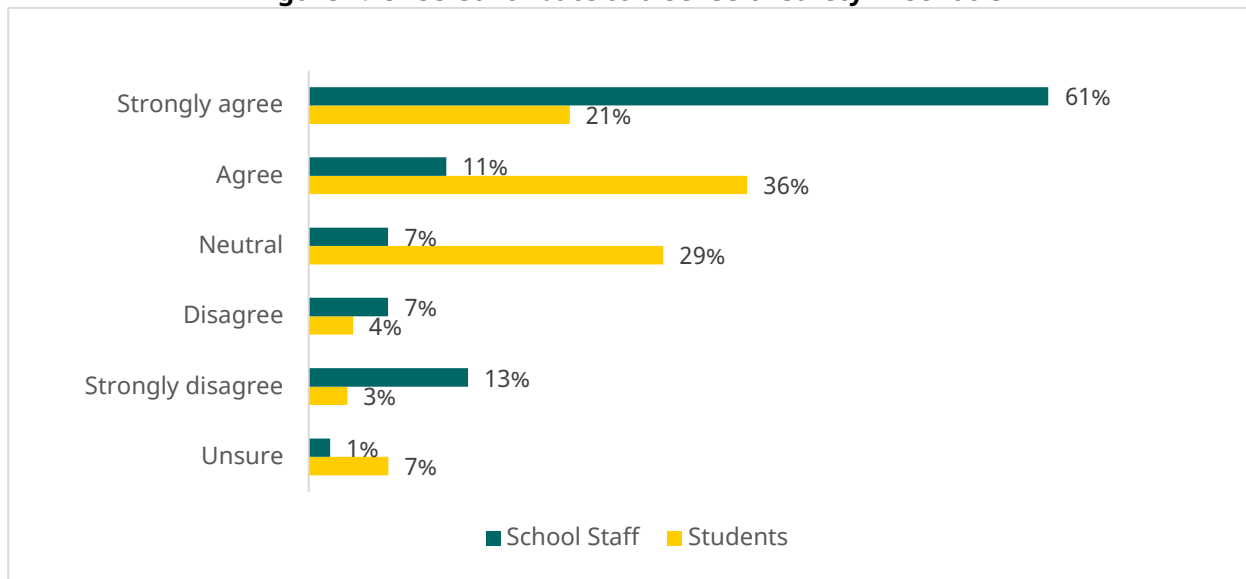
| | |
|---------------------|---|
| (n = 28, 7%) | <p>(e.g., “I have always felt a bit scared around the police not that I did anything bad but in general”, “Corrective authorities are scary”, “They misunderstand, don’t feel safe”).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative past experiences with law enforcement: A few students also held negative perceptions of law enforcement because of their past experiences (e.g., “With my past interactions with police officers and those of law enforcement, I would prefer not to go to them for help”). ▪ Discomfort around guns: Two students indicated discomfort knowing that police held concealed firearms at their school (e.g., “I am deeply disturbed by the presence of a gun at my school. I don’t feel like something misinterpreted could end in a classmate or I could get shot”). ▪ Unfamiliar with officers: Some students also felt uncomfortable simply because they were not that familiar with police officers (e.g., “I just don’t know him very well and only see him 1 time a week”, “I feel this way because I have never interacted with one”). |
|---------------------|---|

Source: Students Survey, 2025

Most school staff and students agree that the SLOs contribute to a sense of safety and positive community in their schools. Students tend to be more neutral (indifferent) in their views than school staff, likely because they are less familiar with the Program.

When asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement that SLOs contribute to a sense of safety in schools, 72% of school staff agreed compared to 57% of students. Students tended to be more neutral or indifferent (29% vs. 7%) and less likely to disagree (7% vs. 20%) than school staff.

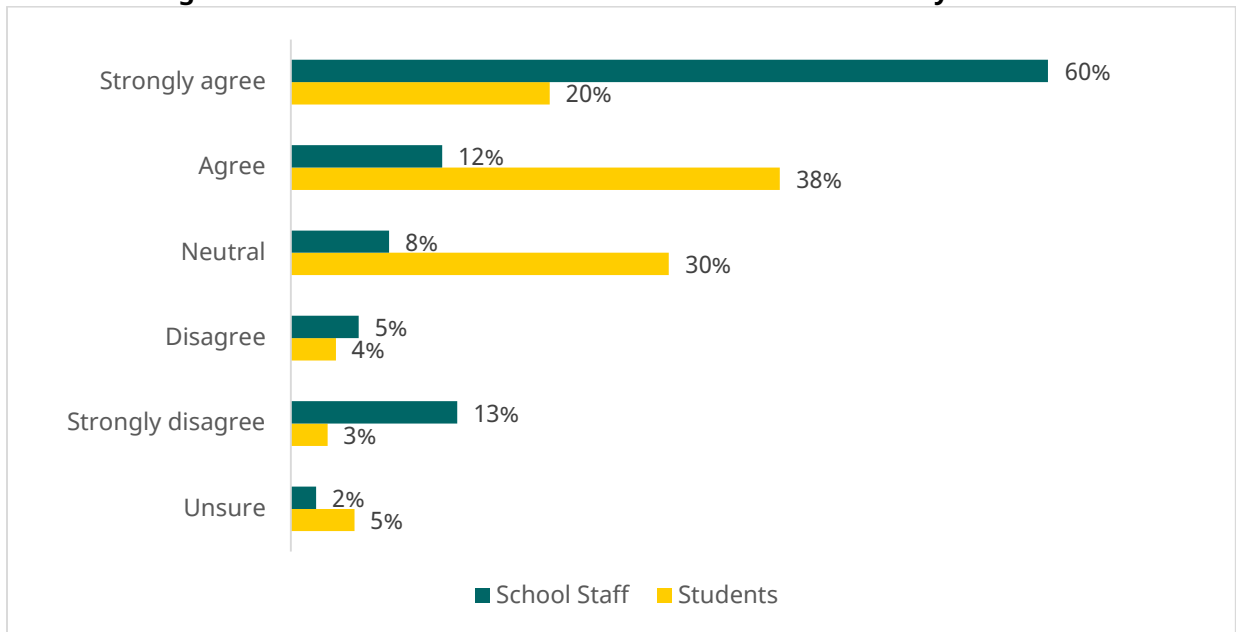
Figure 7. SLOs Contribute to a Sense of Safety in Schools



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025 Note: Blank responses are removed from the calculation

Similarly, more than two-thirds (72%) of school staff, compared to 58% of all students, strongly agree or agree that SLOs contribute to a sense of positive community in schools. 30% of students were neutral, and only about 7% (compared with 18% of school staff) disagreed with the statement.

Figure 8. SLOs Contribute to a Sense of Positive Community in Schools



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025 Note. Blank responses are removed from the calculation

In comparison to previous years, the negative perception of the Program has decreased significantly, particularly among Black and Indigenous students.

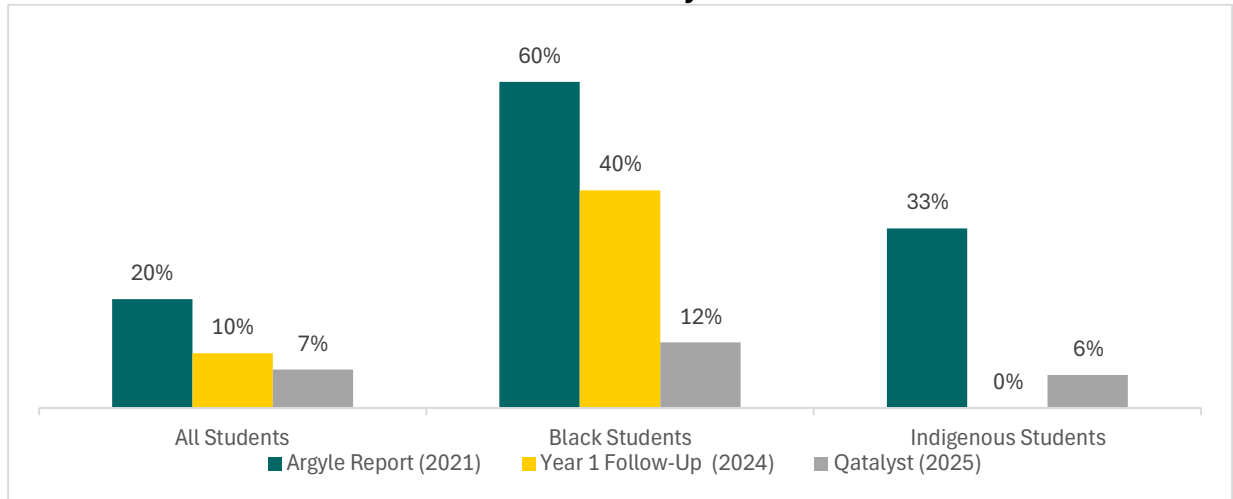
The external review of the Program in 2021 by Argyle highlighted that while most students, parents and school staff had positive or neutral views of the Program, self-identified Black and Indigenous students held comparatively negative views of SLOs. This resulted in the Program's suspension in June 2021, followed by a restructuring and the renewal of the reimagined SLO program in November 2022.

The following charts illustrate changes in the percentage of students who strongly disagreed or disagreed with the two statements presented below across three time points: the Argyle report (2021), the Year 1 follow-up review (2024), and the Qatalyst engagement (2025).

The percentage of students who feel negatively about SPOs' impact on safety in school:

- Decreased from 20% to 7% overall;
- Decreased from 60% to 12% among Black students;
- Decreased from 33% to 6% among Indigenous students.

Figure 9. Proportion Of Students Over Time Who Feel Negatively about SLOs' Impact on School Safety ⁴

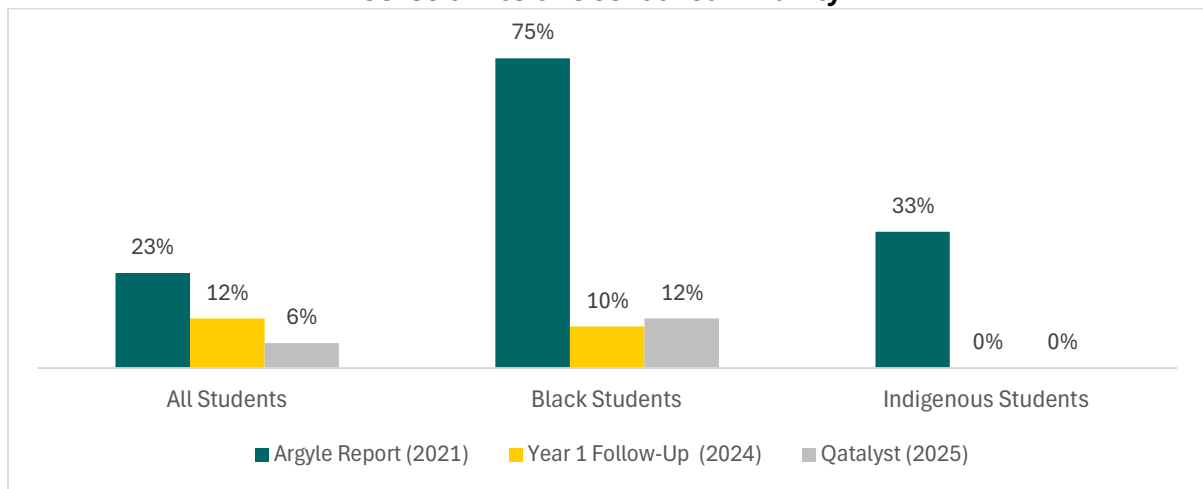


Sources: Argyle Report (2021), Year 1 Follow-Up Review (2024), Qatalyst Student Survey (2025)

The percentage of students who feel negatively about SLOs contribution to a sense of a positive community in school:

- Decreased from 23% to 6% overall;
- Decreased from 75% to 12% among Black Students;
- Decreased from 33% the Argyle Report to no Indigenous students reporting disagreement with the statement in the Qatalyst-led survey.

Figure 10. Proportion of Students Over Time who Feel Negatively about SLO Contribution to a Sense of Positive School Community⁵



Sources: Argyle Report (2021), Year 1 Follow-Up Review (2024), Qatalyst Student Survey (2025)

⁴ Students were asked to rank their agreeance with the following statement “I think the SLO program contributes to a sense of safety in my school”, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 – Strongly Disagree, 3 – Neutral, and 5 – Strongly Agree

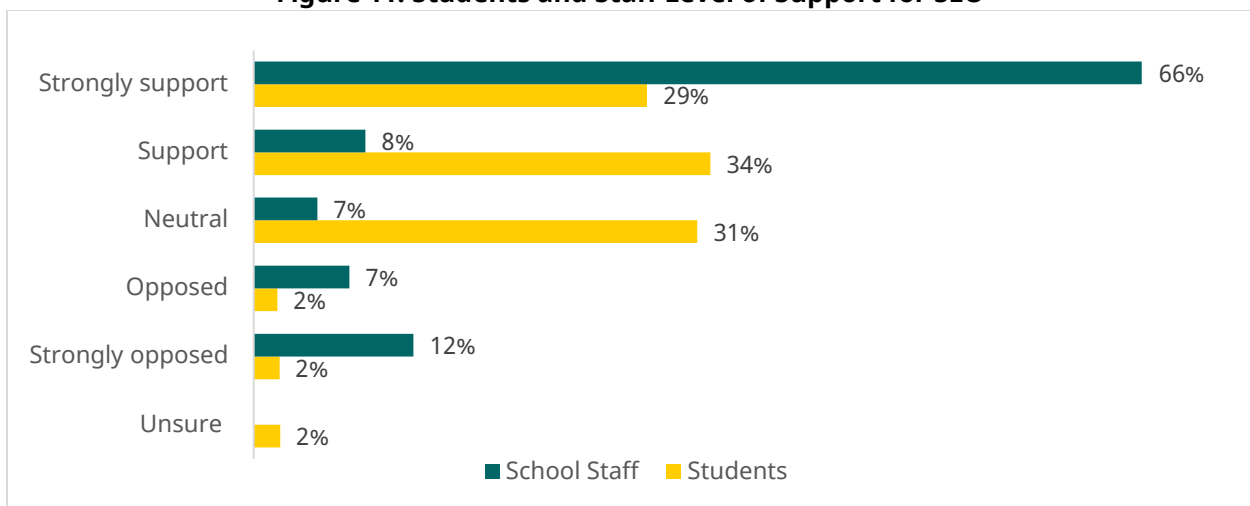
⁵ Students were asked to rank their agreeance with the following statement “I think the SLO program contributes to a sense of positive community in my school”, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 – Strongly Disagree, 3 – Neutral, and 5 – Strongly Agree

Given feedback from school staff that more Indigenous students participated in the survey but some may have chosen not to disclose their identity, we tabulated their responses separately. Of the 20 students who did not disclose their ethnicity, only 1 (5%) disagreed that SLOs contribute to a sense of safety or a positive sense of community in schools. 50% and 40% agreed with the statements, respectively, while others were neutral (20% and 30%), and 25% were unsure or did not provide an answer for either question.

More than 90% of students and over 80% of school staff support, or are neutral, about having SLOs assigned to their schools.

As illustrated in the chart below, 74% of school staff support having an SLO assigned to their school, and 63% of students do as well. A third of students are neutral or indifferent, 4% oppose it, and 19% of school staff oppose it.

Figure 11. Students and Staff Level of Support for SLO

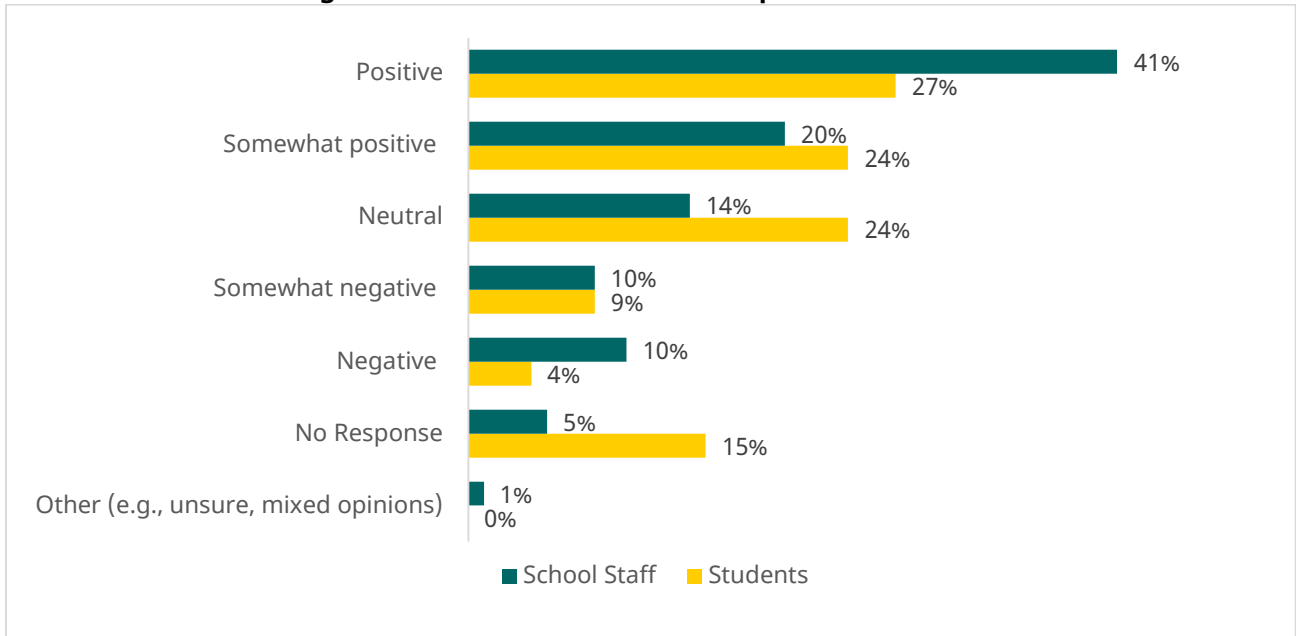


Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025 Note. Blank responses are removed from the calculation

By building relationships in schools, SLOs have positively affected some students' and staff members' views of the police.

About 61% of school staff and 51% of students reported having a positive view of the police. School staff reported slightly more negative views of police than students (20% vs. 13% respectively).

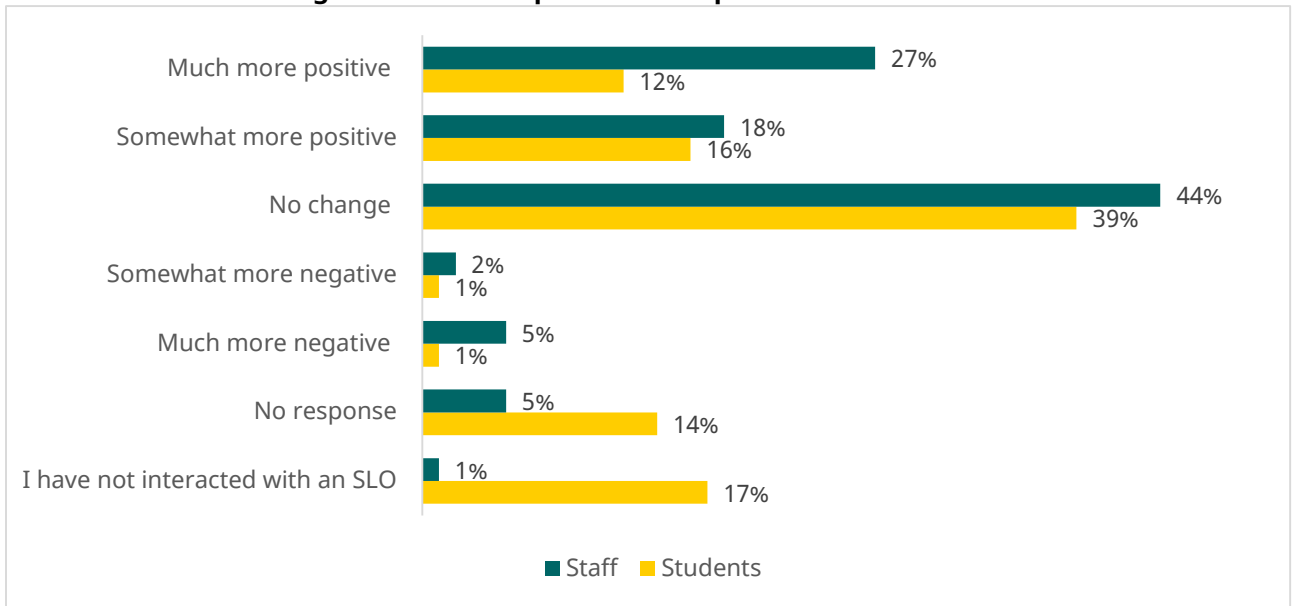
Figure 12. Students and Staff Perceptions of Police



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025 Note. Blank responses are removed from the calculation

45% of school staff and 28% of students reported having a more positive view of the police because of their interactions with SLOs.

Figure 13. SLOs Impact on Perceptions of the Police



Source: School Staff and Students Survey, 2025 Note. Blank responses are removed from the calculation

Administrators also emphasize the importance of the relationships and community connections facilitated by SLOs. Many respondents observed that SLOs help humanize law enforcement and break down barriers, making officers more approachable and integrated into the school environment. The program is seen as fostering mutual understanding between students and law enforcement.

Some staff members raised issues related to the impact of police presence on BIPOC communities and the need to provide support for individuals who may feel uncomfortable or traumatized by police in schools. There are also calls for the program to adapt to better meet the needs of diverse student populations by increasing relationship-building with BIPOC communities.

The requirement of parental consent when SLOs interact with students is also cited by some administrators as a challenge, who report that this process can delay timely intervention in certain situations. While the rationale for parental involvement is recognized, there is a desire for greater flexibility to allow for prompt action when needed.

3.3 CRIME PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The SLOs respond to a wide range of calls for police service from secondary schools, and formal reports are written only in about half of those that require further investigation.

There were a total of 1,117 unique calls and online reports to police from administrators or school staff in secondary schools with the SLO program from September 2023 to June 2025 (reflecting the period since the SLO program was renewed). They involved 55 types of calls for service, ranging from assistance to the public (calls in which police are asked to help a member of the public or school members, such as retrieving belongings or mediating a situation) to threats and assaults.

The SLOs were dispatched in more than 80% of cases involving assisting the public, threats, and youth incidents, including curfew checks and well-being checks. Other units were more likely to respond to calls involving theft and suspicious-person cases.

Table 8. Police Group Dispatched on Top 10 Call Types

| Initial Call Type | Youth Investigative Unit | | Youth Liaison Unit (SLO) | | Other Police Units | | Number of Unique Incidences |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|
| | # of times dispatched | % | # of times dispatched | % | # of times dispatched | % | # |
| Assisting the general public | 2 | 1% | 146 | 86% | 30 | 18% | 169 |
| Threats | 1 | 3% | 30 | 86% | 12 | 34% | 35 |
| Youth incidents | 12 | 13% | 80 | 83% | 5 | 5% | 96 |
| Assault | 3 | 9% | 26 | 74% | 17 | 49% | 35 |
| Suspicious circumstances | 1 | 2% | 43 | 68% | 23 | 37% | 63 |
| Mischief | - | 0% | 23 | 62% | 17 | 46% | 37 |
| Other criminal code | 2 | 4% | 29 | 58% | 27 | 54% | 50 |
| Theft | - | 0% | 36 | 40% | 54 | 61% | 89 |
| Suspicious person | - | 0% | 12 | 27% | 34 | 77% | 44 |
| Alarm | - | 0% | - | 0% | 41 | 100% | 41 |

Source: CAD System Records (Sept, 2025); Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive, row totals may not sum to 100%.

The SLO reported that the preference is not to document the incidents, if possible. However, when incidents require further investigation or when previous warnings or discussions have not been followed, a general occurrence report is created. Just over half (52%) of 1,117 calls for services resulted in a formal report (General Occurrence Records).

Table 9. Outcomes of calls for dispatch

| Outcome | # | % |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Resulted in a general occurrence report | 581 | 52% |
| Did not result in a general occurrence report | 536 | 48% |
| Total calls for dispatch | 1,117 | 100% |

Source: CAD System Records (Sept 2025) Note. Total calls include 63 online reports

A total of 88 individual UCR offence types were recorded. More than 70% of recorded incidents fell within the top 10 categories, including dealing with the public or unwanted guests in school, theft, suspicious persons, mischief, and others. Only 45 cases (7%) were recorded as cybercrime (25), family violence (19), and hate crime (3).

The following table shows the total and percentage of the type of offence recorded. For example, in 14% of the type of offence involved 'Assist Public or Unwanted Guest'.

Table 10. Most frequently occurring UCR offence types

| UCR Offence Type | # of offence type | % of total | UCR Offence Type | # of offence type | % of total |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| ASSIST PUBLIC OR UNWANTED GUEST | 100 | 14% | SEXUAL ASSAULT | 6 | 1% |
| THEFT-OTHER UNDER \$5000 | 87 | 12% | ASSIST-PROVINCIAL AGENCY | 5 | 1% |
| SUSPICIOUS PERS/VEH/OCCURRENCE | 48 | 7% | PROPERTY-SEIZED | 4 | 1% |
| MISCHIEF \$5000 OR UNDER | 35 | 5% | SEXUAL INTERFERENCE | 4 | 1% |
| UTTER THREATS AGAINST PERSON | 29 | 4% | ARSON-PROPERTY | 4 | 1% |
| DISTURBED PERSON/ATT SUICIDE | 28 | 4% | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT-YOUTH | 4 | 1% |
| MISSING PERSONS | 26 | 4% | DIST INTIMATE IMAGE-NO CONSENT | 4 | 1% |
| SCHOOL ACT | 24 | 3% | DOMESTIC DISPUTE-NO ASSAULT | 4 | 1% |
| ASSAULT-COMMON | 23 | 3% | FIREARM-IMITATION | 4 | 1% |
| THEFT BICYCLE UNDER \$5000 | 22 | 3% | INTELLIGENCE-CRIMINAL OTHER | 4 | 1% |
| MENTAL HEALTH ACT-SEC 28 | 21 | 3% | PROPERTY SEIZED-WEAPON | 3 | 0% |
| PROPERTY-FOUND | 16 | 2% | THEFT FROM MV UNDER \$5000 | 3 | 0% |
| ASSAULT-W/WEAPON OR CBH | 15 | 2% | BREAK & ENTER-BUSINESS | 3 | 0% |
| BULLYING | 15 | 2% | CRIMINAL HARASSMENT | 3 | 0% |
| BREAK & ENTER-OTHER | 13 | 2% | EXTORTION | 3 | 0% |
| PROPERTY-LOST | 13 | 2% | FIREARMS/AMMO FOR DESTR/DISPOS | 3 | 0% |
| WEAPONS-POSSESSION | 11 | 2% | INTELLIGENCE-DRUGS | 3 | 0% |
| FRAUD-MONEY/PROP/SEC<\$5000 | 7 | 1% | OBSTRUCT PEACE/PUBLIC OFFICER | 3 | 0% |
| HARASSING COMMUNICATIONS | 7 | 1% | TRAFFIC-OTHER MOVING PROV | 3 | 0% |

| UCR Offence Type | # of offence type | % of total | URC Offence Type | # of offence type | % of total |
|--|-------------------|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| MISSING PERSONS-HIGH RISK | 7 | 1% | UTTER THREAT PROPERTY/ANIMAL | 3 | 0% |
| ASSIST-RCMP | 6 | 1% | Other (occurring twice or once) | 71 | 10% |
| Total number of types of offences | | | | 699 | 100% |

Source: CAD System Records (Sept. 2025); Note: a unique incident can have more than one type of offence

Across the 581 incidents, the majority (83%) were associated with a single offence.

Table 11. Number of UCR offences in general occurrence cases

| UCR offences in case | # of incidents | % of total incidents |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| One | 480 | 83% |
| Two | 87 | 14% |
| Three | 11 | 2% |
| Four | 3 | 1% |
| Total number of incidents | 581 | 100% |

Source: General Occurrence Records (Sept. 2025)

Of 68 individuals recommended for charges, more than two-thirds were Caucasian, Asian, Middle Eastern, or Hispanic. Charges were pursued against 13 individuals, of whom 4 were convicted, and 4 are still before the court.

68 individuals were charged with 71 types of offence (1 individual committed 3 types of offence, and 1 committed 2 types of offence). The table below shows the types of offences committed by individuals for whom charges have been recommended. The top three offences included uttering threats against a person, possession of weapons and assault (with a weapon).

Table 12. Offences Resulting in Charges Recommendation

| UCR offence type | # of offence type | % of individuals involved |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| UTTER THREATS AGAINST PERSON | 10 | 15% |
| ASSAULT-W/WEAPON OR CBH | 7 | 10% |
| WEAPONS-POSSESSION | 7 | 10% |
| ASSAULT-COMMON | 4 | 6% |
| BREAK & ENTER-OTHER | 4 | 6% |
| FIREARM-CARELESS USE OF | 4 | 6% |
| MISCHIEF \$5000 OR UNDER | 4 | 6% |
| ROBBERY W/OTHER OFFENSIVE WPN | 4 | 6% |
| FRAUD-MONEY/PROP/SEC<\$5000 | 3 | 4% |
| SCHOOL ACT | 3 | 4% |
| TRESPASS ACT | 3 | 4% |
| ASSAULT POLICE-COMMON | 2 | 3% |

| UCR offence type | # of offence type | % of individuals involved |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------|
| BREAK & ENTER-BUSINESS | 2 | 3% |
| CRIMINAL HARASSMENT | 2 | 3% |
| HARASSING COMMUNICATIONS | 2 | 3% |
| POSSESS PROP OBT CRIME U/\$5000 | 2 | 3% |
| THEFT BICYCLE UNDER \$5000 | 2 | 3% |
| THEFT-OTHER UNDER \$5000 | 2 | 3% |
| DIST INTIMATE IMAGE-NO CONSENT | 1 | 1% |
| PUBLIC MISCHIEF | 1 | 1% |
| ROBBERY WITH A FIREARM | 1 | 1% |
| SEXUAL ASSAULT | 1 | 1% |
| Total individuals involved in incidents | 71 | |

Source: PRIME-BC (Nov. 2025); Note: A person can commit more than one offence

As illustrated in the table below, more than two-thirds of cases involved individuals who self-identified as Caucasian (27%), Asian (18%), Middle Eastern (13%), and Hispanic, followed by Indigenous, South Asian, and Black individuals.

Table 13. Ethnicities in Cases Where Charges were Recommended

| Ethnic group | # | % |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Caucasian | 18 | 27% |
| Asian | 12 | 18% |
| Middle Eastern | 9 | 13% |
| Hispanic | 8 | 12% |
| Indigenous | 6 | 9% |
| South Asian | 5 | 7% |
| Black | 2 | 3% |
| Other (not specified) | 1 | 1% |
| Not specified | 7 | 10% |
| Total individuals | 68 | 100% |

Source: PRIME-BC (Nov. 2025)

Charges were pursued in most serious cases (e.g. robbery with other offensive weapon, assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm, criminal harassment, uttering threats against a person, fraud involving money, property or securities under \$5,000 and one case of common assault). Of 13 individuals for whom charges were pursued, *only four* resulted in convictions, and 4 are currently before the court. The remaining cases did not result in convictions; instead, outcomes included conditional discharge, release on an undertaking with conditions, or participation in alternative measures.

Table 14. Charges Pursued & Approved

| Charges | # | % |
|---|----|-----|
| Charges not pursued | 50 | 74% |
| Charges pursued and approved by the Crown | 13 | 19% |

| Charges | # | % |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| Charges pursued but not approved by the Crown | 5 | 7% |
| Total individuals | 68 | 100% |

Source: PRIME-BC (Nov. 2025); Note: Categories are mutually exclusive, totals may not sum to 100%

Significant efforts and strategies undertaken by SLOs focus on prevention and on collaboration with school administrators, school staff, and parents. When incidents do occur, alternatives to formal charges (restorative justice, mediation, extrajudicial measures) enable conflict resolution and accountability without involving the criminal justice system.

Most administrators and SLOs emphasized the importance of SLOs' work in incident prevention and crime deterrence. Some respondents highlighted the importance of collaborative supervision and maintaining a presence in schools and communities in preventing incidents. This often involves SLOs working alongside school staff to engage positively with students and foster a sense of security and oversight. Building relationships and maintaining open communication with students, staff, and families are highlighted as foundational elements that facilitate trust and early intervention

Educational activities such as workshops, presentations, and campaigns also play a significant role in prevention efforts, with SLOs discussing issues like vandalism, vaping, drug awareness, cyberbullying and online safety. Proactive intervention in specific incidents, such as theft or online harassment, is another key area where SLOs are involved, helping to address and prevent further issues.

When incidents do occur, SLOs are encouraged to prevent criminalization by working with students and families to prevent future incidents or by recommending alternative measures and support for students within and outside the school environment. Collaboration with other agencies and school staff is a recurring theme, underscoring the importance of coordinated efforts to address student needs and prevent escalation. Early identification of at-risk youth is prioritized, with efforts made to connect with these students and offer support before issues become more serious.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The following are the major conclusions of the evaluation:

The changes to the renewed SLO Program have been implemented as planned.

The renewed SLO Program has been implemented as intended. Changes to reduce visible markers of policing have been implemented, including reduced use of standard uniforms, visible weapons, and marked police vehicles in school settings. The Program has also focused on relationship-building, mentorship, and broader involvement in the school community, alongside efforts to strengthen diversity among SLOs. Additional training has been provided to SLO, which has helped the officer in their day-to-day interaction with students, improved communication, de-escalation, and youth-focused support.

The more involved SLOs are in school activities, the higher the awareness and support for the Program.

SLOs are generally involved in various school activities, including sports, health clubs, field trips, and other initiatives. In some schools, SLOs are more visible and work more closely with school staff (e.g. are invited by teachers to conduct presentations on safety issues). Nearly all staff reported interacting with an SLO (95%), while fewer than half of students did (43%). Students with limited or no contact with the SLOs are less familiar with it and more likely to hold neutral or negative impressions; conversely, students who are more familiar with the Program tend to express more positive views of SLOs.

Students are generally comfortable or feel at ease approaching SLOs.

More than 85% of students reported feeling comfortable or natural (at ease) about approaching SLOs for help or guidance. Those who said they are uncomfortable approaching SLOs are more likely to have never interacted with an SLO, have negative views of the police, identify as female or non-binary/preferred not to answer, self-identify as white or of European descent and are less likely to be familiar with the Program.

Most respondents perceive the Program as making a positive contribution to school safety and crime prevention. Negative perceptions of the Program among Black and Indigenous students have significantly declined.

Most participants perceive SLOs as contributing positively to school safety and prevention. Majorities of school staff and students agree that SLOs contribute to a sense of safety in schools (72% of staff; 57% of students) and support a positive school community climate (72% of staff; 58% of students), while student neutrality remains comparatively high, reflecting lower direct interaction. Negative perceptions about the Program's contribution to safety in schools declined from 60% to 12% among Black students, and from 33% to 5% among Indigenous students. Similarly, the negative perceptions about the Program's contributions to a sense of positive community in school decreased from 75% to 12% among Black students and from 33% to 0% among Indigenous students.

The SLOs focus on prevention and collaboration with school staff. When incidents do occur, alternatives to formal chargers are typically implemented.

Of 1,117 calls for police services, only 68 individuals were recommended for charges, and charges were pursued against 13 individuals (of those 4 resulted in convictions and 4 are before courts, while others are conditionally discharged or participate in alternative measures). Administrators, staff, and SLOs consistently describe prevention impacts arising from SLO presence, familiarity with students and staff, collaborative supervision, proactive relationship-building, and timely engagement on emerging issues—contributions that are widely understood as reducing escalation and supporting safer school environments.

ADVOCACY SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Subcommittee Report to the Policy and Governance Committee, May 13, 2026

The Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee called the meeting to order at 2:41 pm. She acknowledged that with deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). She then handed over the chair to the Chair of the Subcommittee.

1. Advocacy Subcommittee Report of January 21, 2026

The Chairperson welcomed all participants and advised that the January 21, 2026 Advocacy Subcommittee report was received by the Policy and Governance Committee on February 11, 2026 and is included in the agenda package for information.

2. Advocacy Priorities for the Provincial Budget 2027 Consultation

The Chairperson introduced the discussion on advocacy priorities for the 2027 Provincial Budget consultation and invited participants to provide their ideas on key priorities aligned with the VSB Advocacy Plan that should be included in the Board’s submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services.

During discussion, Board Chair Jung informed subcommittee members about the submission process and her presentation of Vancouver School Board’s 2026 Provincial Budget Priorities to the Select Standing Committee in June 2025. She shared a document on the screen that outlined the top three priorities submitted last year.

Key Advocacy Priority 1: Equitable and Sufficient Funding for Education

Subcommittee participants discussed the three top funding priorities to highlight in the submission to ensure equitable access to quality education and how addressing them will improve student learning, well-being, and equitable access to education.

Participants discussed:

- Ongoing financial pressures, including inflation, flat provincial funding, rising staffing costs, and the impact these have on long-term sustainability.
- Increased staffing needed including youth and family workers, Indigenous education workers, counsellors, and administrative roles for vulnerable student groups.
- The importance of fully staffed classrooms and sustained funding for inclusive education with particular emphasis on resource teachers and student support assistants and training for these positions.
- Concerns that current staffing ratios are based on total enrolment rather than student need considering the rising number of students with designations.
- Opportunities to strengthen advocacy efforts by aligning with provincial priorities and increasing visibility of key issues including child care.
- Unfunded areas, including student technology needs, costs for programs and equitable access to learning resources across schools.

Key advocacy priorities identified:

- Inflation-indexed funding to avoid increasing disparities and future budget pressures.
- Change in funding approach to consider student needs, rather than enrolment alone.
- Adequate funding for inclusive education.

Key Advocacy Priority 2: Enhancing Recruitment and Retention

Subcommittee participants discussed the main challenges in recruiting and retaining staff to be highlighted in VSB's submission and how addressing them will impact student outcomes.

Participants highlighted:

- Attrition outpacing recruitment with shortages in priority areas such as French Immersion, secondary counsellors, SSAs, and other specialized roles.
- Funding constraints continuing to affect retention, with increasing pressures on workload and a growing risk of burnout, particularly in classrooms supporting students with moderate to high needs.
- The need to strengthen teacher readiness through enhanced collaboration with post-secondary institutions and increased practicum experience.
- The importance of teacher training supported by Distributed Learning programs, alongside employee recognition initiatives, to strengthen morale, job satisfaction, and a sense of value across different staff groups.
- Continued commitment and dialogue to advance employment equity and increased support for Indigenous teachers. This includes removing barriers in hiring and retention and further exploring collective agreement considerations.

Key advocacy priorities identified:

- Increased in-school supports with a focus on priority retention areas such as French Immersion.
- Enhanced employee recognition programs aligned with the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL).
- Provincially funded bursary program to increase career development opportunities.
- Advanced employment equity and removal of barriers for Indigenous teachers.

Key Advocacy Priority 3: Improving Facilities and Infrastructure

Subcommittee participants discussed the most pressing facilities, and infrastructure needs to be highlighted in VSB's submission and how addressing these needs will impact student outcomes.

Participants noted:

- Seismic safety as a critical priority with approximately 40 schools in need of upgrades remaining combined with concerns about the Province's ability to meet commitments for 2030 based on project approvals over the past two years.
- Family and community considerations, noting that school choice is often based on proximity rather than seismic safety, and that awareness of seismic risks varies among families.
- Accessibility across all schools as an ongoing key concern.
- Preventative maintenance of existing schools to avoid higher long-term costs resulting from delays.
- Climate-related infrastructure challenges, with facilities not designed for climate impacts, rising temperatures affecting student well-being and learning conditions, and disproportionate effects on students with disabilities.
- Graffiti and vandalism concerns, with potential responses such as security cameras that respect privacy, appropriate signage, and doorbell camera systems.
- Additional infrastructure considerations, such as potential consolidation of facilities, ventilation limitations under current building codes, and challenges in advancing climate-related needs amid competing priorities.
- Addressing needs is expected to enhance student well-being, support equitable participation, and foster a positive learning environment where all students, particularly students in priority groups, can fully engage and succeed.

Key advocacy priorities identified:

- Prioritized advocacy for seismic safety upgrades of remaining VSB schools holding the provincial government accountable to their 2030 commitment.
- Climate-related impacts on learning environments to support safe, sustainable school conditions.
- Enhanced accessibility across schools to ensure all students can fully access and navigate all areas of school facilities.

The most important message to the Select Standing Committee is that declining enrolment is reducing funding at a time when student needs and system demands are increasing, underscoring both the risks of under-investment and the importance of sustained investment in public education.

3. Universal School Food Program Study Report

The Chairperson presented a report dated May 6, 2026, titled *Universal School Food Program Study Report*, a copy of which is on file with the meeting agenda. He noted that the report was prepared by staff at the direction of the Board and in response to a board motion and includes information from the Food Framework to inform the Board’s advocacy for a fully funded Universal School Food Program in all VSB schools, barriers identified in delivering a Universal School Food Program in the District and the advocacy points the Board should focus on.

Trustees and subcommittee meeting participants asked questions and staff provided clarification on various points. This report was provided for information only.

The meeting adjourned at 3:54 pm.

Christopher Richardson, Chairperson

| | |
|--|---|
| Subcommittee Members Present: | Christopher Richardson (Chair) Suzie Mah (Vice-Chair) Victoria Jung (Alt.) |
| Subcommittee Members Absent: | Lois Chan-Pedley |
| Senior Team Members Present: | Janis Myers, Associate Superintendent Alison Ogden, Associate Superintendent Lorelei Russell, Executive Director, Finance |
| Inherent Rights Holder Representatives Present: | Kirsten Touring, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) |
| Association Representatives Present: | Suzette Magri, CUPE 15 Kerry Chuah, PASA Marjorie Dumont, VEAES Laura Rhead, VEPVPA John Silver, VSTA |
| Also Present: | Cornelia Haack (recorder) Donna Wong (recorder) |

May 13, 2026

TO: Policy and Governance Committee**FROM: Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer | CFO****RE: Draft Policy Review – Trustee Remuneration and Expense Policy**[Reference to Education Plan](#)**GOAL:** Goal 2: The Vancouver School Board will increase equity by...**OBJECTIVE:**

- Improving stewardship of the district’s resources by focusing on effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Section 71 of the *School Act*, a board of education may authorize annual remuneration for the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, and other trustees. At present, the VSB’s trustee remuneration and expenses guidelines are set out in Appendix B of [Policy 7 - Board Operations](#), rather than existing as a stand-alone policy. While this approach establishes authority for remuneration, it does not include a defined framework for determining appropriate remuneration levels over time beyond annual indexing.

Establishing a clear and transparent policy framework specific to trustee remuneration and expenses is an important governance practice.

At the October 29, 2025 Public Board meeting, the Board approved a motion directing an Ad hoc Committee, working with the Secretary Treasurer, to develop a draft Trustee Remuneration and Expenses Policy for review by the Policy and Governance Committee and subsequent consideration by the Board.

At the February 11, 2026 Policy and Governance Committee meeting, participants discussed potential options for structuring a mechanism to determine trustee remuneration levels within a new stand-alone policy.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The small group discussion from the February 11, 2026 meeting is summarized below.

1. Comparator for Determining Trustee Remuneration Levels

The discussion indicated a preference for school district benchmarking as the primary comparator, with careful selection, transparency around inclusions, and recognition of Vancouver-specific cost pressures.

- Benchmarking against other large B.C. school districts is generally viewed as the most appropriate approach, given the similarity of mandates and work.
- Concerns were raised about relying solely on districts with large student enrolment; there is interest in also considering districts with large geographic or rural complexities to provide additional context.
- Participants emphasized the need for clarity and consistency in what is included in comparator districts’ remuneration (e.g., whether expenses such as parking are embedded).
- It was noted that inter-district benchmarking does not fully account for Vancouver’s high cost of living, suggesting a possible need for contextual adjustments or supplementary analysis.

- Benchmarking to municipal elected officials was broadly viewed as inappropriate, as the nature of the work, authority, and mandate are not comparable beyond the fact of being elected.

2. Trustee Remuneration Structure

The discussion highlighted support for the adoption of a simple, transparent flat remuneration model, with clearly defined role-based differentials, rather than a meeting-fee-based structure.

- Differentiation in compensation for Chair and Vice-Chair roles is supported, reflecting increased workload, time commitment, and responsibility.
- Compensation is viewed as a means to reduce barriers to participation and ensure that trustees can reasonably take on leadership roles without undue financial impact.
- Committee work is generally seen as passion- and interest-based, rather than something that should be incentivized through per-meeting fees.
- The annual retainer plus meeting fee model raised concerns about complexity, equity, administrative burden, and potential political or governance risks (e.g., committee appointment control, unequal meeting value).
- While meeting fees could incentivize attendance, they also introduce definitional challenges (what counts as a meeting, prep time, private meetings) and risks of inconsistent application.

3. Remuneration Review Cycle and Indexing

The participants identified a preference for the implementation of a once-per-term remuneration review, supplemented by automatic annual indexing (e.g., CPI or a comparable, clearly defined index).

- Conducting a comprehensive review once per term is seen as efficient, predictable, and less resource-intensive.
- Annual adjustments through CPI indexing are viewed as straightforward, transparent, and publicly defensible.
- An alternative approach—linking annual increases to general wage settlements for unionized staff—was noted as a possible option for alignment.
- Reviewing remuneration in the second year of a term was identified as more practical, allowing trustees time to understand the role before engaging in review.
- Annual reviews without a term reset were generally seen as burdensome, less structured, and potentially problematic from a public perception standpoint.

4. Trustee Expenses

Feedback collected supports maintaining the current expense framework, while clarifying ambiguous areas in written policy and reinforcing public disclosure as a transparency measure.

- Specific areas requiring clearer guidance include:
 - Reimbursement for parking at school and graduation events
 - Parameters for reimbursement of printing costs
 - Eligible professional development activities
 - Reimbursement and budgeting for advocacy trips to Victoria
 - Confirmation that BCSTA AGM attendance is covered by the school district
- Expense practices are generally viewed as consistently applied across trustees.

- There was support for public disclosure of trustee expense details to enhance transparency and accountability.
- No major concerns were raised regarding interpretation, consistency, or alignment with broader public-sector practices.

POLICY DRAFT

The attached draft Trustee Remuneration and Expenses Policy was created based on feedback collected at the February 11, 2026 meeting and refined by the Trustee Remuneration and Expenses Policy Ad Hoc Committee and is presented for Committee consideration and discussion.

POLICY DISCUSSION

At the committee meeting participants will engage in small group discussion using the following guiding questions:

- Is the draft policy, as presented, clear, comprehensive, and implementable as a stand-alone VSB policy, or are there areas that would benefit from further refinement or clarification?
- Does the proposed methodology for determining trustee remuneration (including benchmarking against comparable districts, averaging base trustee compensation, and applying set differentials for Chair and Vice-Chair) appropriately reflect the scope, complexity, and accountability of these roles? What adjustments, if any, should be considered?
- Do the provisions for trustee expenses—particularly eligibility, professional development limitations, and approval processes—provide sufficient clarity, transparency, and alignment with best practices? What changes, if any, are needed?

NEXT STEPS

The information collected will be shared with the Ad Hoc committee and the Board and will inform refinements to the Draft Trustee Remuneration and Expenses Policy before it is presented to the Board for approval consideration at the May 27, 2026 Board meeting.

Attachments:

- A. Draft Policy 6 - Trustee Remuneration and Expenses
- B. VSB Policy 7 Appendix B – Board Operations (Trustee Remuneration and Expenses)
- C. VSB Guidelines for Trustee Expense Reimbursement and Provision of Resources

Policy 6

TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

Purpose

The Board of Education of School District No. 39 (Vancouver) recognizes the significant responsibilities undertaken by Trustees in fulfilling their statutory, fiduciary, and governance duties. This policy establishes clear, transparent, and consistent provisions respecting trustee remuneration and expense reimbursement in accordance with the *School Act* and good governance practices.

Authority

This policy is established pursuant to section 71 of the *School Act*, which authorizes a board of education to approve annual remuneration for trustees, including differentiated remuneration for the Chair and Vice-Chair; and reasonable allowances for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of trustees' duties.

Guiding Principles

Trustee remuneration and expenses shall:

- support effective governance and public accountability;
- be transparent, reasonable, and fiscally responsible;
- recognize the differing levels of responsibility and complexity associated with trustee roles;
- be benchmarked against comparable British Columbia school districts; and
- ensure decisions regarding remuneration are made at arm's length from those who will benefit.

1. Trustee Remuneration

1.1 Annual Remuneration

The Board may authorize annual remuneration for trustees, including the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Effective September 1 of each year, trustee remuneration shall be adjusted based on the annual percentage change in the Vancouver Consumer Price Index (CPI), unless otherwise determined by the Board in accordance with this policy.

Trustees are paid on a bi-weekly basis in accordance with District compensation practices.

1.2 Differentiation of Chair and Vice-Chair Remuneration

In establishing and reviewing remuneration differentials, the Board shall explicitly recognize the additional duties, workload, leadership responsibilities, and complexity associated with the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair, including but not limited to:

- statutory and procedural leadership of Board meetings;
- representation of the Board in official, public, and intergovernmental capacities;
- liaison with senior staff and external partners; and
- increased time commitment and governance accountability.

2. Review of Trustee Remuneration

2.1 Timing of Review

During the last year of each Board term, the Board shall conduct a formal review of trustee remuneration.

2.2 Benchmarking and Determination of Remuneration

As part of the review, trustee remuneration shall be benchmarked against comparable large urban school districts in British Columbia.

For the purposes of establishing remuneration:

- The base trustee remuneration shall be determined as the average of trustee remuneration in the selected comparator school districts;
- The comparator group shall be approved by the Board and documented as part of the review process; and
- Benchmarking analysis and methodology shall be documented and made available to the Board.

In recognition of the additional responsibilities, leadership obligations, and complexity of the roles:

- The Chair's remuneration shall be set at 40% higher than the base trustee remuneration; and
- The Vice-Chair's remuneration shall be set at 20% higher than the base trustee remuneration.

2.3 Decision and Implementation Timing

Any changes to trustee remuneration resulting from the review shall:

- be approved by Board motion;
- apply only to the subsequent Board term; and
- not take effect during the term in which the review is conducted.

3. Trustee Expenses

3.1 General Principles

The Board may authorize reimbursement of reasonable expenses necessarily incurred by trustees in the performance of their duties. Reimbursement shall be supported by appropriate documentation and administered in accordance with procedures issued by the Office of the Secretary Treasurer.

3.2 Professional Development

Professional development expenses shall be reimbursed only where the education or training is directly relevant to the trustee role and governance responsibilities.

Eligible professional development includes, but is not limited to:

- British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) conferences, annual general meeting, provincial council and learning opportunities;
- British Columbia Public Schools Employers' Association (BCPSEA) conferences, annual general meeting, provincial council and learning opportunities;
- Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) conferences and learning opportunities.

Reimbursable expenses include:

- accommodation, economy airfare and other travel costs, verified by original receipts;
- a per-diem allowance, at a rate set by the District, to cover meals and incidental expenses while traveling on Board business; and
- registration fees and related costs for approved trustee-relevant professional development.

Accommodation expenses incurred in Metro Vancouver are not eligible for reimbursement.

Expenses related to international conferences, study tours, or events not directly related to trustee governance responsibilities are not eligible for reimbursement.

Attendance, other than at BCSTA, BCPSEA and CSBA events, must be pre-approved by the Board Chairperson for all trustees and by the Board Vice Chairperson for the Board Chairperson. All professional development and learning opportunities must be arranged through the Secretary Treasurer’s office.

3.3 Child Care

Trustees may occasionally need to pay for childminding services so they can attend Board meetings, VSB committees, or other committees to which they have been appointed by the Board under Policy 9 – Board Representatives.

Child care expenses can only be claimed for individuals who meet the CRA definition of an eligible child. The claim for child care expenses must include receipt from the child care provider, date of the meeting, number of hours of child minding claimed, rate per hour.

Reimbursement is limited to the duration of the meeting attended plus reasonable travel time.

Reimbursement is not available for childminders residing in the same household as the child.

Reimbursement is based on the minimum wage in British Columbia, regardless of what is paid to the childminder.

Child care expenses reimbursed will be reported to the CRA as a taxable benefit.

To receive reimbursement for costs incurred, trustees must submit child care expense claims to the Secretary Treasurer's office on a monthly basis.

3.4 Ineligible Expenses

Trustees are not eligible for reimbursement of:

- vehicle mileage or personal transportation expenses; or
- expenses not directly connected to Board-authorized duties.

3.5 Budget Approval and Administration

The Board shall approve an annual trustee expense budget as part of the district’s annual budgeting process. Individual expense claims are administered by the Secretary Treasurer in accordance with established policies and procedures and are not approved by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

4. Insurance and Indemnification

Trustees are covered under the Schools Protection Program, which provides blanket liability insurance for official actions taken in service of the Board.

Additional indemnification provisions are outlined in **Policy 16 – Indemnification Bylaw**.

Legal Reference: Section 71 School Act

ADOPTED: XX

APPENDIX A

Comparable Large Urban School Districts in British Columbia

| Board of Education | Student Enrolment 2025-2026 |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Abbotsford | 20,668 |
| Burnaby | 28,468 |
| Coquitlam | 34,053 |
| Langley | 26,552 |
| Richmond | 23,422 |
| Surrey | 81,047 |
| Vancouver | 52,260 |

Trustee Remuneration

As of September 1, 2025, annual trustee remuneration is:

- **Chair:** \$40,315
- **Vice-Chair:** \$39,448
- **Trustees:** \$37,215
- **Student Trustee:** \$3,265

As of September 1, 2025, the annual trustee professional development allocation is \$3,000.

Travel Reimbursement Rates

The maximum per diem rates for meals without receipts are:

- \$20 Breakfast
- \$25 Lunch
- \$40 Dinner

On the date of departure, travel status must start before 7:00 a.m. to claim breakfast; before 12:00 noon to claim lunch; and, on the date of return, travel status must end after 6:00 p.m. to claim dinner.

The maximum per diem rate for incidental expenses when a receipt is unavailable is up to \$10.00 per day.

Childminding Reimbursement Rates

- Childminding by individuals under 18: current minimum wage.
- Childminding by individuals over 18: 130% of minimum wage.
- Childminding for children with disabilities or diverse abilities by a licensed Early Childhood Educator (ECE): 160% of minimum wage (ECE license number must be included on the receipt).

APPENDIX B

TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

Trustee Remuneration

Under Section 71 of the *School Act*, the Board may authorize annual remuneration for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and other trustees.

Effective September 1 each year, trustee remuneration will be adjusted based on the annual change in the Vancouver Consumer Price Index (CPI). As of September 1, 2025, the annual remuneration was:

- Chair: \$40,315
- Vice-Chair \$39,448
- Trustees: \$37,215

Trustee Expenses

Under Section 71 of the *School Act*, the Board may authorize a reasonable allowance for expenses necessarily incurred by trustees in the performance of their duties.

The Board will reimburse Trustees the cost of accommodation and economy air fare, verified by receipts, plus a per-diem allowance at a rate set by the Board to cover meals and miscellaneous expenses.

Trustees are not eligible for reimbursement of vehicle mileage expenses.

The Board will approve the total annual trustee expense budget each year. Individual expense claims will not be approved by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

The Schools Protection Program provides blanket liability insurance coverage for all school districts in British Columbia. This coverage indemnifies the Board, its members, and agents for official actions taken in service of the Board of Education of School District No. 39 (Vancouver). Additional indemnification for trustees is outlined in **Policy 16 – Indemnification Bylaw**.

Guidelines for Trustee Expense Reimbursement and Provision of Resources

Professional Development

In order to fulfill their role in a dynamic, complex school district like Vancouver, trustees are encouraged and have a responsibility to attend and participate in appropriate conferences, conventions, seminars, workshops and other programs that will contribute to their growth as a school trustee. Each trustee is allocated \$3,000 annually for professional development.

“Appropriate” conferences and programs are not limited to, but include those where:

(a) Representatives of educational systems meet to debate and formulate positions to be taken and submissions to be made to higher levels of government regarding educational matters. Examples include the annual general meetings of the BC School Trustees’ Association (BCSTA), the Canadian School Board Association (CSBA), and the BC Public School Employers’ Association (BCPSEA). This definition would also include specially called BCSTA and BCPSEA conferences, called from time to time as issues arise, at which the School District should be represented.

(b) Conferences and training workshop programs supporting professional development and learning to assist trustees with meeting their responsibilities and duties.

Attendance must be pre-approved by the Board Chairperson for all trustees and by the Board Vice-Chairperson for the Board Chairperson. All professional development and learning opportunities must be arranged through the Secretary Treasurer’s office.

Professional development and learning resources:

- [BC School Trustees’ Association](#)
- [Canadian School Board Association](#)
- [Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office](#)
- [BC Public School Employers’ Association](#)
- [Institute of Corporate Directors](#)
- [National School Boards Association](#)

Travel and Accommodation Expenses

Hotel accommodation must be booked in hotels that offer a government rate. The choice of hotel and room must be safe, economical and near where the trustee is travelling for business. Exceptions related to the unavailability of government rate accommodation require the approval of the Secretary Treasurer.

Hotel accommodation should be limited only to the time necessary to conduct Board of Education business. If trustees choose to stay longer than the time required to conduct business, the school district is not to be billed for this cost.

Hotel accommodation for trustees attending Vancouver events shall only be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances pre-approved by the Board Chair and Vice-Chair.

Trustees may, on occasion, due to distance, time commitment, cost, and individual workload use air travel. In all cases, economy class is to be used.

Automobile Expenses

Parking – Trustees who choose to park in VSB paid parking facilities are required to contribute to the cost of parking through a monthly payroll deduction. The applicable parking rate is established and reviewed on an annual basis. Parking is managed by a third-party operator using license plate recognition; Trustees are responsible for ensuring their vehicle information is kept up to date with the Secretary-Treasurer's Office.

Mileage - Vehicle mileage expenses incurred by trustees are not eligible for reimbursement.

Trustees are encouraged to consult a tax expert regarding expenses not reimbursed by VSB that they are entitled to claim on their annual income tax return.

Cell Phone Expenses

Trustees are not usually provided with District cell phones and instead use personal cell phones and receive monthly reimbursement for the basic use of the phone and reasonable long distance and data costs.

To receive reimbursement for costs incurred, trustees must submit cell phone invoices to the Secretary Treasurer's office on a monthly basis.

Child Care Expenses

Trustees may occasionally have to incur childminding expenses to attend meetings.

Child care expenses can only be claimed for individuals who meet the CRA definition of an eligible child. The claim for child care expenses must include: receipt from the child care provider, date of the board meeting, number of hours of child minding claimed, rate per hour. Reimbursement is based on the minimum wage in British Columbia, regardless of what is paid to the childminder.

Child care expenses reimbursed will be reported to the CRA as a taxable benefit.

To receive reimbursement for costs incurred, trustees must submit child care expense claims to the Secretary Treasurer's office on a monthly basis.

Resources

Technology

Trustees are provided with a laptop which is the primary tool used to access Board and Committee agendas, keep track of email and calendar and take notes at meetings.

Insurance

Director and Officers' Liability Insurance – Trustees have liability insurance coverage under Policy 16 of the Board Policy Handbook (By-law No. 3 (I) – Indemnification).

Automobile Insurance - When a trustee driver has an accident while operating an owned or borrowed licensed vehicle for an approved school activity, Schools Protection Program provides automobile liability coverage in excess of the owner's primary automobile liability limit. The vehicle owner's automobile liability is always the primary coverage to the full extent of the limit of coverage carried.