

Subject: Join the Campaign: Oppose Police in Schools

Hello,

A small group of community members have drafted a template for an email campaign to object to the government's threat to remove Greater Victoria School District Trustees over their decision to not reinstate School Police Liaison Officers (SPLO) in SD61. The government's threat has serious implications for our students, teachers, and communities across the province.

This is a time-sensitive request, because a government-appointed special advisor will draft a report and recommendations on this issue by January 6th.

Copy and paste the template below and adjust the **highlighted** areas to make it personal, or write your own email from scratch!

Please share this widely within your networks to amplify our collective voice. You do not have to live within the Greater Victoria School District to voice your dissent! As a number of Districts in the province have SPLO programs, the process undertaken by the Ministry of Education & Child Care could have implications for other Districts. Let's make it clear that safe schools mean well-funded, resourced, and supported schools – not more police.

To learn more about some of the work going into this effort, check out [Policing-Free Schools Canada](#), and their recent document, [Collusion to Expand Police-in-Schools](#), as well as the BC Human Rights Commissioner's [letter to school trustees](#).

Finally, we would like to track the reach of this campaign. Please consider BCCing "No2SLOsSD61@gmail.com" with your letter. This is the best contact email for any questions and/or if you are interested in getting involved with this quick campaign.

Thank you for standing with us!

Send to:

- Minister of Education & Child Care, Lisa Beare ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
- Deputy Minister, Kathryn Krishna DM.Education@gov.bc.ca
- Your MLA (You can use [this website](#) to find your MLA's contact information)
- CC: The Greater Victoria School District Board of Education trustees@sd61.bc.ca (to show your support)
- BCC (optional): No2SLOsSD61@gmail.com

Subject: [Choose your own subject line! This makes it more challenging for the Ministry and your MLA to filter out messages!] As an example: Urgent Request to Halt Reinstatement of SPLO Program in Greater Victoria Schools

Dear [Insert Minister/MLA name],

I am writing to ask that the Minister for Education and Child Care **not require the Greater Victoria School District (GVSD) to reinstate the School Police Liaison Officer (SPLO) program.**

As [a parent of children/teacher/other] in the district, I am disappointed and frustrated that I must dedicate time over the holidays to express my dissent and dissatisfaction at the Ministry's actions. Yet, ensuring truly safe and supported schools remains my highest priority.

Research and data relating to police-in-schools shows that there is [no evidence](#) to support the idea that police-in-schools make educational spaces safer. In fact, there is [ample evidence](#) highlighting the negative impacts of police-in-schools on students, particularly for Indigenous, Black, racialized, 2SLGBTQIA+, disabled, or neurodivergent students, and students with precarious immigration status and intersecting identities. Thriving and healthy communities and educational spaces are schools that are properly funded, resourced and supported.

Below I outline key issues that the Ministry must consider when reviewing the report that will be delivered in early January.

Jurisdictional Overreach

First, I believe the Ministry's intervention in an elected Board of Education's decision to discontinue the SPLO program is extremely concerning. There is no precedent for the government targeting a specific School Board in this manner in B.C. history.

The SPLO program was an area of interest to voters during the 2022 School Board Trustee Election. Since the Victoria Police Department discontinued its SPLO program in 2018, discussions about the merits and limitations of SPLOs have taken place within Greater Victoria Schools and communities. The decision to interfere with the School Board, hire a special advisor, and determine on behalf of an elected Board of Education what constitutes safety is not only jurisdictional overreach, but it undermines voters who carefully considered safety when voting for School Board Trustees.

Timeline of the Ministerial Order

The timeline imposed by the Ministry to draft and propose a new Safety Plan—from October 1st to November 15th—was unachievable. Such a short timeline left no meaningful opportunity for consultation with key partners, including First Nations. Furthermore, it is disrespectful to the workload of the community groups and partners who have expertise that would enhance the capacity of the Board of Education to develop a Safety Plan that meets the needs of students, families, and staff within the District.

Additionally, the Ministry's requirement to include "crime prevention" as part of the Safety Plan misrepresents the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education, as this is not a requirement of School Boards under the *School Act*. Despite this, the Board of Education made efforts to engage and collaborate with local police forces about how this may be achieved, but [were met with a lack of interest](#).

While Minister Beare has emphasized that approaches to safety should be collaborative, by imposing an unachievable timeline on the Board of Education, the Ministry created a situation of further animosity between police, community groups, First Nations and the Board of Education.

SPLO Programs are not evidence-based and do not increase student safety

In media coverage surrounding recent developments on the SPLO program, including media releases from former-Minister Singh and Minister Beare, little to no attention has been given to the process behind the decision to end the SPLO program.

This decision followed over 2.5 years (2020-2023) of review and community consultation by the GVSD's *SPLO Program Review Committee*. The Committee found that the program was run inconsistently, lacked clear goals or mandate, and that no data was collected about the frequency of SPLO visits in schools or SPLO's interactions with students. This led to the recommendation for discontinuation. A SD61 survey found hundreds of respondents were uncomfortable with SPLOs, including 101 students, and dozens of people, including students, reported negative interactions with SPLOs.

The BC Human Rights Commissioner has also advised against SPLO programs, [citing](#) the absence of empirical evidence for supporting these programs. The Commissioner further stated that *"for school boards who choose not to take this step, it is incumbent on you to produce independent evidence of a need for SLOs that cannot be met through civilian alternatives and to explain the actions you are taking to address the concerns raised by Indigenous, Black and other marginalized communities."* Likewise, the Greater Victoria Teachers Association (GVTA) has stated it does not support the presence of police in schools and that *"SLO programs cause harm that negatively affects the safety, rights, and sense of belonging that many marginalized people experience in school."*

If the Ministry tries to force SD61 to re-implement an SPLO program, it would directly contradict the Commissioner's recommendations and the stance of SD61 teachers with no evidence that such programs result in increased safety for students. Safety should be determined by evidence-based programs that ensure the safety of Indigenous, Black and other marginalized students and families.

Budgetary Concerns

Reinstating the SPLO program would have significant budgetary implications for municipalities and local taxpayers. The City of Victoria's proposed 2025 police budget is already concerning, committing nearly a quarter of the total budget to policing (23%). The decision to reinstate the SPLO program by the Ministry does not have budgetary implications provincially, but it would have significant budgetary implications for the municipalities of Victoria, Esquimalt, Oak Bay, and Saanich. Furthermore, the \$55,000 to pay for special advisor Godden's report is coming out of SD61's already strained budget. Redirecting these funds away from student and staff needs to bring back an ineffective program is fiscally irresponsible.

Call to Action

The Ministry of Education and Child Care's misuse of public funds to push for non-evidence-based SPLO programs is alarming. This coordinated response to pressure SD61 Trustees to reinstate police-in-schools signals a broader agenda to normalize SPLOs across B.C. school districts. This is a distraction from the government's failure — including inaction by Minister Beare — to address the chronic underfunding of the education system, and to fulfill campaign promises to [invest in schools](#). What schools need for student safety are proper funding, resources, and support — not police.

I urge the Ministry of Education and Child Care to respect the autonomy of the Greater Victoria School District, acknowledge the lack of evidence supporting SPLO programs, and to prioritize investments in properly funded, resourced, and supported schools. Our students and educational systems deserve evidence-based solutions that foster safety, trust, equity, and well-being in our schools.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

[Full Name]

[Contact Information: email and/or phone number, postal code.]