

## **Contact List**

President Katie Sojewicz

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Vice President Dr. Mark D. Muhammad

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Commissioner Tamica Barnett

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Commissioner Patricia Body

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Commissioner David Cecile

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Commissioner Derrick Dorsey

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Commissioner Dan Romeo

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## **Email Template**

**Subject:** Remove SROs and reinvest in our community

**Send to:**

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[DDesantis@scsd.us](mailto:DDesantis@scsd.us), [mwright-williams@scsd.us](mailto:mwright-williams@scsd.us), [tmoon@scsd.us](mailto:tmoon@scsd.us), [cmiller@scsd.us](mailto:cmiller@scsd.us),  
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**BCC:**

[cuseyouthblm@gmail.com](mailto:cuseyouthblm@gmail.com)

You may copy and paste the text below in an email. Be sure to personalize the sections indicated with "[X]." Feel free to edit this text to your own choosing before sending as well - perhaps adding more of your own personal experience or different research statistics. Alternative messaging tools including storytelling through personal experiences tend to be the most effective form of communication.

### **Message:**

Hello Superintendent Alicea, Board Members and Chief Officers,

My name is [YOUR NAME] and I am a [YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCSD, EX: STUDENT, PARENT, EDUCATOR, COMMUNITY ALLY] in the Syracuse City School District and a registered voter in the city of Syracuse. I am emailing you today to demand the removal of school resource officers from all schools in the Syracuse City School District, and concurrent reinvestment in student support workers and community intervention programs.

As you know, school resource officers are present in each SCSD high school. However, their presence creates a harmful environment for students, especially Black and Brown students. After a public Google Form was created and shared by CuseYouthBLM via [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#), over twenty horrific and anonymous experiences with school resource officers were brought to light. I implore you to read each experience carefully.

*[IF YOU HAVE AN EXPERIENCE AND FEEL COMFORTABLE, THIS IS A SPACE FOR YOU TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH POLICE AND SROS IN SCHOOLS. IN ADDITION TO OR ALTERNATIVELY, YOU MAY SHARE WHY THIS ISSUE IS OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU.]*

I share your highest priority in keeping SCSD students and our entire community safe. That is why I would like to recommend the following solutions for how police-free schools could look, based in restorative and culturally competent practices.

1. Reallocating funds that are spent on hiring school resource officers (\$1.3 million, as shared at the July 2020 board of education meeting) towards community intervention workers. These workers are community members trained in peacebuilding who work in and around the school community. This community intervention model would replace the traditional role of police on school campuses.
2. Investing in the recruitment and maintenance of student support staff as a means to improve the general school climate, as well as to be a preventive measure for future conflicts. These include but are not limited to **social workers, mental health counselors and crisis management team members**.
3. Focusing heavily on implementing greater restorative justice practices within school culture and climate, beyond a few professional development trainings.
4. Hiring and retaining more BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) educators and staff members. Roughly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of SCSD students are of color, and it is crucial that these students are able to see themselves represented in the classroom and in positions within the district.
5. Decolonizing existing curriculums to incorporate more BIPOC histories and experiences in the classroom. Similarly to my previous point, representation is crucial, and it is harmful to not be educating kids of color about their own histories and ancestors.

By removing SROs from Syracuse city schools, we will be joining a movement of schools becoming more anti-racist, including our neighboring Rochester City School District. Implementing more anti-racist policies and practices within the SCSD is long overdue, and removing school resource officers from schools is the first step.

I especially request that you think critically about the presence of SROs now, during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we all reimagine what school looks like, including the hybrid and virtual models that you have developed, we must focus on how these models can be carried out as equitably as possible. It is difficult to understand why we would fund SROs - who would have extremely limited interaction with students in a hybrid model and no interaction in a virtual model - as our students lack devices to join class and new expenses such as PPE are now necessary. There is little to no equity in this scenario that is shaping to become reality.

The vision of the Syracuse City School District according to your website is “...to prepare and inspire all of our students to innovate locally and contribute globally and we are embracing the challenge of giving all of our students a vibrant education with new urgency.” How can our students have a vibrant education if they are overpoliced by school resource officers and not supported by underfunded support staff?

Best regards,

[*YOUR NAME*]

## **Call Script**

**BoE President Katie Sojewicz:** (315) 247-7072

**BoE Vice President Dr. Mark D. Muhammad:** (315) 350-6237

**BoE Commissioner Tamica Barnett:** (315) 200-3979

**BoE Commissioner Patricia Body:** (315) 560-3672

**BoE Commissioner David Cecile:** (315) 416-6896

**BoE Commissioner Derrick Dorsey:** (315) 416-2037

**BoE Commissioner Dan Romeo:** (315) 243-2606

**Superintendent Jaimie Alicea:** (315) 435-4161

**Chief Operations Officer Dean DeSantis:** (315) 435-4161

**Chief of Staff Monique Wright-Williams:** (315) 435-4161

**Chief Accountability Officer Timothy Moon:** (315) 435-4281

**Chief Human Resources Officer Christopher Miller, Ed.D.:** (315) 435-4212

**Chief Academic Officer Laura Kelley, Ed.D.:** (315) 435-5844

**Chief Financial Officer Suzanne Slack:** (315) 435-4826

**Chief Ombuds / Student Support Services Officer Patricia Clark:** (315) 435-4131

Below is an optional script that you may use to guide your conversation with the people listed above. We know it can be nerve wracking to make these calls, but we are so proud of you for doing this!! Take a few deep breaths and consider practicing first by calling a friend.

### **Script:**

*“Hello. My name is [YOUR NAME] and I am a [YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCSD, EX: STUDENT, PARENT, EDUCATOR, COMMUNITY ALLY] in the Syracuse City School District. I am calling you today to demand the removal of school resource officers or SROs from all Syracuse City School District schools, and the reinvestment in our community.*

*SROs create a harmful environment for students, especially students of color. Several current students, alumni and other community members in the SCSD have shared horrific personal experiences with SROs in their schools, which can be read on CuseYouthBLM's social media pages.*

*I share your priority in keeping students and the general SCSD community safe. That is why I recommend you implement safety practices based around restorative justice. This includes investing more deeply in support staff including social workers and crisis management team members, as well as community intervention workers.*

*During the COVID-19 pandemic, there are also so many spaces that funds must go towards when developing an equitable model, including students' technology devices and PPE.*

*The presence of SROs is also a racial justice issue. The SCSD must become more anti-racist by hiring and retaining more educators and staff of color, as well as focusing on decolonizing existing curriculum.*

*Students cannot have a vibrant education when they are over-policed and not supported by an under-funded support staff.*

*Will you commit to removing school resource officers from the Syracuse City School District, and re-allocating funds and attention towards more culturally competent services?*

...

*Thank you for your time."*