



POLICE ENGAGING YOUTH IN SCHOOL

Teacher Engagement

What We Heard Report

August 2023

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“It is difficult to convince a flock of birds that a space is safe if there is a cat that shows up suddenly and randomly... if the cat puts in the time and hangs around without stalking/ or killing any birds the birds might trust that they won’t get hurt.”

- Respondent

Executive summary

In total we heard from 551 teachers, across multiple school boards distributed across Calgary's quadrants. Feedback was received from a moderate representation of Racialized and newcomer teachers, Indigenous teachers, and those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ or living with a disability. This was important as individuals who represent equity deserving groups provide a unique perspective based on their lived experience.

Engagement respondents were very clear that they appreciate and value the School Resource Officers (SROs) and the program, and they felt it had the opportunity to provide students with many benefits. These benefits included building a positive relationship with officers, a sense of security, individual support when needed, education about laws and how to protect themselves, among many others. According to participants, all students could benefit from having an SRO at school, but the specific need and benefits may differ from school to school.

While many respondents working in high schools said they were satisfied with the services their SRO provides, feedback from others highlighted a large discrepancy between schools for frequency of SRO visits to their school and the degree in which the officer interacts with the students. The main theme that emerged repeatedly throughout the engagement, was that SROs were not present at schools enough for benefits of the program to be felt by students. Many participants stated that most students do not know they have an SRO officer, would be shocked to see one in the school and most importantly, do not have a positive relationship.

The time SROs do spend at schools tends to be focused on law enforcement and safety drills, with little time left for relationship building activities. When the officer is at the school, some respondents shared that students may feel the officer is not approachable and that it is vital SROs are well suited and trained appropriately for working with students of all ages.

While the main goal of this engagement was to help inform recommendations to ensure that all students feel safe and comfortable, some findings illustrate noteworthy information about the school environment in which the SRO program must operate. Nearly half (49 percent) of teachers felt there were no negative impacts or inequity to specific demographics of students from having an SRO in the school. This is important because engagement with Racialized and other marginalized students highlighted that they do experience negative impacts.

20 percent or 108 teachers acknowledged that some groups of students are negatively impacted by the presence of the officer. The groups of students identified included those involved in illegal activity and students with differing levels of comfort talking with the officer (outgoing versus shy students). Others identified newcomer, Racialized and other marginalized students who are fearful of police and may experience discomfort with them being in their "safe space" at school, based on perceived and lived experience.

When it came to respondents personally witnessing inequitable, discriminatory, or racist behavior from the SRO towards students, 3 percent or 18 teachers shared that they had. Additionally, 12 percent or 64 teachers had directly overheard students talking about it.

At the heart of tackling systemic racism and achieving equity is acknowledging another's experience of inequity and discrimination and recognizing that the needs of students may be different. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers and school administration also recognize that Racialized and other equity deserving groups of students may have a perception or direct lived experience that can lead to discomfort and fear of police officers. These feelings should be managed in a sensitive and trauma informed manner by both the SRO and school administration to provide an environment where positive relationships can be developed.

Participants shared many ideas for appropriate training that they felt an SRO should have, in addition to ways that an SRO could build relationships and become part of the school community. In addition, a [summary of participant's recommendations](#) is located at the end of the report.

Project background

The Calgary Police Service (CPS) and Calgary Police Commission (CPC) undertook a Service Optimization Review in 2018 (formerly known as the Resource Review). The Review was focused on supporting continuous improvement and to demonstrate transparency and accountability for budget processes approved by City Council. CPS gathered a diverse set of ideas from a wide range of Calgarians in order to deepen the current understanding of needs and expectations and long-term expectations of service delivery.

In 2021, CPS committed to an engagement process conducted by an external consultant, with the purpose of reviewing the impact and outcomes of the School Resource Officer program specifically. Due to Covid restrictions, this engagement was restricted to virtual engagement and a relatively low number of students participated.

While the service review engagement in 2018 showed a generally high level of support from teachers for the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, a key finding from the 2021 targeted engagement was that some Racialized student participants reported they experienced fear and discomfort with the police officer in their school.

As a result, and in commitment to anti-racism, the CPS pursued a second round of engagement to revisit the themes highlighted by students and to explore how prevalent the feeling of fear and discomfort is among Racialized youth. This project has included multiple phases of engagement with students in elementary, junior, and senior high school, and what we heard from these phases of engagement are reported separately.

What we heard from engagement with teachers, principals and support staff is summarized in this report. Feedback gathered in all engagement phases informed a round table sessions with the school community that was held in June 2023. All feedback will be used to inform recommendations to achieve the Calgary Police Service's goal of reimagining and transforming police engagement in schools so that all students feel safe and treated fairly.

Engagement overview

Goal of engagement

- Build understanding, awareness, and trust that the Calgary Police Service cares about the quality of its service delivery and it committed to addressing structural equity.
- Participants feel their perspectives, experiences and ideas have been heard and trust that it will be used to inform decisions regarding the improvement of the SRO program.
- Schools feel that the CPS and The City view the school boards as a partner in tackling anti-racism in Calgary.

Engagement objectives

- To understand what is working well in the current SRO program.
- To understand what is not working well in the current SRO program.
- To understand the best approach to building trust and positive relationships with youth in schools.
- To understand the expectations of teachers about the SRO program.
- To gather feedback on how to improve the existing SRO program.
- To build interest for participants about the round table planning sessions that will take place in June 2023.

Strategy

This phase of engagement was conducted online using a private portal page, which can now be viewed here <https://engage.calgary.ca/CPSSchoolOfficer>. The strategy to reach teachers used a multi-pronged approach. The first tactic involved partnering with the City Hall Open Minds program teacher who works directly with ten other Open Minds sites in Calgary, who in turn

work with very engaged teachers across all school boards. These teachers were identified as being likely to respond to an engagement opportunity as many of them teach their students about the value of civic engagement to improve services. The link to the engagement portal page was sent directly to the Open Mind teacher network.

In addition, the CPS project team worked with the Calgary Board of Education and the Calgary Catholic School Division to share the engagement opportunity to all principals, vice principals, teachers, and supporting school staff.

Verbatim comments are included in the report to help illustrate sentiments and themes. These are shown as italicized bullet points. The complete verbatim report is available as a separate supporting document.

Timeline

This phase of the engagement was open for feedback between January and February 2023.

Audience

The invitation to participate in this engagement was presented to all principals, vice principals, teachers and support staff representing all Calgary school boards who received the portal page link. However, it was made clear that there was a desire to hear from as many marginalized individuals as possible, to ensure we heard the nuanced perspectives informed by their personal lived experience. As a result, we gathered feedback from many marginalized individuals, but also a large number of non-marginalized individuals.

Feedback gathered in engagement is not statistically representative of the whole, in this case representative of the entire demographic breakdown of all staff from all school boards. However, the demographic breakdown of engagement participants is likely similar to that of the school sector. Therefore, hearing from non-marginalized individuals had the added benefit of gaining an improved understanding the general “school environment” in which the SRO program needs to function.

Who we heard from

In total, we heard from 551 respondents in this engagement. These respondents represent schools across all quadrants of Calgary and across all school divisions.

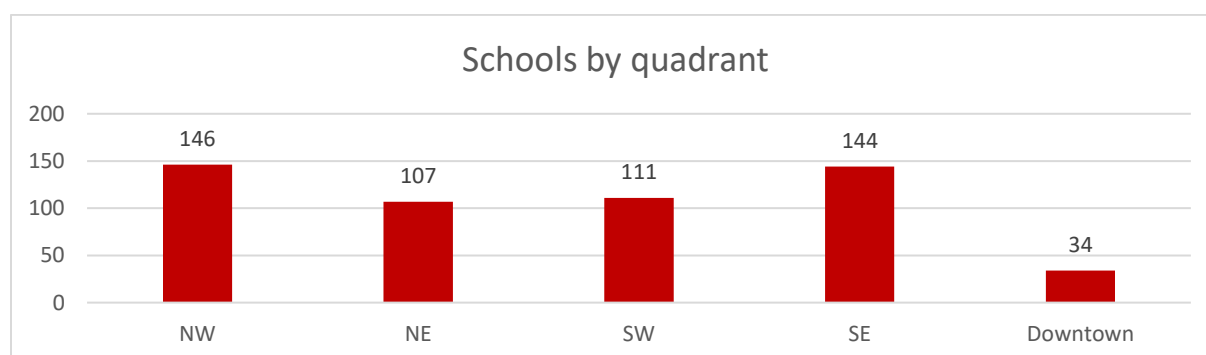


Figure 1- School representation by quadrant

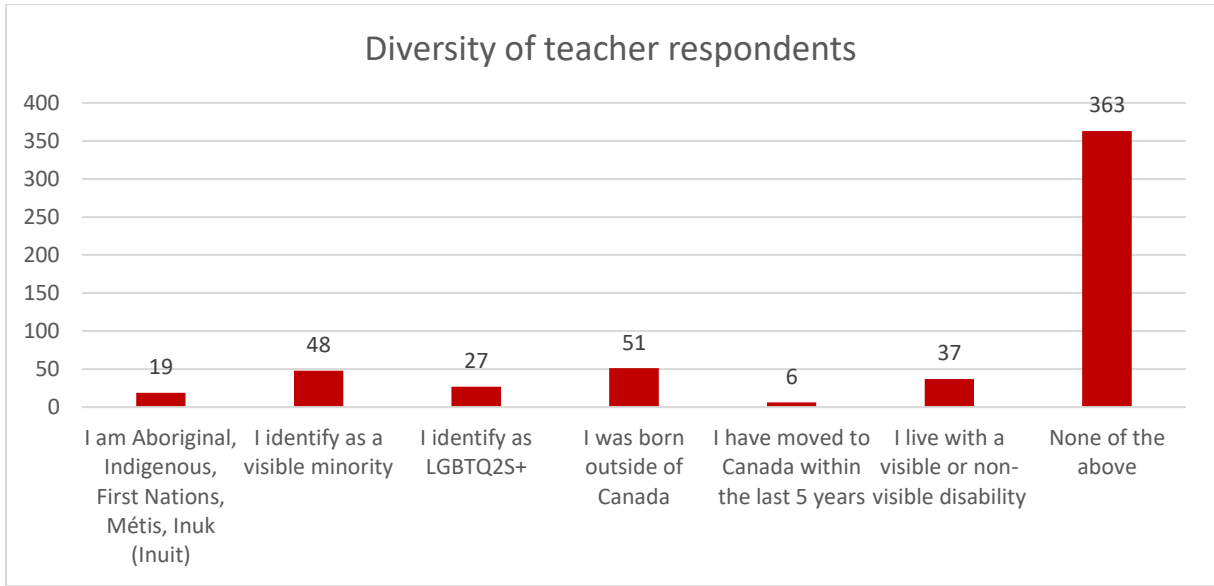


Figure 2- Diversity of teacher respondents

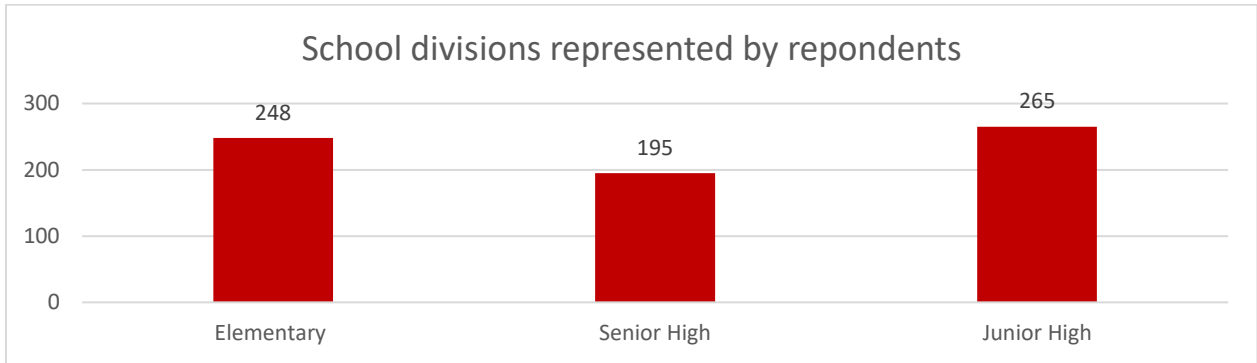


Figure 3- School divisions represented by respondents

Detailed what we heard

Question 1.a.

For the following components of the existing School Resource Officer program, please rate how well you think it is currently working.

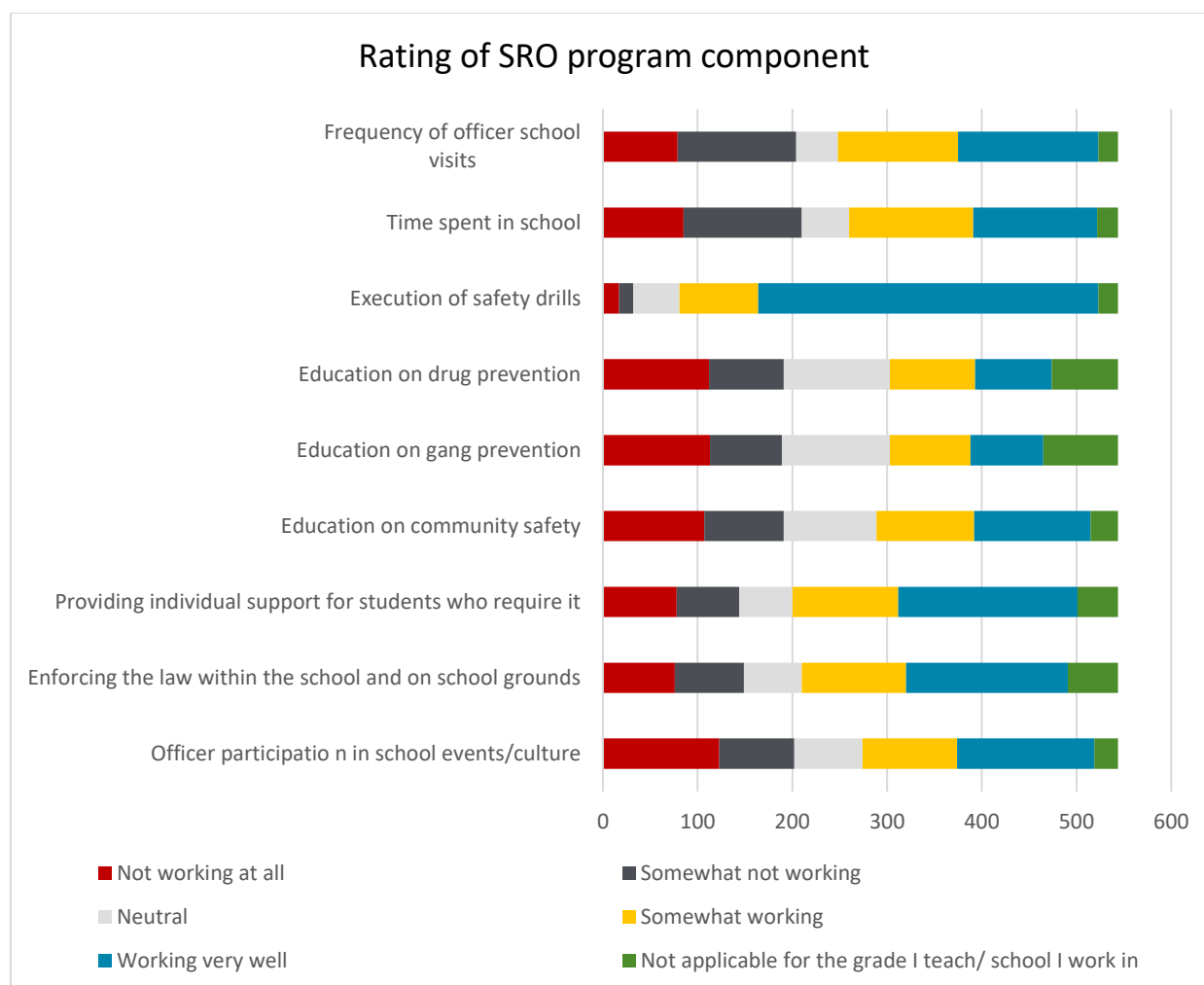


Figure 4- Rating of SRO program component

Question 1.b.

For any program component you rated as ‘Somewhat not working’ or ‘Not working at all’, please explain why you rated it that way?

The most frequent sentiments heard from participants was that there are not enough officers, they were spread too thin or that the SROs were too busy to be available for all the school’s needs. This was also supported by the other most frequent responses suggesting that they don’t see SROs very often, they are only seen when there are issues, or are only visible during lockdown drills or safety exercises.

- *I feel as if the police presence is not consistent and therefore enforcement of any rules, or engagement with students also isn’t consistent or effective.*
- *Officers have spent very little time in our school; only on a safety drill basis.*
- *We hardly ever see our SRO unless there is a problem and we request them. Even then, the SRO is often unavailable.*
- *I feel the resource officers have been assigned too many schools to be able to provide any preventative or proactive support. Our Resource officer is very busy and very very helpful when needed and available. We only utilize them for significant events and those events take a large amount of his available time.*

Other common themes to this question were that respondents have not met or heard from their SRO, there is a lack of funding for the program and visits are inconsistent. Others shared they want their SRO to be more visible and help to address more concerns and issues.

Participant's recommendations

Participants recommended that the program could be improved by SROs being able to spend more time with students, engaging and building relationships. More time for SROs to be in schools would allow them to attend events, assemblies, provide more education (around gangs, drugs, safety, etc) and teach traffic safety. It was also noted that some officers are more suited personality wise to the role than others (i.e. approachable, respectful, good with kids).

- *For impact the Resource officer needs to be seen daily and support needs to be through consistency and routine. Sharing n Officer or once in a while just does not work.*
- *Education is not something I see happening in a school setting. Presentations or lessons on violence, drugs, or youth justice rights are not made obviously accessible.*
- *SRO's come to schools when they are called. They are stretched thin between schools. They do not build relationships with students as they come when there is an issue. They do not come to school events for parents to know and interact with them.*
- *There is still a negative connotation to police so more visibility and informal engagement (ie. joining class discussion, playing sports at lunch, etc.) would allow for a positive light to be shed.*

Question 2

To what extent do you think students currently benefit from having a police resource officer in the school?

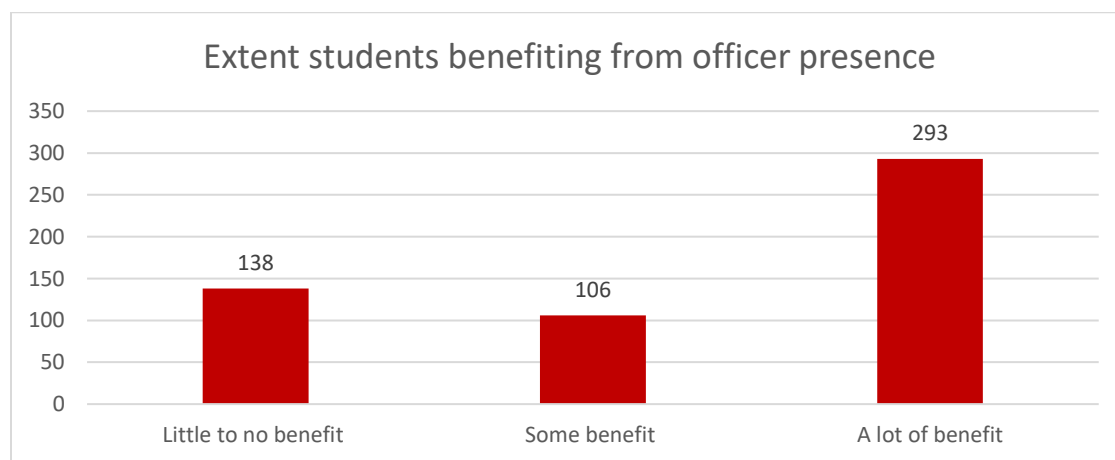


Figure 5- Perception of student benefit

Question 3

If you stated, 'Little to no benefit,' please explain the reasons why you think the students do not benefit from the presence of the police officer in school and add any additional ideas. (Select all that apply)

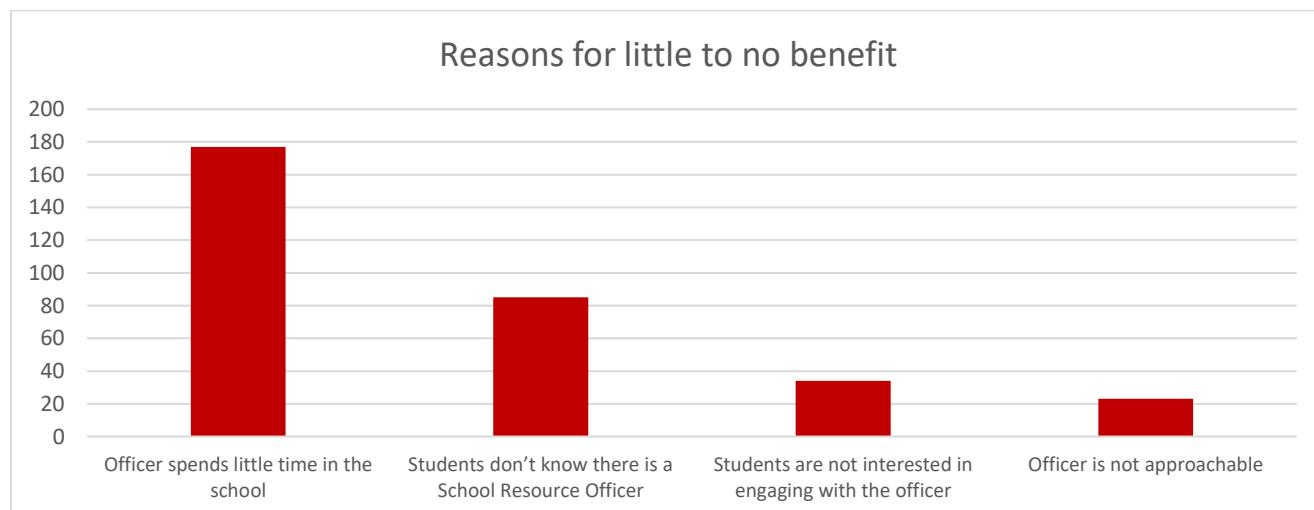


Figure 6- Reasons for little benefit

Other:

Limited interaction with SRO

For those that saw little to no benefit they cited reasons mostly around SROs not being there, having little availability, or SROs that are stretched too thin. Some had never met their SRO, they changed role too frequently or officer’s time was taken up with gangs and crime, with little time for other work.

- *I don't even know anything about our school resource officer and I'm a teacher. I think there is a disconnect.*
- *Currently our SRO time is split between our school and other schools. Having an SRO here more often (as we did years ago), makes it easier for the SRO to become part of the school community, and for students and staff to get to know them, trust them and be comfortable with their presence.*
- *As mentioned above, SRO access is strained due to their current demands.” I would clarify that students are not interested in engaging with the officer because they are not a constant presence in the school community.*

Student barriers to relationship with SRO

Some participants suggested a lack of trust with students, that students can’t relate to their SRO, or trauma and previous experiences were barriers. Some participants suggested that more visibility and more frequent interaction could help to break down negative perceptions.

- *Trauma and negative life experience may interfere with the child's ability to see the officer as a positive person and it may in fact cause more trauma/harm to a child who wants to see the school as a safe place.*
- *Students find it difficult to relate to an officer given the discrimination some of them face (minorities/LGBTQ) It would be nice to have a SRO who identifies as a minority.*

Question 4

If you selected, ‘A lot of benefit’ or ‘Some benefit’ please share how the students benefit from the presence of the police officer in school and add any additional ideas. (Select all that apply)

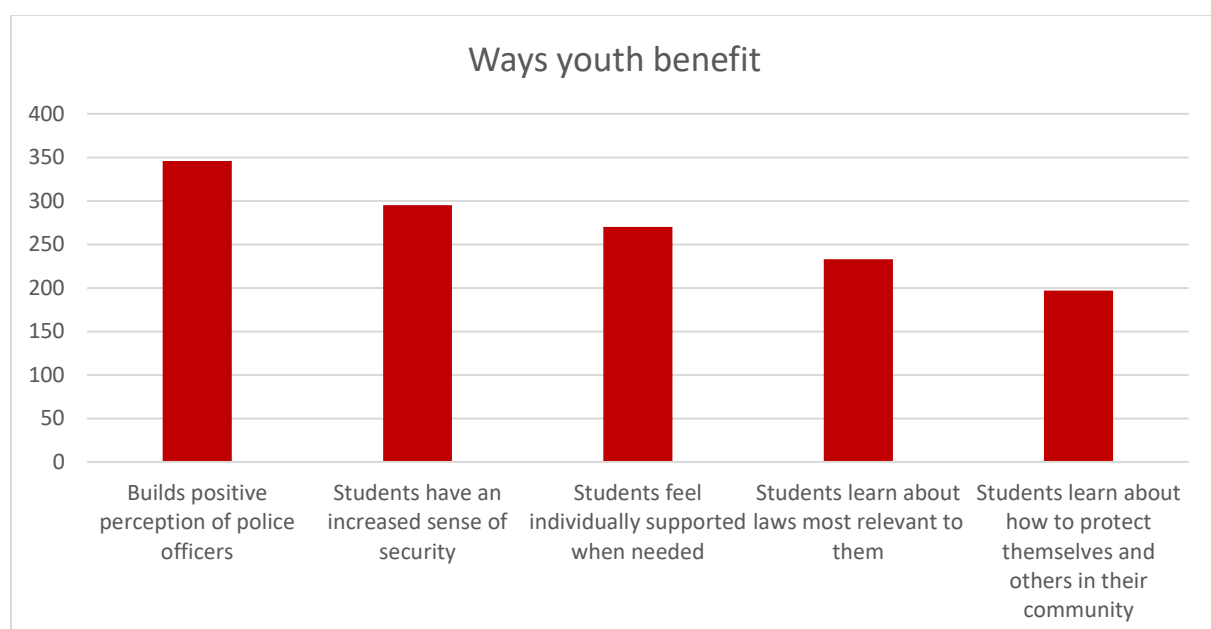


Figure 7- Teacher perception of ways youth benefit

Other:

Benefits directly related to time, positive relationships and a good SRO

For participants who said students benefit from SROs being in the school, most felt that benefits for students are directly related to the time they spend with an SRO to establish a positive relationship. Additionally, participants felt that SROs are good role models for students and can help them to understand the broader role of police in society. Others mentioned that students benefit when the SROs are well suited to the job, have the right skills and become part of the school community.

However, it should be noted that many felt these benefits are not fully being realized because of the lack of SROs or limits on their time. A few teachers shared that this lack of familiarity leads to students feeling confused and concerned when they are in the school.

- *In other schools that I have worked in with active SROs that visit our classrooms, I have noticed all of the above. SROs are dynamos who dazzle the children and make positive impressions upon them. It is vital to make these positive impressions.*
- *Relationship building and learning that members of the CPS are approachable.*
- *Our officer is kept busy with significant gang/criminal issues at the school. Our officer does do pop in visits when they have time and it is very valuable to have him wander through the school and pop-in to classroom. He is very approachable with the students and the students feel comfortable around him.*
- *When we build real relationships and really know the students, they will trust us and be positively influenced by us. Teachers who have the best success with students really get to know them. It is unfortunate that the officers are not given the time to really build these relationships which could create a better understanding of the police by the students and the students by the police.*

Prevention and accountability

Respondents also highlighted benefits such as gang, crime, and drug prevention, added accountability, and deterrence of bad behavior. However, participants repeatedly referenced that these benefits are not being realized due to not enough time with SROs.

Along the lines of accountability, a few teachers felt that students should be fearful of police and having SROs in school is an effective use of the CPS resources as it can help to prevent bad behaviour in adults.

- *We have an active (small) group of high school students who are perpetrating crimes in the community. Without the SRO being here on an intermittent basis, it would take district-based officers and detectives far more time to identify suspects and solve crimes. Furthermore, our SRO engages with all students and her being here helps to provide a sense of security which is absolutely needed on an ongoing basis.*
- *I feel it not only adds a sense of safety but is a great deterrent and preventative aspect in student behavioral choices but this is ALL directly correlated to how often we see our officer and the officer him/herself*

Support role

Additionally, teachers cited support for administration, legal assistance, family and parent support and individualized student support as benefits.

- *Assists staff and administrators in maintaining a safe, caring, and welcoming school environment.*

Feeling of Safety

Participants said SRO presence increases the feeling of safety, both for students and administration alike. SROs helps students to feel prepared and safe, helps immigrants with a

sense of safety, keeps unwanted people away from schools, and helps administration feel safe and supported.

- *Both staff and students feel safe and supported with access to a school resource officer. Safety is our top priority and our police help us with this in a great regard.*
- *The drills give students a sense of what do if something happens. It helps them feel prepared and safe.*
- *Students benefit from having an SRO with a sense of security but they are not present enough only being part time.*
- *Very helpful to have an SRO to support administrators when dealing with serious incidents*
- *Assists staff and administrators in maintaining a safe, caring, and welcoming school environment.*

Question 5

Based on your observations in school, do you think all students experience the benefits of this program equally?

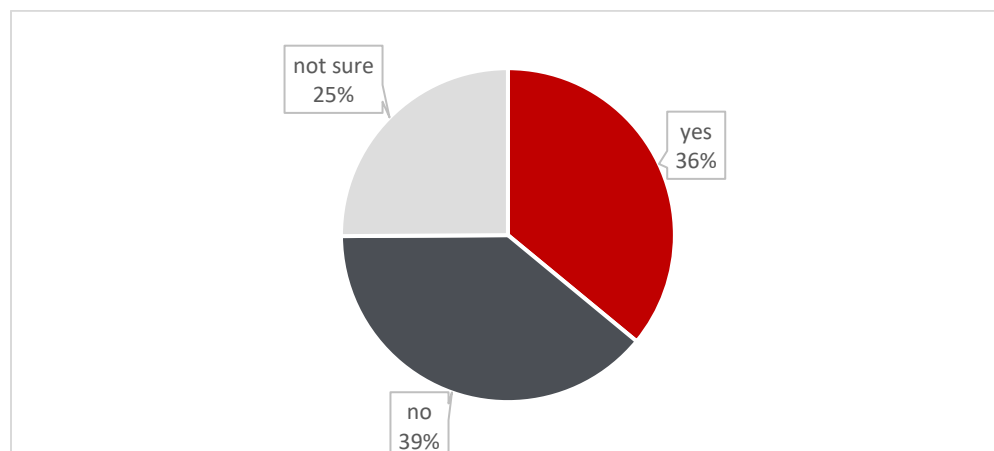


Figure 8- Equal experience of benefits

Question 6

In what ways, if any, do you see the presence of an officer not benefitting, negatively impacting, and/or further creating inequity for students?

All students benefit equally

Teachers who believe that students benefit from the SRO program equally also expressed confidence that students experience no negative impacts or inequity. These respondents shared that the officer's presence brings a clear sense of safety for everyone.

- *As long as they are acting without prejudice, then we should be good here.*
- *I certainly do not see a negative in having the officers in the schools. The officers are very approachable, friendly, and willing to work with the staff and students. As in many situations, 'the squeaky wheel gets the grease'. At school, we will often try to have the students that will most benefit (most need) an officer's attention.*
- *None at all - the students love to have interactions with police officers. This is a positive experience for us.*
- *I don't think there is any inequity created, but the nature of the role means the officers spend more time with some students (often older ones or those who are getting in trouble) than with everyone else.*
- *Fundamentally, students have a right to feel safe in a school. The essential function of police is to maintain law and order and therefore, safety. Some students will, of course, push back against such notions, in the same way that some students will reject the*

authority of a teacher or administrator. Some new immigrants also come from countries where police are largely ineffective or corrupt, and they may view police with apprehension. However, this in no way promotes or creates inequity. Safety is a universal concept that should apply to everyone. While some schools may see less of a need for a resource officer, others could potentially use more officer presence. SRO's, when selected well, are approachable, knowledgeable and are able to answer questions for students.

- *Never. That is an American idea we have imported into our society. I have been admin for 20 years now and have known many SRO in a variety of settings. You employ excellent people and I have only observed them creating equity. We need more funding of police, and more presence in every aspect of our community. Defunding police, is again, an American idea that does not reflect our diverse community or serve the good work that CPS was doing in our school everyday when present.*

Students do not benefit equally

Many respondents acknowledged that not all students benefit equally, and they felt that inequities were related to the SRO's limited capacity, how their time is spent, the quality of the SRO and their interaction with students, the varying nature of student personalities. Some participants identified that certain students may be legitimately fearful of police based on their lived experience.

SRO not there enough and not a good fit

Teachers reiterated here that the SROs are not at school consistently enough to achieve equal benefits for all students. Many mentioned they are only seen during lockdowns or incidents, not consistently or the officer is not a good fit for working with students.

- *Having an officer here is very beneficial to help youth see the police as a positive rather than a negative. The current roll of these officers though, as a sentry, does not seem to meet the suggested or possible impacts that could come from their being a full time member of the school. If they were here more or more visible in the commitment to the school and its members, if they taught classes or offered sessions there would more connection to them. Give the community more than a uniform.*
- *Too little time to become involved with students when there is not a specific crisis to attend to.*
- *Students really only see the officer at suspensions or during lockdown drills. It would be better if they were more involved in the school.*

SRO's time not equally distributed

Respondents felt that SRO's time is typically spent on students with bad behavior and others don't benefit from their presence. Some would like to see SROs spend more time on non-disciplinary activities. Additionally, some mentioned that "good" kids, or those who are outgoing, will feel comfortable talking to an SRO, but others will not.

- *I think there is more support for the students that are known to have committed crimes, or have participated in negative activity throughout the school. The SRO does not have much presence in the school besides being in the main foyer, where the SRO chats with students that are already comfortable with them, or in the office speaking to students who need SRO intervention.*
- *If the officer is only dealing with the "problems", they can't build a positive relationship with the other students.*
- *This is due to the nature of the behaviours at my school. Too much of our SRO's time is taken by students who are demanding the SRO's attention for negative reasons. I believe that more time at school would allow for more positive, non-disciplinary, interaction with our student body.*

- *Students that are not exposed or involved in illegal activity have a neutral benefit or pay little attention to SRO*
- *Students who do not experience opportunities to interact with school resource officers may not receive as many benefits as those who regularly interact with them.*

Some students feel fear and anxiety

Some respondents identified that immigrants could have a negative perception, lack of trust, or fear of police based on experiences living in other countries. Therefore, having police in school could create more stress or fear. Some teachers felt student's perceptions of police were also likely influenced by polarized views in the media. Another highlighted how some students simply reject authority or the role and would therefore would not be open to feeling benefits of an SRO.

- *I see two groups of students within this question; the first having legitimate concerns and the second not. 1. Students from other countries of origin may have negative views of police based on their past experience. 2. Teens tend to see things in extremes and their views are often "popularized" in social media so some of their personal experiences are unnecessarily exaggerated/unfairly portrayed.*
- *Some of our students of colour have expressed a fear of officers*
- *Some students are fearful of an officers presence. Especially because they are here so infrequently, or only for drills.*

Quality of the interaction

Respondents reiterated that the quality of the interaction and positivity of the relationship determines the benefits that students experience, and this varies significantly with different SROs. If the officer is not well suited to the role officer or they are seen as authority instead of a community member there may be less benefit. Some respondents mentioned that SRO presence is an important opportunity to regain trust with immigrant populations but could also solidify mistrust if not managed well.

- *I really think that having a real relationship with the RCMP or CPS is important so that they are not an enemy but someone who helps to maintain order/law in our society and that they can be a positive resource.*
- *From my experience with police, they are viewed as authority figures and not much as community members.*
- *Some of the SROs I have had spend all their time in their office with the door closed. Another one had a sign on his door stating that if you didn't know who stole something from you, please don't bother him. I have had a few that have targeted students (those that have already had trouble with the law) on the first day and that has created a terrible rapport.*
- *The simple presence of a Calgary Police officer cannot negatively impact a student. Whatever interactions a student has with the officer is what will determine the impact that officer has.*
- *Having worked in four of the high schools in various parts of the city, I'd say it isn't as much a certain student demographic as an officer's ability to make connections.*

Participant's recommendations:

Some teachers suggested improvements could be made to the quality of interactions or efforts made to address previous issues that caused fear and anxiety towards SROs. This could be done by increasing interactions with SROs through classroom visits or presentations, having them be of diverse backgrounds, using officers that are shown to work well with children and involving SROs in a more wholistic manner with school programming, councillors, and staff. It was mentioned that some schools may need more supports than others.

- A more diverse population reflected in police officers (race, gender, speaks other languages).
- It would be great to see more diversity in the SRO in our schools. Schools with a significant population of visible minorities, would benefit from an SRO who is also a minority.
- Unskilled or inexperienced officers may have difficulty building relationships with students.
- It would be helpful to meet with SRO at beginning of year and know what he or she can do to support. I would love class visits etc on various topics.
- I used to work in a elementary/jr high with a huge Sudanese population. Our SRO was incredible, but I wanted the students to connect with a likeness of themselves in the CPS. I additionally sought out [name removed] (then, an auxiliary cadet) and then Staff Sergeant [name removed] to visit our school to show representation. We lucked out with representation of a courageous Sudanese immigrant training to be a police officer and a strong female Staff Sergeant (now Superintendent? Excellent!). SROs are fantastic, but it would be so much more powerful for SROs to bring a rotating cast of buddies to reflect the rich diversity within the CPS to make those faster connections. Thanks again!

Question 7.a

Are there specific demographics of students who you think experience negative impacts or inequity from the officer's presence or behaviour?

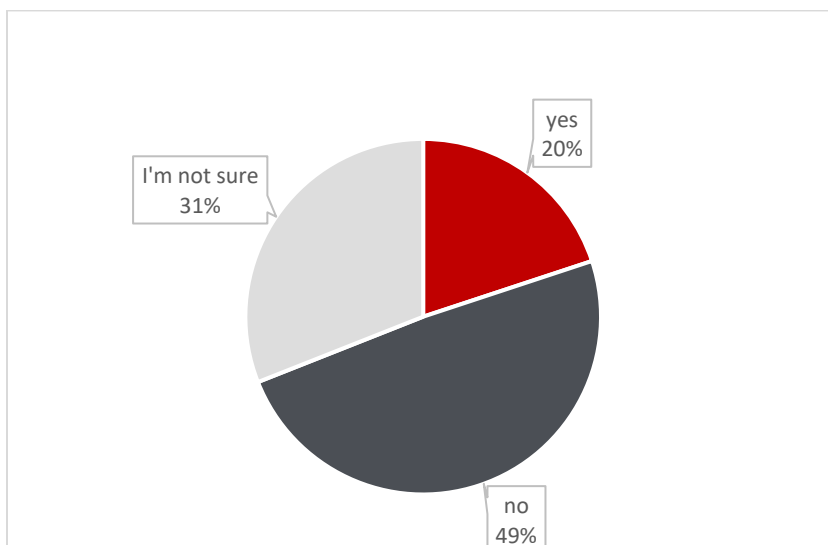


Figure 9- Students who may experience negative impacts or inequity

Question 7.b.

Comments:

No, there are no specific groups of students who experience negative impacts

Approximately half of the respondents did not believe specific demographics of students experience inequities or negative impacts. This group of respondents consisted of a mix of demographics and was not more heavily represented by any one demographic.

- Having worked in four of the high schools in various parts of the city, I'd say it isn't as much a certain student demographic as an officer's ability to make connections.
- This is a bias question. SROs actually provide an opportunity for all demographic groups to have a positive experience with SROs in a non threatening environment.

Yes, some demographics of students experience negative impacts

Similarly, there was an equal mix of demographics in the teachers who said there were students who do experience inequities or negative impact.

Students with negative direct lived experience and mistrust of police

Of the 20 percent of teachers who agreed that there are demographics of students who might feel negatively impacted by the SRO being in school, most respondents mentioned students who have had previous negative lived experience, whether in the community in Calgary, with their family, or for immigrants and refugees in the country in which they came. These statements were usually very generalized around race and culture and could refer to a wide diversity of students.

Other teachers mentioned that many student's perceptions have also been influenced by what they see on social media, and this has led to a negative perception and mistrust with police. One teacher shared that perception is reality, so whether a student's opinion is based on direct experience or media, the task to overcome it is the same.

- *For some kids, the presence of police is very negative - they have history in the family where they only see police when something bad happens, so it would be important to build positive relationships and have things like presentations where they can see them and talk to them. Some kids are also heading in directions of not necessarily law-abiding citizens, so the presence of police is threatening - rather than being educating on why they shouldn't do that, or the risks to their lives if that's the direction they continue in. It is also historically (and currently) quite a racist organization, so our demographic immediately sees police as threatening.*
- *I think students think of police officers as enforcers and that they do not see them as helping students. They see what they think as a police officer as what social media announces them as and that is bad. If a police officer charged for example a parent of guardian of a crime they (the student) may think that the officer or law is hurting them because one of their parents are gone.*
- *I have a lot of kids from Nigeria and even in grade 1 they speak about how the police in their country are bad.*
- *for the students that have had trauma at home and associate that trauma with CPS attending a call- this can bring back memories when they see an officer*
- *Students who have come from places where uniforms are to be feared and have had negative experiences need more support (through our school support team) to feel safe and engage.*
- *Lots of students have expressed fear of the police due to their/their family's experience with them in the community. When officers have come in, such as for lockdowns, it creates a lot of anxiety for these students who have learned that police may not be a symbol of safety and fairness. Besides that lots of children may feel an officer is 'scary' or serious, children who are not white have an extra level of discomfort that they often feel about the police.*
- *Particularly our refugees and claimant refugees. They have had very negative experiences and often refer to CPS as 'bad guys'. The SRO experience makes such a difference. Also our students that have had family members with negative experiences are often scared and angry with CPS. When they have the SRO experience they are often surprised and comforted. Lastly, some of our students are scared of the CPS. Having the SRO come and read a story or join a class for a special activity relaxes our anxious students.*
- *Some of our kids have experienced trauma in their home countries related to police or military personnel. Having said that, some students are addicted to social media and this drives the majority of their ideas, beliefs, and identity.*

Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ2S+, neurodiverse and low income

Other teachers referred directly to Black, Indigenous, neurodiverse, low income and students who identify as LGBTQ2S+ who are likely to feel very uncomfortable with an SRO being in the school.

- *Black students continue to present high mistrust of police officers, and increasing defiance of law authority as they become more cynical of change happening. With a more equitable model of servicing, this can change.*
- *Black and indigenous students face more disconnection and poor treatment from SRO's*
- *Systemic racism is real, and we have several African Canadian students who may be negatively impacted by police presence and/or their behaviour in the school.*
- *What comes to mind are the Indigenous students in my district. Due to the inter-generational trauma that has been experienced, and some of the not so positives experiences with police, that would go hand in hand with the trauma.*
- *My school is over 30% Indigenous. Many other students are racialized. They do not see the police as friendly member of society as police have traditionally targeted people of their backgrounds. Some of the students have personal experience with police outside of school and have expressed that it has not been a positive experience.*
- *Racialized students, minorities, LGBTQ+ population, etc. anyone for whom police presence is often seen in a negative light.*
- *LGBTQ+ view officers as macho and homophobic, also people of color and immigrants, this included immigrants for Eastern European countries who do not trust law enforcement.*
- *LGBTQ+ and non-white students feel threatened by "thin blue line" and lack of diversity in officers who enter our school. Neurodiverse students feel officers lack understanding and will not listen.*
- *Low income students, racialized students and neurodiverse students are the only ones that have been approached by the SRO in our building. These students are also the ones who are less able to and less likely to defend and stand up for themselves, because of the way they are generally treated.*

Students on the wrong side of the law

Some respondents mentioned the population of students who are involved in crime and get in trouble with the law. They felt these students would feel impacted by the SRO presence in school, and as many teachers shared, this is a good thing.

- *Students who either engage in, or are friends with those who engage in, criminal behaviour. SRO's never seek out crime, they simply respond to it. If you are involved in potentially criminal activity, you would certainly not be pleased with the presence of an SRO.*
- *If a student is actually not following the law, there will be a negative impact on that student- as there should be.*
- *The very real groups of teen boys who seek trouble, lead to suspicion of other similar, non-problematic groups. The reality is the "Persian-mafia" group causes trouble and are visible.*
- *Those who are dealing drugs, bringing weapons to school or are agitating others into gang membership experience negative impacts, as they should. This is not race or background dependant*

Participant's recommendations

Use positive interaction to counteract negative perceptions

Regardless of the respondent's position on this question, the most common recommendations were to ensure SROs are well-suited with the right skills for building relationships and that a good SRO provides a key opportunity for CPS to reverse and mend student's negative associations and experiences.

- *I am at a school in the NE so some of our students have viewed previous interactions they have had with the police in a negative manner, with a positive presence in the school, these relationships can be mended.*
- *I would say that some view the officers as negative - due to social media and maybe personal experience in a different situation (traffic stop). The program helps change the view of our officers and changes the interactions that may occur in the future. This isn't about schools enforcing law - it is about building community relationships - which is only possible with time in a building with the students*
- *Some students who have family histories of being discriminated against by the law may be apprehensive to have a SRO in the building. But, selecting the right SRO would be key with this.*
- *We have many students that have bad experiences with police in the community. The officer coming in to school provides an opportunity for positive interactions despite it being dysregulating.*
- *Yes, students who have been impacted already by the justice system or who have had negative interactions with Officers. Having an SRO in the building allows them to see that not all interactions with Officers are negative and that they can also be used as resources and are often looking out for their best interest. With the support and trust the students already have with us as school staff, we can often bridge this gap and help them build trust and a safe relationship with the police*

Question 8.a.

Have you personally witnessed inequitable/discriminatory/racist behaviour from CPS officers towards students?

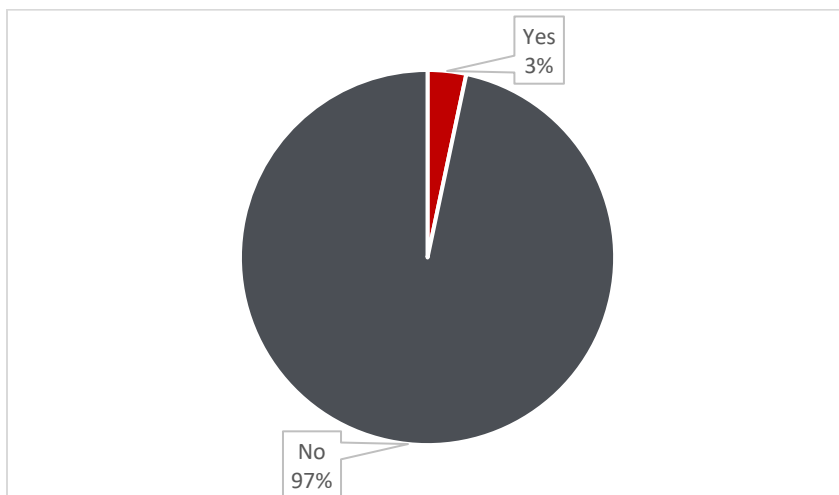


Figure 10- Teachers who have witnessed inequitable SRO behaviour

Question 8.b.

If yes, please describe what you have seen:

Of the 3 percent, or 18 respondents who said yes, 12 identified as Racialized, LGBTQ2S+ or having a disability. This could suggest that teachers representing equity-deserving

demographics are perhaps more likely to notice and recognize inequity and discriminatory behaviour.

These participants expressed seeing examples of racism, inequitable and disrespectful treatment based on bias, and inappropriate treatment of a neurodiverse students.

Racism and microaggression

- *A male police officer chastized a grade 3 boy who was wearing a small turban, asking him, "how are you going to wear a bike helmet with that on your head?"*
- *I witnessed an SRO telling racialized students that they felt CPS public messages about making a greater commitment to antiracist education amongst members was just a knee jerk reaction to appeasing "public and political pressure," and that in their experience, racialized people who had negative experiences with police officers were in those situations for a reason...My response in 8b was very upsetting for several students who were involved in the conversation. They came to me after expressing shock and frustration that a police officer our school would openly deny the importance of antiracist training for police.*
- *Officer repeatedly asked Sikh student "where he was from" even though student was born and raised in Calgary and the officer was aware of this.*
- *-officers who entered the school wearing "thin blue line" on uniforms*

Bias and stereotyping

- *Different questioning, support, and tone when interacting with students*
- *I worked with an officer once who was familiar with a family from the community. He approached this student in a negative and biased manner from the beginning and never gave him a chance to prove that he was different from the choices his family had made.*
- *Officers making assumptions about students based on negative stereotypes. Officers being more harsh on students in NE schools than NW schools.*
- *I have personally witnessed neglect regarding cases where violence occurred between Black groups. I have witnessed SROs support the bias of principals regarding how allegations were handled between students of different racial backgrounds.*
- *Not from an SRO, but when the street officers attended to a stabbing near the school this year I had to intervene to ensure our indigenous student was treated fairly and with respect - and I made him aware of his rights - when the officer did not. I had to interrupt an officer to make that point, as he was being aggressive and speaking down to an indigenous student that was only a witness to a stabbing. I was shocked and for the first time was able to see the perspective of what that looks like for a young indigenous person. I will add none of that would have happened, had an SRO been present with the needed relationships. That is the point of having an SRO - to avoid all those judgements.*
- *Yes, but only once and over a decade ago. A white officer was questioning a grade 9 black student who was a repeat drug offender. The officer was so condescending and just awful to the student, who clearly had so many struggles. I remember him saying, "I know your mother doesn't love you." I'll never forget the look in the child's eyes. Defeat. Embarrassment. That has sat with me to this day. I was caught off guard and was a new administrator at the time. If I could go back I would have stood up for the child in a better way than I did.*

Disrespect and inappropriate behaviour

- *neurodiverse student who was manhandled by officers who obviously had no training nor understanding of said student's reaction to accusations from officer*
- *dismissive of student pronouns*

Staff feeling silenced and unsupported by school board

- *My personal thoughts are that the more CPS can build relationship with ALL staff, the more CPS can be supported by staff who see the early signs troubling or troubled students. I have had my voice silenced more at the administrative level than once then something negative has occurred by or against a student. I feel that by silencing the "people in the trenches" CSSD is causing insecurity in our schools. As a highly educated staff member who hears a fair amount of "side conversations" I am scared at school on a daily basis.*

Questioning intent of survey

Some respondents took this opportunity to reiterate that they have only ever had positive experiences with their SROs. Some teachers felt this question was unfairly eliciting negative feedback. All respondents who shared comments under these two themes did not identify with any marginalized group.

Defence of good SROs

- *Never - the officers are very respectful and friendly in their numerous interactions with students over the years at the schools I have been an administrator. Officer [name removed] (I believe) was absolutely wonderful to have working with us during her years as an SRO.*
- *We have been very fortunate to have awesome police, both male and female who have always treated students with respect. They just need more time among students to engage.*
- *NO As a school administrator I am always pleased to work with CPS.*

Criticism of question

- *Again, why is this designed to illicit negative responses? Here's what I see. I see a police commission and a city council that is hell bent on destroying a program that supports at risk youth in schools.*
- *I am looking for the question that asks. " Have you witnessed CPS behavior that is equitable and inclusive?"*
- *LGBTQ kids are at no risk by CPS officers. I think this is virtue signalling at its worst.*

Question 9.a.

Have you heard students talk about inequitable/discriminatory/racist behaviour from CPS officers towards students?

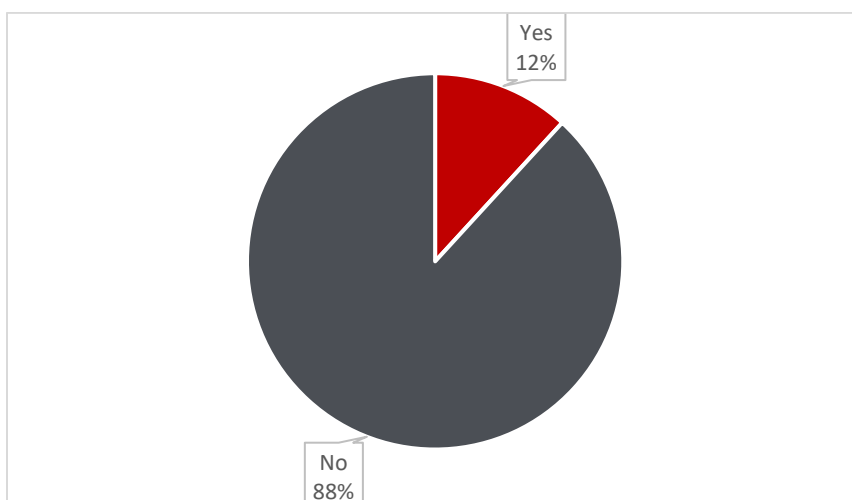


Figure 11- Teachers who have heard about inequitable SRO behaviour

Question 9.b.

Of the 12 percent, or 64 respondents who said yes, 34 identified as Racialized, LGBTQ2S+ or having a disability.

Some respondents didn't offer examples of what they have heard, but shared sentiments of support for police officers to show an antiracist approach when working with Racialized students.

- *More work needs to be done to make police officers responsive the needs expressed by racialized students in the school. They need to take an openly antiracist stance and speak to how policing can evolve to meet the needs to racialized communities.*

If yes, please describe what you have heard students talk about:

Racial profiling/racism in community and not in school

- *Students felt the "white cop" didn't understand their culture and was targeting or picking on them.*
- *Students believe that they are targeted based on the colour of their skin and/or gender.*
- *All the time. The perception is that CPS is racist.*
- *Approaching them in public because they look suspicious because they are a person of color*
- *I have heard racialized students in our school speak about inequitable/discriminatory/racist behavior from all adults in a position of authority in our building, teachers included.*
- *Indigenous students being singled out, roughed up, held without reason, followed in an intimidating way. LGBTQ students being spoken to in discriminatory ways.*
- *In an incident that occurred last year at Chinook mall. Some of my grade 8 students were ordered to lay on the floor and had weapons pointed at them when a Caucasian person pulled out a weapon and they had nothing to do with it. Students have often told me about times when they feel they were discriminated against based on their skin color and ethnicity.*
- *I have overheard students talking about issues from the community, not specifically school related.*
- *I have students belonging to ethnic minorities who have expressed difficulties with non-SRO officers in the community. They have positive experiences with SROs in our school.*
- *Not from our SRO, but they have described these experiences occurring outside of school.*
- *From outside of school events specific to policing of protests and treatment of parents.*

Students feel unfairly targeted

- *I cannot substantiate what is true but have overheard students say they feel specific groups are targeted within the school. Many times this comes down to perception and perhaps a group that has a negative reputation already.*
- *Kids sometimes feel they're being targeted just for hanging out (loitering, I guess?) but there are few places where kids can hang out, so it's a bit tricky.*
- *Students felt unfairly targeted and were frustrated as they were already dealing with their probation officers outside of school and now had to deal with an overbearing SRO in their school setting.*

Teachers who feel some students cry "foul"

Some respondents shared they have heard students feeling targeted and discriminated against, however respondents who shared this sentiment felt these student's concerns are unwarranted or are not taking responsibility for their choices and legitimate bad behaviour. None of these respondents identified as Racialized.

- *I have heard students say He's racist! or She's racist! but never any students who already aren't saying that about teachers or administrators in an effort to deflect attention from their behaviour. I have also seen a situation in which there were multiple students who had run-ins with the law and it was only a group of black students who were part of this group. I remember the stress of an SRO being told he would need to arrest/escort out, etc. students connected with this gang and recognizing that the only students he was being asked to do this with were black. It wasn't the fault of administrators or anyone else - these students had been involved in breaking the law, but because other races hadn't been involved in this, it put the SRO in a very difficult position. I have never seen or heard of a situation in which I felt an officer was racist or discriminatory toward any students.*
- *I have heard students question why THEY are being asked questions or detained--when it is unwarranted. They are being asked questions because they might know something; they could choose to be helpful, responsible citizens; or, they feel profiled, when an SRO or officer are simply trying to learn more about a situation. Many are not justified in their reactions--police have a job to do and, in most cases, are doing just THAT, their job.*
- *Again, I teach in the NE, so some of these students view their interactions with CPO to be discriminatory, however, they usually do not see their fault in any situation. They need education to turn their perspectives around so that they can be better citizens and educated citizens.*
- *When charged or the CPS was brought in - the "you're racist" card was played very quick and often.*
- *Students of color sometimes accuse racist judgment, but it is baseless.*
- *2. Some students will use social media and perceived negative experiences as attention-seeking opportunities within their peer group. This group seems to want to capitalize any opportunities to show themselves as victims to garner sympathy, time away from responsibilities, excuses why they can't meet certain goals, etc.*

Generalized negative perception

Some respondents shared that what they heard from students are generalized comments about police in class discussions, but nothing directly related to the SRO in their school.

- *In class discussions, not related to our actual SRO*
- *Yes, but usually regarding 'the police' in general and not a specific officer. Some have expressed they feel their neighbourhoods are heavily patrolled by police.*

Some students don't trust police

- *However, I get the sense many students don't trust the Police. This is mostly a cultural factor that is sometimes brought with them from other countries.*
- *Students are mostly fearful of interacting with any police due to their previous experiences of being stopped, harassed, or profiled off of school property. They think cops will plant evidence or make false charges to get racialized people in trouble. Female students regularly discuss how cops are more likely to abuse their spouses and are fearful of gendered violence or sexual harassment. Even stating cases where officers have accessed women's information to seek them out after interaction.*
- *Students in high poverty areas do not generally have a positive feeling about the police.*

Dismissive attitude

- *Dismissive of racialized kids' experiences; dismissive of girls when they ask questions about sexual assaults.*
- *I have heard them describe their frustration at not being heard when involved in an incident, of being intimidated by street officers when they haven't been the perpetrator (students make no distinction between SROs and street officers).*

Black students

These respondents shared that they have heard comments about discrimination specifically from Black students.

- *Yes I have heard of this being discussed amongst student,s of incidents within the community, amongst students whom are black.*
- *Our students are well-versed in the topics of police brutality and Black Lives Matter. While many of our racialized students are committing crimes, they struggle to detach these narratives from the consequences for their actions. Whenever our SRO does visit, they berate him with interrogative questions about how other officers have treated them, why they treat black people in those ways, etc.*
- *I have heard black students voice concerns of racial profiling by CPS.*

A few other respondents shared a few unique comments including how they heard about discriminatory behaviour from parents and also a Racialized teacher who shared they themselves do not feel comfortable when a police officer is in the school.

Participant's recommendations:

Participants recommended that the SRO role can be used as an opportunity to rebuild trust and establish positive relationships if situations are approached with more sensitivity and a genuine intention to build trust.

Question 10.a.

Based on your knowledge of the students in your school, what do you think might be the root cause(s) of any anxiety or fear felt by the officer's presence in school? (Select all that apply)

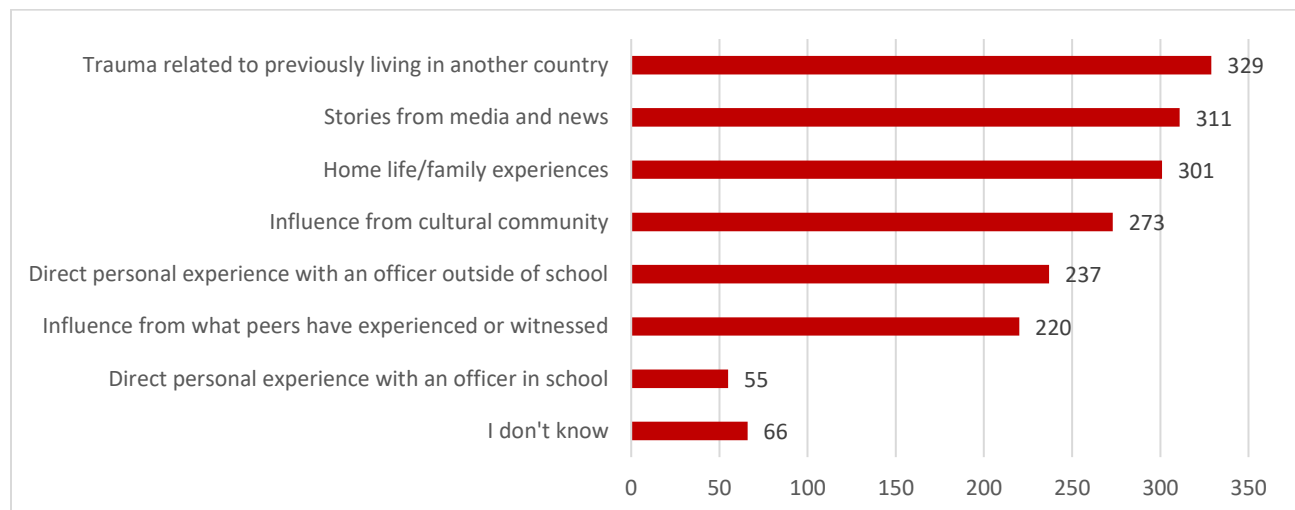


Figure 12- Teacher's perspectives on root cause for student fear or anxiety

Question 10.b.

Other:

The written responses to this question added a few ideas in addition to the items presented in Figure 12.

There is no anxiety felt by students

Some respondents reiterated they have not witnessed students having anxiety with SROs. Only one of these respondents identified with an equity deserving group.

- *I don't believe there is any anxiety or fear by police presence.*
- *Our students have not expressed anxiety or fear due to our SRO's presence in our school.*

- *The officer's presence in the school only very rarely causes anxiety for students. Therefore I feel this is a leading question and feels geared towards stepping away from SROs in school, which would be a big mistake. For students who do experience anxiety due to SRO presence, this could be from any and all of the options above.*
- *Biased stories from peers and administrative inability to fully explain how and why school discipline occurs are at the root of most of these problems, I suspect. There is much more appearance of injustice than reality, and the stories some students tell are far off the mark.*

Students involved in crime

Several participants felt anxiety was experienced mostly by those who are involved in or close to crime and again, these respondent's felt this anxiety was justified.

- *I believe it might be because the student is doing something wrong and got caught. In other words, the student's conscience. And know that now there will be consequences to their wrong doing.*
- *Students who are selling or distributing drugs or participating in things they shouldn't are highly against having officers in schools. This I have overheard and witnessed.*
- *The students in my school that are fear ful of police in the school are those that are violent, selling drugs, extorting other students and involved in criminal behaviour.*

External sources more influential than limited direct experience

Students not having a direct experience or relationship with the SRO was the next most common theme. Some teachers pointed out that external influences such as media, politicians or stories from peers are powerful in absence of positive direct experience.

- *American TV, social media, inflammatory politicians on the news. It's the worst. I am sorry you have to endure it.*
- *A lack of opportunity to build relationships with Officers. Also a lack of understanding as to why they are in schools. If all SRO's do is police/give tickets/uphold the law and run lockdowns, why wouldn't a student be on edge?*

Officer visit are for negative situations

Respondents shared that SRO time at school is currently spend on situations involving enforcement or drills. For example, SROs are only around during lockdowns which makes some students anxious as they think the officer may be there because the school is unsafe for other reasons. Others pointed to anxiety around SROs wearing uniforms and carrying guns as a reason.

- *If the officers are only in the schools because of problems, the students show anxiety when officers arrive.*
- *Students may feel that a school is unsafe and that is why there is a need for an SRO, which causes anxiety.*
- *The presence of a gun on the officer's hip.*

Question 11.

The following list includes components of the current SRO program. For *any component you think could be improved*, please describe what changes should be made that would contribute to achieving the goal of positive relationship and trust building.

The written responses to this question repeated much of the key themes presented in this report already, therefore responses to this question focus on recommendations that respondents believe will help to improve the SRO program.

A/B. Frequency of the officer's visit and time spent in school

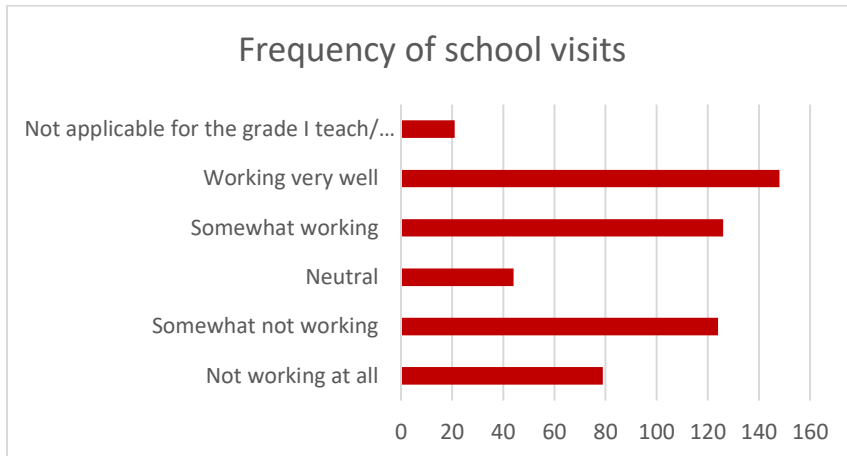


Figure 13- Frequency of the officer's visit

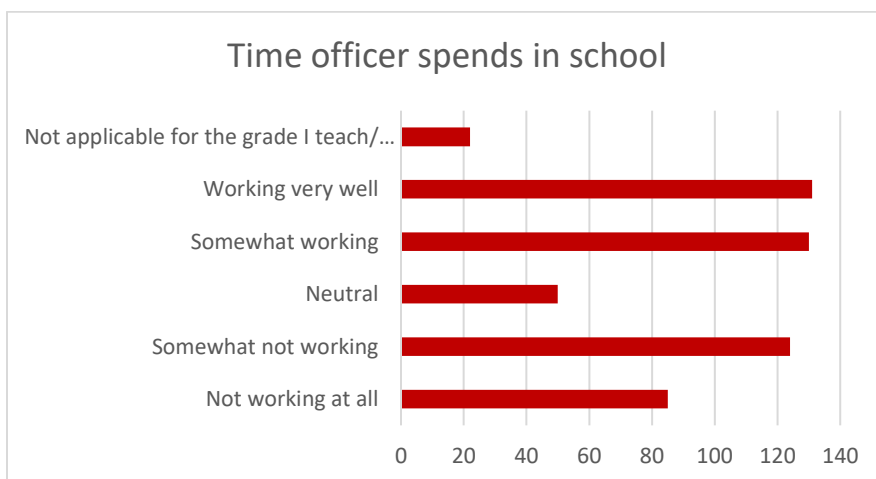


Figure 14- Time officer spends in school

More time to interaction with students

The clear message from respondents was that more frequent or consistent interactions with SROs would help establish connections with students and help to “normalize” the officer’s presence in school. It would allow more time for classroom visits, education and attending events in the school community. They want to see SROs more often outside of drills or issues. Some respondents also mentioned that frequency of visits may be based on the needs of the school.

Teachers mentioned a variety of frequencies in which they want to see an officer in the school. The commonality of these responses is always, more than what is currently happening was better than less. Many participants thought that SROs should be there for at least half a day to full time to be effective. This suggests that frequency of visits may need to be a custom plan made between the school and the SRO based on the needs of the school community.

- *Time to walk around the school, and have students see them. Then when we do need to call them for a specific reason, students do not panic.*
- *Definitely we could benefit from our SRO being onsite more often - the students need to see the SRO as someone who is there for them*
- *In general time spent in the hallways, in the classroom, engaged with students is underrated and undervalued I believe. Proximity addresses a lot of what would soon become a problem.*
- *If they're going to come at all, it needs to increase drastically so that students have a rapport with the SRO and actually get to know them.*

- *Would love to have SRO in school more just hanging out in the hallway during class change for a chat with students, even coming to classes just to chat and answer questions.*
- *Should have set 'office hours' as much as possible. Useful for staff if they wish to book the officer for class time, useful for students should they have questions.*

Participants want to see SROs visit classrooms, attend assemblies, do presentations, walk the hallways during busy times and have fun with students at school events. Some respondents even mentioned being outside during supervision. They suggested the earlier that SROs can build relationships with students in their childhood development, the better. They would also like to see SROs work with teachers to ensure they know what resource are available.

- *Not just in assemblies but as a guest expert in classrooms and engaging students in school extra-curricular events to build positive relationships.*
- *They could come for events, or just walk around and visit by popping into classes, they could come and participate in PE classes, they could deliver educational presentations*
- *For visits to classes, 45 minutes to 1 hour is good. Police officers came to our welcome/open house and mingled with families, played basketball with some kids. It was amazing! :) More of that please!*
- *Ideally 1 full day working with different classrooms would be ideal. Or 1/2 a day. In the past I have seen our SRO out at recess and playing basketball with the students. It is well received - the students love it.*

SRO not great

Some participants felt that some SROs were not a great fit for working with kids or that they were not interacting enough with the school community.

- *They are mostly having a jolly good time visiting instead of actual work with students. There are some really nice officers who care but the majority of them are on holiday mode in schools.*
- *longer and more visible. our one SRO was often in the cafeteria getting to know the students and engaging with them. Unfortunately our current SRO "hides" (or seems to) in an office and seems less approachable.*

C. Execution of safety drills

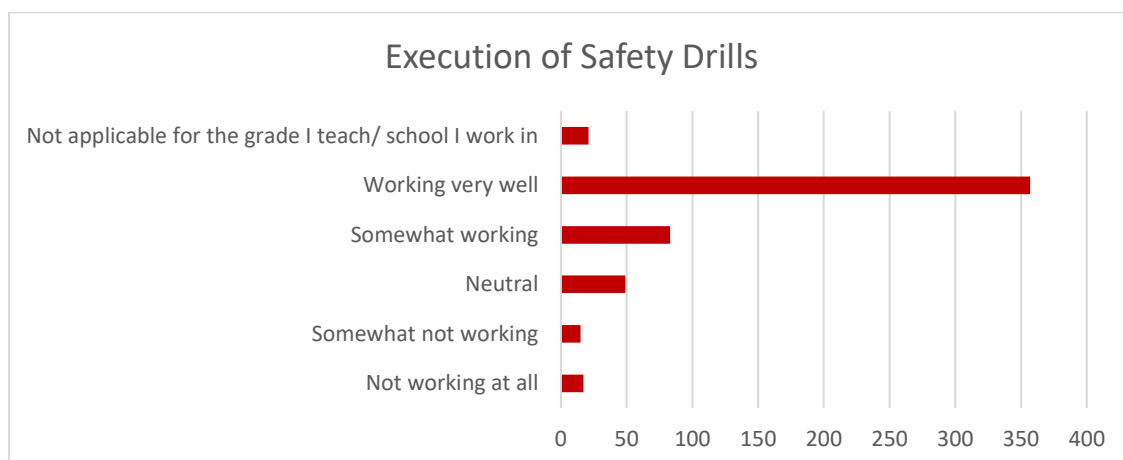


Figure 15- Execution of safety drills

Most participants said safety drills are important, beneficial and should continue, however others said this is not happening in their school at all. Other respondents feel that teachers are able to run the drills, if SROs ensure they have the right information.

- *Excellent- All officers in attendance were approachable and used the time well to instruct the students on the answers to "Why do we have to sit on the floor.... why do we have to turn off our cells." When students understand why they are being asked they are more compliant.*
- *I feel this is done well, especially those that just don't unlock the door after a practice lockdown and say it is over and leave. Spend time and talk, ask questions. A few have done this, this is valuable.*
- *We have had positive experiences with our SRO and each time we conduct a drill we learn something more to improve our response.*
- *The lense of the officer impacts our practice each and every time. They look at the drills through a lense we do not have*
- *Their involvement adds a layer of importance and helps the students realize the importance of the drills.*
- *"Whatever- we can handle this without them. Maybe 1 time per year to ensure we are aware of the most recent knowledge."*

Respondent's recommendations

For those who say that SRO should be involved in the drills, they felt SROs should be available to communicate about the importance of drills beforehand and debrief with students and staff afterwards. There were some who suggested more officers to help execute the drills.

- *We are happy with the execution of safety drills. It may be nice to have more time with each class for a question and answer period following the drills. Students often have queries.*
- *Having a police officer on site helps to reinforce the importance of drills.*
- *Officers are vital to helping implement safety drills (lockdowns) and help reassure students during these drills*
- *Whenever possible, SRO Officers should be present and visible during safety drills so students and staff can see that Officers are involved in our school community.*

D. Education on drug prevention

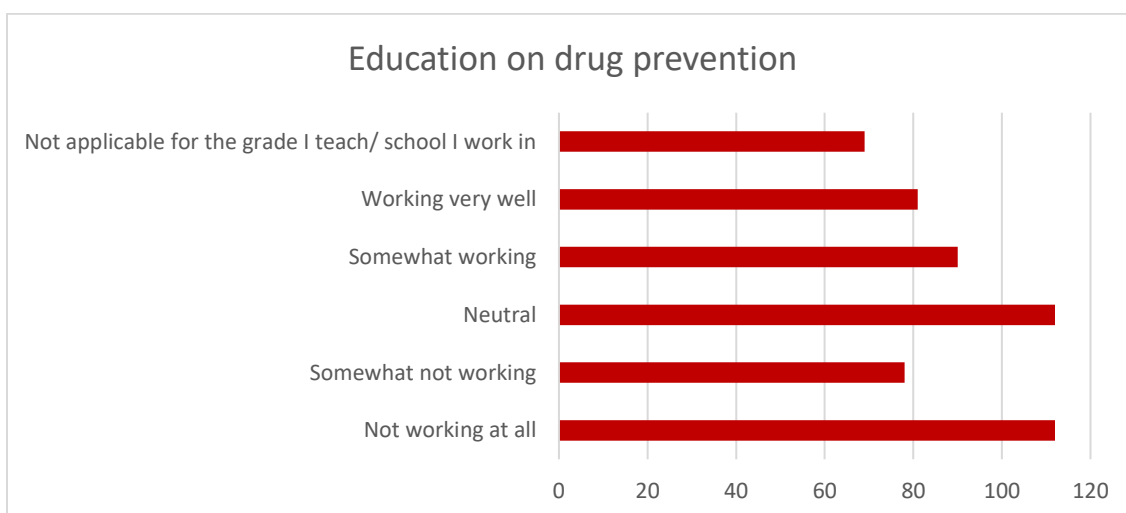


Figure 16- Education of drug prevention

Need more of it

Most participants felt drug education is very beneficial and would like to see more of it occur, especially during key times, like before graduation, as a preventative tactic.

- *Continuing drug prevention and education for students and staff. Having an SRO provides students and staff with a resource where they can ask questions or voice concerns.*
- *All schools could benefit from educational programming from police officers including assemblies. These should be at key times especially. Prior to graduation maybe it is an assembly on NOT drinking and driving. All schools should have at least one whole school wide presentation. It would be nice to have more than one assembly, maybe even two or three per year.*

Not happening or aware it is

Some participants did not see drug education happening now or were unaware. Many felt drug education was important for the SRO to do as they have the knowledge and experience to best deliver this information.

- *This has not happened in our school but I feel would be a welcome addition. Hearing information of this type from a different trusted adult can be a powerful experience.*

Participant's recommendations

Participants highlighted SRO's limited time and challenges in scheduling them for this type of work but felt education and drug prevention should happen at least once a year via presentations, visiting classes, or at assemblies. While they would like to see more SRO time dedicated for this, many respondents suggested working more closely with teachers and staff to share more information on the topic so that they in turn can share with students. They also mentioned the need for parents to be educated on this topic.

- *The education programs can be very valuable, but the resources shared and stories/anecdotes/script are not consistent from officer to officer. Other resource programs have prepared materials that the presenter can sign out/use for the talk, including key messages. This would be helpful for the SROs as well. Training for presenters on how to address provocative comments/questions from students would also be helpful.*

Some respondents reiterated the importance of an SRO who is approachable and good fit for working with students. This in addition to being well trained on the topic, will have positive impacts on students when it comes to drug prevention.

- *Provide officers with the relevant training to be able to teach this to students*

When it came to age appropriateness, many agreed that it is a topic that should be covered in all grades and used as a preventative measure for late elementary and junior high. Teachers also suggested that a presentation aligned with curriculum (like CALM) would make delivering this type of information much easier.

- *Maybe a consistent pre-made program made by educators that officers can follow when at K-6 schools would be helpful. This could align with Alberta Program of Studies making it easier for teachers to want to book such a program.*
- *This is important in the JH and elementary schools as this is a preventative and proactive action that is taught at a time when children at this particular age begins to experiment with various drugs.*

E. Education on gang prevention

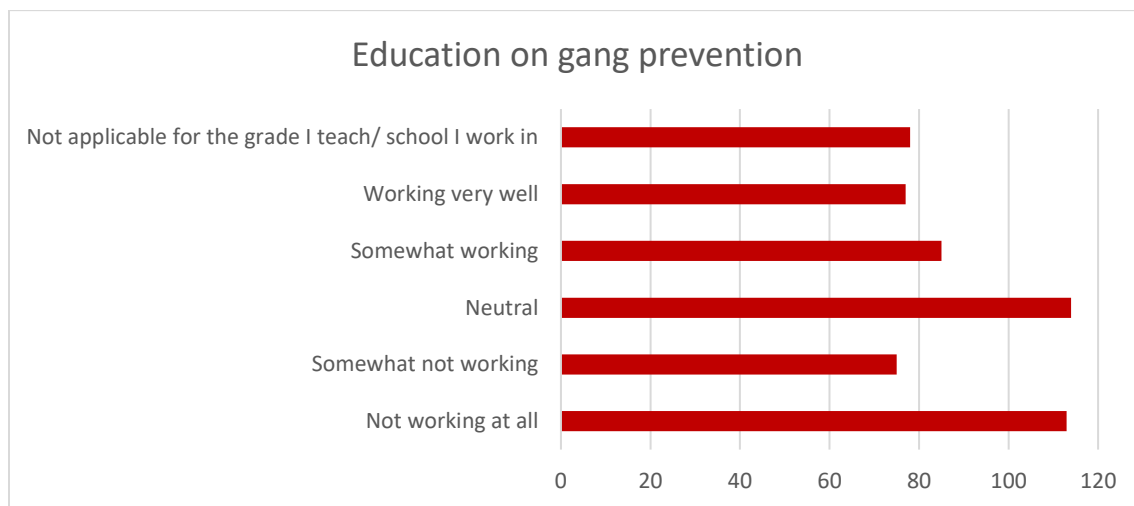


Figure 17- Education on gang prevention

Many participants would like to see more gang prevention education as it is very beneficial, especially at the later elementary or junior high level as a preventative approach. Some respondents mentioned that this education is currently not happening, and they want it to.

- *In our school, and with our demographics, I believe improvements could be made with more frequent education/presentations to students regarding gang activity.*
- *Haven't seen this but would like to. In Kelowna we had a very engaging visit from a task force member from the lower mainland who gave an extensive talk on the very real dangers of joining gangs.*
- *This needs to be in the younger grades. By the time students get to high school, they are too entrenched to be 'taught' about gang prevention. It is also important that SRO's have more knowledge about the gangs that are active in Calgary as many that I have worked with had very little knowledge on the subject.*

Participant's recommendations

Again, participants would like to see gang education embedded in the curriculum or specific and consistent information provided to students that is age appropriate. Teachers suggest delivering this information through presentations, classroom visits, assembly presentations.

They want SROs to educate and work with teachers, and parents, and have the appropriate training and knowledge needed to do this effectively. The SROs should be approachable and have a strong relationship with teachers and staff as well as trained to work with youth.

- *This could be embedded as a component of a CALM course to foster relationships, and offer a platform for student/officer engagement*
- *Information given to teaching staff about what educational opportunities the SRO program grants for guest visits, lessons, or presentations based on grade level.*
- *-give a presentation showing the impacts of gangs on a community-provide information on what gangs are active in Calgary at present -show kids how to get out of situations where gangs are involved*

F. Education on community safety

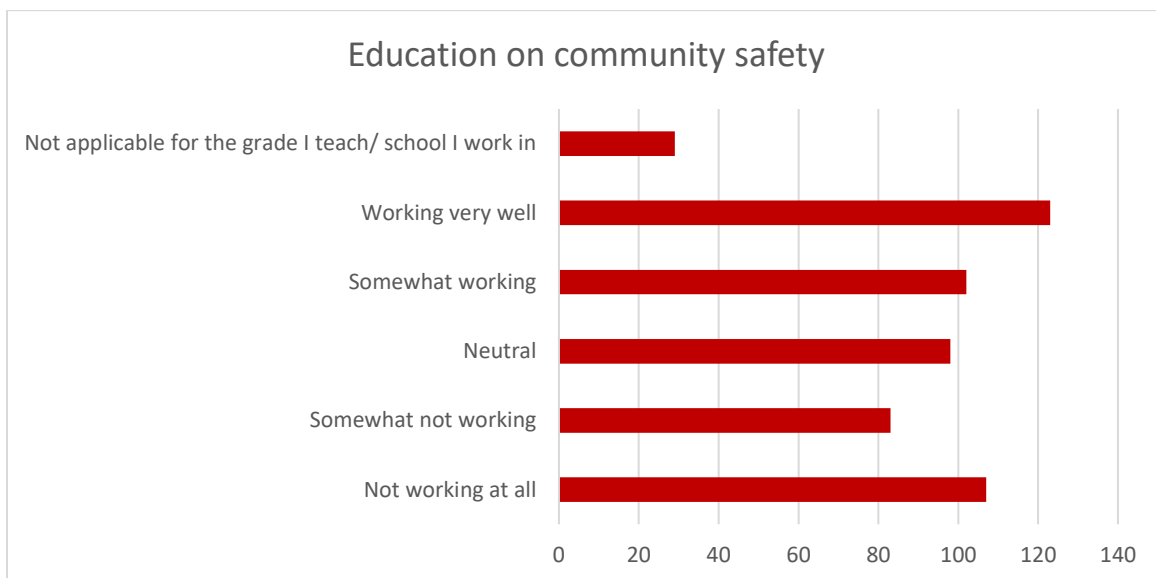


Figure 18- Education on community safety

Comments:

More of this

Community safety education was stated as beneficial and most would like to see more presentations, classroom visits or at assemblies. Having the SRO available with more time to do this work is important.

There were various perspectives on age appropriateness on these topics. Many felt that it should be done at all grades, but more should be happening at the younger grades before habits are formed.

Not happening currently

- *We only get this information for students IF we attend Youthlink. this isn't happening in schools*

Participant's recommendations

Again, many participants suggest more time was needed for this and was required for relationship building with students and staff. Others suggested recommendations such as bringing back the S4 program, adding content to the curriculum in CALM that includes information on traffic safety and online safety and intentional initiative at school to achieve the desired outcomes.

- *Starting a club or committee to build school safety would show that it is a priority and not just a presumed outcome of the SRO's presence.*

Other respondents suggested pre-made presentations that could be distributed widely that shared important age-appropriate content. Many shared that more information about these topics should be shared with teachers and parents to support this learning.

- *Offer district-wide presentations and/or distribute information packages so that students from various grades and schools can receive similar messages on community safety measures.*

G. Providing individual support for students who require it

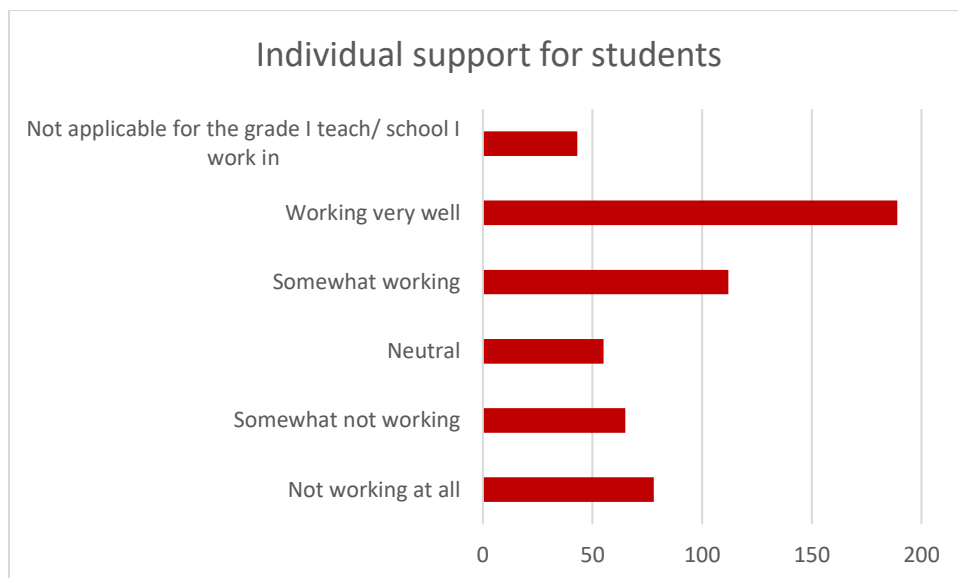


Figure 19- Providing individualized support

Many felt SROs providing support to individuals who need it should continue and is beneficial. While many shared that this does happen on a 1 to 1 basis when needed, more consistent presence and visibility of the officer would help establish relationships with students and staff. Others said that it too challenging to schedule this as their SRO is too busy.

Bring back MASST

Some respondents shared that the MASST program provided great benefits to schools, students and families and should be available in all schools.

- *Continue MASST, this was a very positive experience at our school for the student(s) involved.*
- *MASST - I have a student who benefits from this program (not our SRO) and the school is tremendously thankful for this program. It is of significant support and benefit for the student, family, school and community.*

Participant's recommendations

The common theme in the recommendations was more time, and more officers with the right skill set to work with youth. Respondents want the SRO working with teachers and becoming embedding in the school community to effectively interact with all students.

H. Enforcing the law within the school and on school grounds

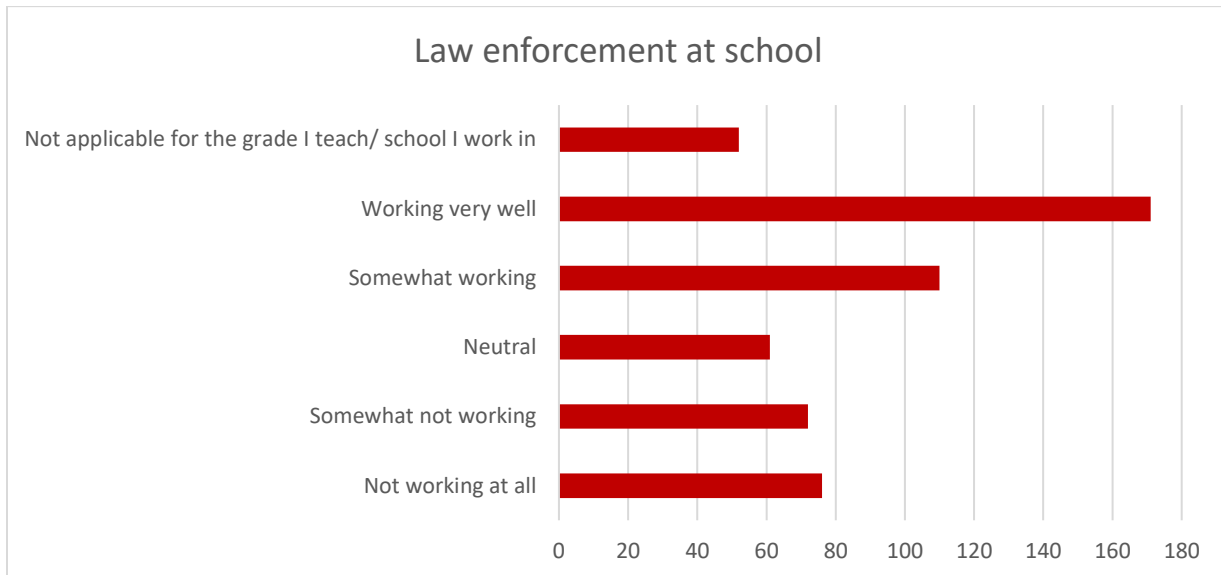


Figure 20- Law enforcement at school

Need more

Many participants felt it was beneficial to have law enforcement at school. While some said it is currently happening when needed, other felt it was not effective or happening enough. Others felt that having an officer more visible would help to hold students accountable and encourage students to be more disciplined. Many recognizing that more officers and time are needed to do this effectively as these situations must be managed in a timely manner.

- *Being more present in and around the school- before school, during school and after school.*
- *Smoking, vaping and doing drugs are not legally enforced very often. students vape etc in bathrooms and foyers regularly with no consequence. I have been told that the school would prefer to have the students in the school than feeling the need to go away from the school due to concern for the more serious consequence of them being unsupervised at another site... The truth in this may be different than my interpretation but there has to be a different way to support these kids.*
- *At least at my school, the kids need to book thrown at them and less warnings.*

Shouldn't be the SRO

Other respondents shared that they didn't think law enforcement should be the job of the SRO and that calling 911 was sometimes a better way to deal with these situations. Some shared concerns about the balance of law enforcement while also trying to build as supportive and trusting environment and said that SRO's should not be too heavy handed at school.

- *This can be done by calling the local district office instead of being done by the SRO.*
- *911 is used more often than not for these ones.*
- *I think this is important but the most difficult area to navigate. I think that SRO's sometimes have a difficult time balancing the law, and realizing they are dealing with kids. Absolutely the law needs to be enforced, but often by doing so with a heavy hand, kids learn to hide things better, and not trust the police. SRO's should be here to help and offer a line of support to students.*

Need support with traffic infractions around school

Many respondents shared their desire to have more support for traffic safety with regards to speeding motorists and parents around the school property.

- *enforcing the law on the roadways (parent drivers) is always appreciated and needed.*

- *The only aspect of this issue that I have any relation to would be traffic around the school grounds. Not enough is being done to support student safety or hold neighbourhood motorists accountable in this regard.*
- *Need to help out with managing parents parking in bus areas and blocking the road, pulling u-turns, etc.*

Participant's recommendations

Participants shared a desire to have more support managing traffic safety issues and violations. They would like to see SROs be more proactive by focusing on prevention, education and working together with administration. They want SROs available in a timely manner and to be patrolling and interacting with kids in a positive way.

Question 12

Each of the following factors contribute to positive relationship and trust building between officers and students. For each one, please describe what you think would be the ideal situation to help to achieve this goal.

A. The officer's attire /presence of weapons

Overwhelmingly, participants felt that officers should be dressed in uniform, but many felt they should not have weapons, at least visible ones, while in the school.

- *Continue wearing standard officer attire but keep weapons out of sight.*
- *The officer should continue to wear their regular attire. I don't believe that weapons should be seen on an officer's person when they are in schools.*
- *The uniform is always necessary as it identifies the individual as an SRO. The weapons could cause some students anxiety, especially immigrants coming from countries where they themselves may have used weapons.*
- *I think it intimidates a lot of the younger students to see officers in uniform with Kevlar and weapons. If an officer is coming to arrest a student I understand the need for this. If an officer is coming to participate in a class or activity it would be nice to see them stow these items in a locked area and wear a more casual uniform that allows them to participate easier. I think the uniform sometimes deters engagement because, for example, an SRO can't play basketball with a gun on their hip.*

Some felt that there was benefit for students to see the officer in plain clothes occasionally. These respondents also shared that there is time and place for both.

- *This triggers a lot of trauma and distrust/anxiety/nervousness when our students see the officer in full uniform everytime. Even if the officer is very friendly. If the officer was more casually dressed - maybe in off duty clothes the first time for a class meet and greet it would develop more trust I think.*
- *This is circumstantial. Sometimes, the clothes make the man, or woman, and the authority of the office and what it represents is crucial to help students understand the seriousness of situations. When educating in other parts of the role, however, plain clothes and no weapons would be preferable - civilian wear, essentially.*

Other participants mentioned that wearing a uniform is a good opportunity to teach students about it and why they need certain elements of the uniform. This increased understanding may help some students to feel more comfortable.

- *Students need to see the police officer in uniform and out of uniform to help build that relationship. It is also important that students understand the different aspects of the officer's uniform*

- *I think the SRO wearing their usual uniform and tools is important so students understand that these are tools. One of the most powerful things I heard an SRO say was that the most powerful, and most frequent tool was a pencil - to take notes.*
- *The Grade 1 students love seeing the officers in their uniform. Having everything explained makes the officers less scary and more approachable.*

B. The officer's demeanour towards the students

Participants shared that it was very important for officers to have the right personality and soft skills to work well with students. The following list of personality and character attributes are listed in order of most mentioned to least mentioned by engagement participants.

- Friendly/outgoing/personable
- Engaging/interactive/talking to students/answering questions
- Firm/stern/serious/authoritative presence when needed
- Approachable
- Kind/gentle/warm/caring/empathetic
- Positive attitude
- Good with young people/age-appropriate communication
- Able to build positive relationships
- Welcoming
- Professional
- Humorous
- Calm
- Respectful
- Less stern/less intimidating
- Be themselves/genuine/authentic
- Good listener
- Welcoming of diversity/inclusive
- Patient
- Fair
- Informative/educational

C. The officer's participation in school events/culture

Participants felt that it was vital for officers to attend more school events and be a part of the school culture to effectively develop positive relationships and trust with the students. Most would like them to be present and more involved in the school, with students, staff and families but acknowledged the current time and availability constraints.

Suggestions of events

Respondents provided many suggestions of school events in which they would like SROs to participate. In order of most mentioned to least mentioned, these events included:

- Participate/ attend sports events
- BBQs/ breakfasts/casual events/carnivals/dances
- Events with parents in attendance
- Graduation
- Pep rallies/spirit activities
- Special ceremonies (e.g. awards, Remembrance Day, religious)
- Assemblies
- Cultural events
- Concerts/plays/arts

D. In-class interaction versus passing in the hallway

Both

Most participants felt both in-class and hallway interactions were important and would help with relationship building. SRO's that are friendly, open, engaging, respectful, supportive and at the school consistently would be ideal. A few respondents felt that an SRO's visit should be scheduled.

- *The small group interactions would serve to create community and a positive culture. But, having the officer in the hallways would serve to have those interactions occur in non-structured time. This non-structured time learning translates to "real life" sometimes (often times) more than classroom learning.*
- *Being invited to the class is another avenue that the SRO can use to make headway in gaining the respect of students and in breaking down barriers. The more time that is put in to building relationships during non-emergent events, the better it is when the SRO (and perhaps other officers) are forced to change the narrative. Both the classroom and the hallway have their respective advantages.*
- *Both are needed. Interacting in classes helps break down the barriers and provides students a "forced" time to get to know the officer. The hallways allows for informal interactions and increased comfort level.*
- *Both. Hellos and smiles in the hallways are more impactful than anyone can estimate. In-class interactions are best when the class has decided that "we should invite the SRO in to talk about this with us" or messages from the teacher to the class like, "the SRO is all about community building and working together to make everyone feel safe and you have impressed me so much with this, I think we need to invite the SRO in to share everything this class has been doing that is so great".*

Classroom

Several participants thought classroom engagement was necessary and best to allow discussions and questions and answers. This was suggested as a good forum for presentations and education and a few respondents suggested bringing S4 back.

- *Programs like S4 where teachers chose targeted topics for officers to address when in the classroom.*
- *The lessons CPS officers have shared with my students are so very valuable.*
- *Very good to have the officer in the classroom teaching once in a while. Students are fascinated with the truth and stories.*

Hallway

Many participants felt talking and engaging with students in the hallway, lunchroom and common spaces is helpful.

- *I don't know about the in class but in the hallway, the students do respond well as our SRO is very engaging*
- *In class can be tricky (teachers have a load of curriculum to get through and we're hard pressed for time) but for a specific presentation is great. Passing in the hallway or out on playground is where most of positive interaction will happen.*
- *Both are needed... but it shouldnt be 'passing in the hallway'... the hallways are where real relationships are formed.*

E. Resource officer training

Many agreed that training for SROs was important, but the most common theme was the importance of the SRO liking the job and being well suited to working with students. Participants also suggested having new SRO's training at school with more experienced SROs, and opportunities for job shadowing before applying to the role. A few respondents suggested there be opportunities for students with genuine interest in being an officer to shadow their SRO throughout the school year. Other respondents mentioned the need to coordinate with school staff.

- *The person would have to want to do this kind of job, not just be "placed" here. Shadowing former SROs, start from the very beginning of a school year, and maintain consistency in the position over time, so students and staff truly have an opportunity to know this person.*
- *They need some. But I don't know what that looks like. The S4 program was good. Personality and interest in the position is key.*
- *a period of mentorship before a SRO is replaced with a new one*
- *I have had students who have mentioned they are interested in becoming an officer. I have introduced them to the SRO, but I do not think it went further than that. It would be nice to allow job shadowing for students who express sincere interest in this line of work.*

Suggested training for SROs

Participants suggested many topics for training they felt would be beneficial for an SRO to have. In order of most mentioned to least mentioned, topics include:

- Working/dealing/communicating with children/adolescents
- Trauma
- Child/adolescent development
- Mental health/adolescent mental health
- Cultural sensitivity
- Learning the school's culture/issues/procedures
- EDI (general)
- Racial sensitivity
- Education/Teaching
- LGBTQ2S+
- Diverse learners/kids with special needs/neurodiversity
- De-escalation
- Dealing with sexual assault
- Family violence
- Internet/social media dangers/safety
- Restorative justice

Summary of participant's recommendations

Throughout this engagement, respondents took the opportunity to share how important and valuable the SRO program was and that they wanted it to continue. Participants shared many suggestions they felt would improve the SRO program for school administration and for students.

1. Increase SRO ability to spend more time at school, by increasing number of SROs and their capacity.
2. Ensure that all schools have equal access to an SRO officer.
3. Improve quality of time spent in school, to focus on relationship building activities, instead of just law enforcement and drills.
4. SRO needs to be part of the school community.
5. Improve hiring and training of SROs to ensure they are a good fit for the job.
6. Do not limit tenure of SROs and let the good ones remain in role if they want to.
7. Increase diversity of SROs.
8. Develop onboarding and ongoing training for SROs.
9. Start early. Relationship and trust building, in addition to prevention, must start at an early age.
10. Ensure that everyone in the school community is aware of the SRO and the purpose of the program. Intentional introductions at the beginning of the school year are important.
11. Provide the SRO with the training and information to be able to effectively refer students, parents, and teachers to community resources.
12. Tie content and learning outcomes of the SRO program to curriculum.
13. Educate, train and work with teachers to ensure that desired learning outcomes are achieved and to reduce SRO responsibility.
14. Work closely with the school to understand needs of students, families, and administration.
15. Work with school boards to build anti-racism training and capacity and data sharing when possible, to measure progress.