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Pilon, Janet

Subject: Police Presence in Hamilton Schools

From: Emily Upper

Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 5:40 PM

To: hwdsbkidsneedhelp@gmail.com

Subject: Police Presence in Hamilton Schools

To the board of trustees,

My name is Emily Upper. I am a librarian and I live in Ward 2. I am concerned about the presence of police in schools. The board of trustees' decision to not terminate the Police liaison program and further, the decision to not suspend the police liaison program while it is under review despite school closures due to COVID 19, is deeply concerning.

The conversation around needing more data is ignoring the data that racialized and Black students have been collecting for years. It is actively ignoring the voices of some of our most vulnerable students. In the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), following the termination of the SRO (School Resource Officer) program, [suspensions for the 2018/2019 school year dropped by 24% with 1,771 fewer suspensions as the previous year and expulsions dropped by 53% with 34 fewer expulsions](#). Police officers in schools intimidate and harass Black, racialized, poor, immigrant, queer, trans, disabled, poor and immigrant students.

In Hamilton, Black youth in the city are being carded in their schools. Black students are being wrongfully arrested and are unsafe due to police presence. A police force with a history of carding and violence against vulnerable communities should not be allowed to make decisions about student safety. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has previously described Hamilton Police as engaging in a ["textbook description of racial profiling."](#) It is deeply concerning to me that students are exposed to these practices in their schools and in Hamilton.

I want to be clear: I am not asking for a review as a review will only prolong the presence of police in schools. The data is clear. I am asking for the termination of this program and the termination of HWDSB's relationship with the Hamilton Police Service.

On June 16th, the human rights and equity advisory committee to the Trustee Board voted unanimously to support the call for the termination of the police liaison program. A motion for the termination of the police program will be put forward and I am asking that on June 22nd you vote to terminate the police liaison program.

Thank you,
Emily Upper