

Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #151

I would like to provide: *	Written Public Comments
My public comments are related to:	ACPS/Alexandria Police Dept. MOU
Topic *	ACPS/Alexandria Police MOU
Full Name *	Katherine Glennon
What is your relationship to ACPS? *	Parent/Guardian of an ACPS Student

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

I am writing in response to the request for input on the revision of the APD/ACPS MOU regarding School Resource Officers in ACPS schools.

Initially, I believe that SROs do not belong in ACPS schools. I request that ACPS and the City of Alexandria consider redirecting the funds that support SROs to more appropriate specialists and professionals, including school-based social workers and psychologists, who can work with students more appropriately to resolve conflict and intervene proactively when students need help and guidance. Alexandria Police should only be present in the schools when directly called upon by ACPS school administrators to deal with specific incidents. I believe the presence and activities of APD in the schools reinforces racial stereotyping and inequality, and it is way beyond time to end this practice in our schools. Students have a true need for mental health support, tutors, and after/out of school activities, and funding from the City should be redirected from the SRO program to support these more urgently needed resources.

In lieu of this, APD should release all data regarding police activity in ACPS schools, including demographic data, so that an accurate understanding of the impacts of SROs in the schools can be made, and so that the program itself can be assessed for how it may or may not be addressing the reasons it was implemented in the first place. It will remain an open question whether police presence in schools actually results in a significantly safer school environment or creates an improved academic environment where students are more likely to thrive without this data, and a revision of the MOU will not be effective when undertaken without full information about the program itself.

Additionally, and again in lieu of the reallocation of funding for

this program, I offer several comments on the MOU: all training of SROs and ACPS admins should occur prior to assignment in a school, not within 60 days thereafter; the training that occurs should be made public so that that we understand generally what it entails; the purpose of having SROs in the schools should be clearly stated and the exact activities and practices SROs are permitted when in the schools should be explicitly stated, i.e., can SROs stop students in the halls for some reasons but not other reasons; SRO interviews of students should always include ACPS staff and strict documentation; all students should be notified that they need not submit to questioning (as I believe is stated in the MOU).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important topic.
